

Sample Scholarship Essays

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Scholarship Essay One

- Crabiel Scholarship Winner, won \$3,000 scholarship

Like Mr. Crabiel, I literally work tirelessly in many academic and leadership roles. I sleep no more than six hours a night because of my desire to expertly meet my many commitments. Throughout my life, I have worked as long and as hard as I possibly can to effect beneficial changes in both school and society.

During the summer of tenth grade, I took a number theory course at Johns Hopkins University with students from Alaska, California, and Bogota, Colombia. Similarly, during the summer following eleventh grade, I was one of ninety students from New Jersey selected to attend the Governor's School in the Sciences at Drew University. At Drew, I took courses in molecular orbital theory, special relativity, cognitive psychology, and I participated in an astrophysics research project. For my independent research project, I used a telescope to find the angular velocity of Pluto. With the angular velocity determined, I used Einstein's field equations and Kepler's laws to place an upper bound on the magnitude of the cosmological constant, which describes the curvature of space and the rate of the universe's expansion.

In addition to learning science, I recently lectured physics classes on special relativity at the request of my physics teacher. After lecturing one class for 45 minutes, one student bought many books on both general and special relativity to read during his study hall. Inspiring other students to search for knowledge kindles my own quest to understand the world and the people around me.

As president of the National Honor Society, I tutor students with difficulties in various subject areas. In addition, I am ranked number one in my class with an SAT score of 1580 and SATII scores of 750 in math, 760 in writing, and 800 in physics. In school, I take the hardest possible courses including every AP course offered at the high school. I am the leading member of the Math Team, the Academic Team, and the Model Congress Team. In the area of leadership, I have recently received the Rotary Youth Leadership Award from a local rotary club, have been asked to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and the Constitution in Washington D.C., and wrote the winning essay on patriotism for

South Plainfield's VFW chapter. Currently enrolled in Spanish 6, I am a member of both the Spanish Club and the Spanish Honor Society. In addition, I recently was named a National Merit Scholar.

Besides involvement in academic and leadership positions, I am active in athletics. For instance, I lift weights regularly. In addition, I am the captain of my school's varsity tennis team. So far this year, my individual record on the team is 3-0.

Working vigorously upon being elected Student Council President, I have begun a biweekly publication of student council activities and opinions. Also, the executive board under my direction has opened the school store for the first time in nearly a decade. With paint and wood, we turned a janitor's closet into a fantastic store. I also direct many fund raisers and charity drives. For instance, I recently organized a charity drive that netted about \$1,500 for the family of Alicia Lehman, a local girl who received a heart transplant.

As Student Liaison to the South Plainfield Board of Education, I am working to introduce more advanced-placement courses, more reading of philosophy, and more math and science electives into the curriculum. At curriculum committee meetings, I have been effective in making Board members aware of the need for these courses. In addition, my speeches at public Board meetings often draw widespread support, which further helps to advance my plans for enhancing the curriculum.

I have also been effective as a Sunday school teacher. By helping elementary school students formulate principles and morals, I make a difference in their lives every week. The value system that I hope to instill in them will last them their entire lives. I find teaching first-graders about Christ extremely rewarding. Clearly, I have devoted my life both to working to better myself and to improving civilization as a whole. Throughout the rest of my life, I hope to continue in this same manner of unselfish work. Just as freeholder Crabiel dedicates his life to public service, I commit my life to helping others and to advancing society's level of understanding.

Scholarship Essay Two

- Winning National Merit Scholarship Essay

Nothing in all the world is comparable to reading Ayn Rand beneath New York's skyline or to studying Nietzsche atop a mountain summit.

Since childhood, the studies of philosophy and science have interested me profoundly. Having read many books on relativity, quantum mechanics, existentialism, religion, capitalism, democracy and post-Aristotelian philosophy, my quest for knowledge has only intensified. Certainly, the purpose of my life is to discover a greater understanding of the universe and its people. Specifically, I

plan to better grasp the interrelationship among forces, matter, space, and time. In addition, I hope to find a unified field theory and a convincing explanation for the birth of the universe.

During the summer of tenth grade, I took a number theory course at Johns Hopkins University with students from Alaska, California, and Bogota, Colombia. My attendance of the New Jersey Governor's School in the Sciences is another accomplishment that exemplifies my dedication to knowledge. During the summer following eleventh grade, I took courses in molecular orbital theory, special relativity, cognitive psychology, and I participated in an astrophysics research project. For my independent research project, I used a telescope to find the angular velocity of Pluto. With the angular velocity determined, I used Einstein's field equations and Kepler's laws to place an upper bound on the magnitude of the cosmological constant, which describes the curvature of space and the rate of the universe's expansion.

In addition to learning science, I recently lectured physics classes on special relativity at the request of my physics teacher. After lecturing one class for 45 minutes, one student bought many books on both general and special relativity to read during his study hall. Inspiring other students to search for knowledge kindles my own quest to understand the world and the people around me.

Also, as president of the National Honor Society, I tutor students with difficulties in various subject areas. Moreover, I am ranked number one in my class, and I am the leading member of the Math Team, the Academic Team, and the Model Congress Team. In the area of leadership, I have recently received the Rotary Youth Leadership Award from a local rotary club and have been asked to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and the Constitution in Washington D.C. Currently enrolled in Spanish 6, I am a member of both the Spanish Club and the Spanish Honor Society.

As student council president, I have begun a biweekly publication of student council activities and opinions. Also, the executive board under my direction has opened the school store for the first time in nearly a decade and is finding speakers to speak at a series of colloquia on topics ranging from physics to politics. Directing fund raisers and charity drives also consumes much of my time. For instance, I recently organized a charity drive that netted about \$1,500 for the family of a local girl in need of a heart transplant.

Consistent with my love of freedom and my belief in democracy, which is best summarized by Hayek's Road to Serfdom, I have recently initiated an application to become the liaison to the local board of education. Also, in keeping with my belief that individuals develop strong principles and ideology, I teach Sunday school three months a year and have chaperoned for a local Christian school.

Outside pure academics and leadership roles, I lift weights five times a week for

an hour each day. In addition, I play singles for my school's varsity tennis team. Because I find extraordinary satisfaction in nature and have dedicated my life to its understanding, I enjoy mountain climbing. Among the notable peaks I have reached are Mt.

Washington, Mt Jefferson, Mt. Madison, Mt. Marcy and Mt. Katahdin. Unquestionably, my life's aim is to dramatically raise the height of the mountain of knowledge so that my successors may have a more accurate view of the universe around them.

Scholarship Essay Three

- Fulbright Application Essay

On one hot late-summer day when I was in high school, my parents came back from a shopping trip with a surprise present for me: the legendary board game, Diplomacy. At first I scoffed at such an old-fashioned game. Who would want to waste glorious sunny days moving armies around a map of pre-World War I Europe, pretending to be Bismarck or Disraeli? But after playing the game once, I became absolutely riveted by the nuances of statecraft, and soon began losing sleep as I tried to craft clever diplomatic gambits, hatch devious schemes, and better understand the game's ever-changing dynamics. As my friends and I spent the second half of the summer absorbed by the game, my parents grinned knowingly. How could I resist being fascinated with Diplomacy, they asked me, when I incessantly read about international affairs, and liked nothing more than debating politics over dinner? How could I resist being fascinated, when I had spent most of my summers in Greece (and, much more briefly, France and England), witnessing first-hand the ways in which countries differ socially, culturally, and politically?

Though my passion for foreign policy and international affairs undoubtedly dates back to high school, I never had the chance to fully develop this interest before college. Once I arrived at Harvard, however, I discovered that I could learn about international relations through both my academics and my extracurricular activities. Academically, I decided to concentrate in Government, and, within Government, to take classes that elucidated the forces underlying the relations of states on the world stage. Some of the most memorable of these classes included Human Rights, in which we discussed what role humanitarian concerns ought to play in international relations; Politics of Western Europe, in which I learned about the social, economic, and political development of five major European countries; and Causes and Prevention of War, which focused on unearthing the roots of conflict and finding out how bloodshed could have been avoided. Currently, for my senior thesis, I am investigating the strange pattern of American human rights-based intervention in the post-Cold War era, and trying to determine which explanatory variables are best able to account for it.

Interestingly, I think that I have learned at least as much about international

relations through my extracurriculars in college as I have through my classes. For the past three years, for instance, I have helped run Harvard's three Model United Nations conferences. As a committee director at these conferences, I researched topics of global importance (e.g. the violent disintegration of states, weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East), wrote detailed study guides discussing these subjects, and then moderated hundreds of students as they debated the topics and strove to resolve them. Even more enriching for me than directing these committees was taking part in them myself. As a delegate at other schools conferences, I would be assigned to represent a particular country on a particular UN committee (e.g. France on the Security Council). I would then need to research my country's position on the topics to be discussed, articulate my view in front of others in my committee, and convince my fellow delegates to support my position. Trying to peg down a country's elusive national interest, clashing over thorny practical and philosophical issues, making and breaking alliances - Model UN was basically a simulation of how diplomacy really works.

Thankfully, I have also found time over the past few years to cultivate interests and skills unrelated to Model UN and foreign policy. One of the most important of these has been community service. As a volunteer for Evening With Champions, an annual ice-skating exhibition held to raise money for children with cancer, and as a teacher of a weekly high school class on current events and international affairs, I have, whenever possible, used my time and talents to benefit my community. Another more recent interest of mine is the fascinating realm of business. Two years ago, my father's Christmas present to me was a challenge rather than a gift: he gave me \$500, but told me that I could keep it only if I invested it in the stock market - and earned a higher rate of return than he did with another \$500. Since then, I have avidly followed the stock market, and become very interested in how businesses interact and respond to strategic threats (perhaps because of the similarities between business competition and the equally cutthroat world of diplomatic realpolitik). A final passion of mine is writing. As the writer of a biweekly column in the Independent, one of Harvard's student newspapers, I find very little as satisfying as filling a blank page with words - creating from nothing an elegant opinion piece that illuminates some quirk of college life, or induces my readers to consider an issue or position that they had ignored until then.

Because of my wide range of interests, I have not yet decided what career path to follow into the future. In the short run, I hope to study abroad for a year, in the process immersing myself in another culture, and deepening my personal and academic understanding of international affairs. After studying abroad, my options would include working for a nonprofit organization, entering the corporate world, and attending law school. In the long run, I envision for myself a career straddling the highest levels of international relations, politics, and business. I could achieve this admittedly ambitious goal by advancing within a nonprofit group, think tank, or major international company. Perhaps most appealingly, I could also achieve this goal by entering public service and obtaining some

degree of influence over actual foreign policy decisions - that is, becoming a player myself in the real-life game of Diplomacy.

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