

## Personal Statement Science Student

### Education and Career Goals\*

Write a brief statement outlining your education and career goals; if undecided, state what you hope to gain from the college experience.

Neurodegenerative and neuropsychiatric diseases such as schizophrenia, Huntington's disease (HD), Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease (AD) are complex, traumatic, and potentially disabling disorders. They are often poorly understood and carry unfortunate stigma within the general population, while being extremely distressing for both the patient and the family. They also place a huge burden on society through pressure on the public health system and lost productivity.

Technological, as well as methodological, advances are improving our understanding of these diseases, while translational research is making knowledge about these disorders applicable to the general population. It is here that my interests lie, and is why I have decided to further my education in life sciences and biotechnology at Mira Costa College (MCC) while volunteering at the Center of Behavioral Genomics, UC San Diego (UCSD). At UCSD, I am learning how to extract and store DNA and RNA from blood filters collected from individuals with neuropsychiatric disorders (and controls). Furthermore, in the coming months I hope to have the opportunity to assist a postdoc scholar in culturing and studying brain cell connectivity and signaling using schizophrenia patient-specific cell models.

Courses at MCC are essential to filling in the gaps in my biological knowledge and have provided bio-statistical techniques that help interpret the data and write technically about it. I aspire to translate my training in biotechnology, biostatistics, and life sciences into the more specific goal of becoming a Research Scientist in the area of genetic epidemiology/ bioinformatics with a focus on neuro-genetics. More narrowly, I endeavor to be able to assist in the search for biomarkers for neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases in order to identify, protect, and prevent their manifestation.

After completing foundational coursework at MCC, and taking bioinformatics/upper-level life science courses at UCSD, I plan to enter the epidemiology master's degree program at San Diego State University.

### Extracurricular Activities\*

List activities you are involved with both on and off campus; for example, clubs, organizations, volunteer service, and sports activities. If applicable, describe your employment experience and how many hours you work per week. Do your activities relate to your education or career objective?

I volunteer at the Center of Behavioral Genomics, UC San Diego (UCSD) as a lab technician. I am currently learning how to extract and store DNA and RNA from blood filters collected from individuals with neuropsychiatric disorders (and controls). I also have the chance to learn how to do literature searches, edit manuscripts, and create presentations for Center members.

**Other Information about yourself\***

Please provide information you would like to share about yourself including accomplishments you are proud of, hardships or challenges you overcame in your life, scholarships and/or honors you received. Most important, state your financial need and how a scholarship will help you achieve your education goal.

As stated above, I am employed as an Administrative Assistant at the time of writing; thus any fiduciary reward would be received quite gratefully and utilized practically in both furthering my education, and carrying my career aspirations forward.

This semester (Spring 2015), I am taking the math and biotechnology courses at MCC and a chemistry course at UCSD. Proof of the commitment I have to my studies, and interest in the area is displayed in my 4.0 GPA in science courses (3.83 overall).

As I was a recipient of the Mireille Rajah Memorial Endowed Scholarship, I believe it germane to introduce to the reader how these funds were disbursed in the Fall semester, 2014. With financial assistance from Mireille Rajah Memorial Endowed Scholarship, I matriculated in the following courses and received the corresponding grades: Institution Course Grade Received  
UCSD Genetics (upper division) A, MCC Biotechnology and Business Environment A, MCC Biological Data Analysis with Excel A.

Receiving a Scholarship would assist in defraying much of the cost of pursuing my interest in psychiatric/neuroscience and genetic research. The scholarship's value approximates the cost of taking several units at Mira Costa College; including books, and transportation. This award would be of tremendous personal assistance. As I employed as an Administrative Assistant at the time of writing, any fiduciary reward would be received quite gratefully and utilized practically in both furthering my education, and carrying my career aspirations forward. Thank you for considering my application.

Published: 7/9/15