



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY



1. Harvard has long recognized the importance of enrolling a student body with a diversity of perspectives and experiences. How will the life experiences that shaped who you are today enable you to contribute to Harvard?

In the spring of my eighth-grade year, a boy I once shared playdates with became a headline, succumbing to the gun violence that plagues my city's south side. He was shot just blocks from my home. The pain of losing someone I'd known for a decade was devastating. Growing up surrounded by violence influenced my perspective as a person of color navigating a community where young lives are constantly at risk. These challenges have shaped the person I am today, even if they are difficult for others to fathom. Throughout my life, my neighborhood has been burdened with stereotypes that cloud the beauty of our experiences. Community outsiders have never experienced a group forming a circle in an alley, bowing heads, holding hands, and praying at the spot where a fifteen-year-old boy tragically lost his life.

What I value most about my neighborhood is the profound sense of unity. It's a value I intend to carry throughout my life, especially as I embark on my college journey. I'm determined to foster inclusivity on campus, and I aspire to join a service organization dedicated to uplifting communities like the ones that shaped who I am today.

2. Describe a time when you strongly disagreed with someone about an idea or issue. How did you communicate or engage with this person? What did you learn from this experience?

Shotokan Karate has been practiced for a century with few technique changes. Still, when I added MMA to my repertoire freshman year, I found Shotokan's traditional drills weren't preparing my classmates for self-defense.

I suggested to modernize self-defense to the head Sensei; however, another more purist Sensei disagreed, but I found courage through my head Sensei, who told me to keep the conversation going. For months, I argued that old-school techniques risk injury in real-life scenarios, asked my classmates' opinions, and shared their support for change with the unconvinced Sensei.

Through our emails, I learned more about Shotokan's traditions, and although I was initially worried about our power dynamic, he told me he learned from me that traditions can be developed. Hundreds of Shotokan dojos across the country have adopted my suggestions, showing me that if I dispute respectfully, I can reach a middle ground that is satisfactory for all.

3. Briefly describe any of your extracurricular activities, employment experience, travel, or family responsibilities that have shaped who you are.

The clatter of blades has shaped my adolescence. Under an Olympic-level épée coach, I discovered fencing is more than just a sport. It's a bridge between diverse communities. Yet beyond parts of Europe and major U.S. cities, fencing remains largely inaccessible.

This inspired me to found a nonprofit dedicated to democratizing fencing worldwide. I created an online marketplace connecting fencers with affordable equipment and launched a virtual mentorship program pairing athletes with experts to nurture talent regardless of location or finances. To date, I've donated over 100 pieces of fencing gear to those in need, and the program continues to grow.

The organization reflects my commitment to inclusion and community building, values shaped by years of fencing and coaching. My vision is to transform fencing, often mistaken for a protective railing, into a sport as popular as football or basketball.

4. How do you hope to use your Harvard education in the future?

I want to work as a policymaker for the UN Development Programme. There, I would design skill training initiatives for South Asian governments to increase sustainable domestic opportunity. These programs would minimize the push factors that drive millions of low-wage laborers to migrate to the Persian Gulf.

The South Asian Studies concentration would provide me with the immersive understanding of the subcontinent's culture and history required to design tailored socioeconomic policies. In Advanced Hindi-Urdu, I would develop my ability to work with Delhi and Islamabad policymakers. At the Mittal Institute, I would research the relationship between caste discrimination and outbound migration. Having taken classes on international relations and refugeedom, I know pairing my study of South Asia with classes in the Government and Sociology departments would help me become a leader for development in South Asia.

Show

5. Top 3 things your roommates might like to know about you.

I embody a proton. Whether this overwhelming positive energy came from being around Chopin's emotional writing or chatty friends, I've cartwheeled into math class and have done jump splits after taking tests. I hope I can give you smiles and laughter. :D

If I pop into our common room to share newly discovered music or complain about tennis player [NAME] always getting injured, it's just my way of saying you're family. I promise that whether you need a laugh, a sparring partner, or company at Annenberg, I'll be there to turn quiet moments into conversations, but silence is golden too.

I like finding the why and how behind things, like why tone heals people and how illusions fool brains. I once rewound magician [NAME] routines for hours to master the backpalm and ambitious card. I might levitate a card mid-conversation and pretend you're seeing things

Source:

<https://www.crimsoneducation.org/za/how-to-get-into/harvard-university/supplemental-essays>