

Why I Am Applying to the College Scholar Program

The College Scholar Program (CSP) was created to push the boundaries of what is known and ask questions that have never been asked. The study of Bitcoin embodies the same principles. The 21,000,000 bitcoin are society's tools for the 21st century. Our world is undergoing a dramatic transformation; I wish to see outside our existing systems to see what's next. By studying Bitcoin, I will see what is next. *"If you know nothing else about the future, you can rest assured that dramatic changes will be neither welcomed nor advertised by conventional thinkers. **You cannot depend upon conventional information sources** to give you an objective and timely warning about how the world is changing and why. If you wish to **understand the great transition** now under way, you have little choice but to **figure it out for yourself**"* (*The Sovereign Individual*, 54-55). Only in the CSP will I be able to look outside of "conventional information sources" and begin to understand the great transition underway through Bitcoin. Bitcoin is a "disruptive innovation," creatively destroying existing systems for a better path forward into our future.

bitcoin is a cryptographically secured currency. However, Bitcoin, the network, touches upon an incredible amount of areas. Additionally, while the current/main implementation of the Bitcoin blockchain secures financial information (the currency bitcoin) and while bitcoin is the best form of money we've ever had, Bitcoin is much more than just a currency, impacting geopolitics, energy, freedom/human rights, etc. It is my belief, and the belief of many others (such as Fidelity, Goldman Sachs, BlackRock, KPMG), that Bitcoin, alone, is an empowering technology with the potential to fundamentally transform civilization, sitting at the intersection of math, physics, computer science, philosophy, biology, game theory, engineering, monetary theory, economics, finance, morality, etc. Furthermore, most people, given "coin" in the name,

diminish Bitcoin to only a monetary asset. They never consider it a technology, a liberating, freedom and privacy-protecting, digital energy savings technology. Additionally, Bitcoin is fundamentally different from any other cryptocurrency. “Broader” cryptocurrency will be labeled, at best, an intranet technology and, at worst, an unregistered security bordering on fraud.

A personal goal of mine is to examine my assumptions, learning to ask better questions without longing for an answer. To all meaningful questions that progress our world, I believe that Bitcoin will be a part of the answer. However, *“Western government[s] will seek to suppress the cybereconomy by totalitarian means,”* and *“will violate human rights, censor the free flow of information, [and] sabotage useful technologies* (The Sovereign Individual, 25). Why?

“Governments have grown used to enjoying a monopoly over currency that they could depreciate at will...In the Information Age, individuals will be able to use cybercurrencies and thus declare their monetary independence. Their importance for controlling the world’s wealth will be transcended by mathematical algorithms that have no physical existence. In the new millennium, cybermoney controlled by private markets will supersede fiat money issued by governments” (The Sovereign Individual, 24-25). There is a humanitarian imperative affecting generations, present and future, to study Bitcoin and for students to be validated in their efforts. To do the greatest good in our drastically changing world, we have to think differently; we have to draw on the “and” to shape what’s next. I am applying to the CSP to do just that.

Experiences That Have Prepared Me for Original, Independent Research & the Design of My Curriculum.

In the context of Bitcoin, over the past 4 years, independently, I’ve spent between 5,000-6,000 hours falling down the blockchain/ Bitcoin rabbit hole. To me, the true wealth you gain in Bitcoin is knowledge. Bitcoin has shown me how much I don’t know from “What is

money?” to Human Rights to Energy, etc. Furthermore, my independent learning has been validated. In the past 6 months, I’ve been on 14 podcasts, written 32 articles, have 3 features in Forbes, and been invited to and spoken at 3 conferences: Bitcoin Prague, Global Bitcoin Summit, and the Africa Bitcoin Conference (all fully funded). I’m also an advisor to educational initiatives in Japan, El Salvador & Kenya. Additionally, I am the Project Lead at Generation Bitcoin, co-founder of the Bitcoin Students Network, a contributing author to Bitcoin Magazine, and author of my own Bitcoin “quick-start” blog. In high school, I elected to pursue my school’s Technology, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Certificate, which was a 3-year program in which you selected a distribution area (I chose innovation) to take classes under and then culminated in a capstone project your senior year. My project was a financial literacy website called *Asset*. In my freshman year of college at NYU Shanghai, in a class called *Creativity Considered*, taught by former Cornell President Jeffrey S. Lehman, we did a semester-long project studying a creator of our choice (I chose Cathie Wood) with applications to our class topics. From my senior spring of high school to my sophomore fall of college, I worked at IBM as their STEM for Girls program manager and on their learning platform, IBM SkillsBuild. My junior year of high school, I decided to study abroad in Beijing, having no prior knowledge of Chinese, so I am comfortable with unknown or uncertain situations. Finally, daily, I set aside time to think, just think.