Aibek Sarbayev

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Essay about Myself

Hello, my name is Aibek Sarbayev and I want to tell about myself in this essay. Currently I am a sophomore student in the Bunker Hill Community College studying Computer Science. I tried transferring to MIT during my freshman year, which wasn’t wise, because I didn’t have that much classes taken. Moreover there were only 2 science courses among 5 that I took in the fall semester. But I don’t regret about it, because I got great experience in application process. During the summer I’ve read admission blogs of MIT deeper and closer. First of all, I want to thank you, admission officer, who is reading this essay for your energy and effort. Now I have a close idea how much soul you put into the admission process. I hope it will be a great journey for you.

I was 4 years old when I got my first LEGO set, I remember it was LEGO System set with a police helicopter, small track and a small yellow boat. I loved creating new models using details I had, and if possible I used all of them effectively, but without making the model pointlessly complicated. Someday that year my parents asked me who I want to be in the future and I told them that I want to be an inventor. At that age I liked Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and I found out about Leonardo Da Vinci and other sculptors of Renaissance. I remember I was attending painting courses for some time, because I wanted to paint Mona Lisa, and I did, which was important for me as it placed me closer to Leonardo Da Vinci. Now I realize that the teacher was helping me, but anyways it was a great feeling as I created something Great by myself. Since that time passion for creating and creativity hadn’t left me. My love with LEGO improved it as I was building more complex and advanced models.

At the age of 9 I started to take piano lessons in the music school. I went to the music school for 4 years, then after my family moved to Almaty - previously we lived in Bishkek; I took private piano lessons at home for 2 years. I finished taking lessons in the beginning of high school. Nevertheless I continued playing piano for myself. It always allowed me to relax or encourage myself when I was upset. Even now in college I bought a digital piano, because I missed it during the first year. It helps me to maintain myself or provide a relief. During this winter break my sister suggested to put videos on YouTube, so far I’ve uploaded only one video, but I plan to continue uploading.

At school I always was good at science courses, particularly I loved math for its structure, logic and beauty. Very soon I understood that solution always exists to any problem, or it can be proved that problem doesn’t have any solution at all. So I didn’t give up when the problem seemed too hard, I simply tried to understand the structure of the problem and find a good approach to it. In my entire life I’ve always been in physics-mathematics schools, even the kindergarten was academically advanced. However I had ‘A’s in every course before high school, and mostly ‘A’s during the high school, I wasn’t a big fan of humanities, particularly language and literature courses. I preferred to read whatever I like, and I loved reading books.

When I was younger I enjoyed Jules Verne’s books. I loved the adventures that heroes of his books had and moreover I loved how he literally predicted the modern technology we have today. My favorite book of Jules Verne is “The Mysterious Island”, where survivors maintained their new colony on the Lincoln Island. The favorite invention is, of course, Captain’s Nemo submarine - it is simply fantastic!

After Jules Verne I’ve read Tolkien’s “The Lord of the Rings”. I was so affected and thrilled by the world The Professor created, that I studied history, geography, languages and cultures of Arda – the world where Middleearth is located. It was during the high school when I started learning elvish language Quenya – of those who lived in Valinor. I remember that time and it was one of the most fantastic periods in my life. I tried to speak elvish, and I “hooked up” my best friend with elvish too. So we spoke some common phrases in Quenya. I even translated my own name *Aibek* into elvish, which would be *Aglartur*. There are two meanings for my name: “*Ai”* in Kazakh, which belongs to Turkic language group, means *moon*, or in elvish – *ithil* and “*bek*”, which is sort of *lord* in ancient Kazakhstan, or in elvish – *tur.* So the first meaning would be *Ithildur,* which is like *Isildur.* However I prefer another meaning for “*Ai*”, which is exciting “Ai!”, like “Wow!” in English, so I found the closest word in elvish would be *Aglar –* which means *glory,* so instead of *Ithildur,* I chose *Aglartur.* I also studied elvish and dwarvish runes, Tengwar and Angerthas. Aibek in elvish alphabet would be: ~CwaJ and in dwarvish: AjbEk.

After I finished the 9th grade of my high school, I went to summer camp, where I learned how to edit movies. Later that year, we got an assignment for a literature class to play a sketch for some poem. I convinced teacher to make a short film instead of playing a sketch, and she was quite happy about it. So my group shot a 2 minute trailer video and presented it for the class. Next year we got the same assignment and again I initiated to make a movie. But this time we created a 15 minute movie, of “science-fictional comedy-parody” genre. I remember how much effort we put in that movie. There was one scene which took us 5 hours of shooting, due to constant laughing at the spot. After few weeks of shooting I worked on the editing for another week. I remember I was editing at night if I had a lot of homework. In the end of the movie we put our fail scenes which added a lot of fun to the movie. The class highly appreciated our work. But my best work was done at the prom evening. Our school system is 11 years, so that year was our last one. I had an idea to create two videos: one for the Last School Bell event, which takes place before our equivalent of SAT test, and another for the Prom evening. For the Last School Bell event I shot an everyday routine of our class. It took me two weeks to shoot ourselves during various aspects of school life. Editing took about two weeks, because of preparations for exams. After we finished with final exams and I showed my video for the entire school at the Last School Bell event I started shooting my last school video. It was nostalgic film and half of it I shot after the finals, for another half I used the random school diary videos I took during entire year. At the prom evening every class in our school provided some sort of performance, of course, the auditory was applauding to them, but most of the applause was coming from their own classmates. But after I showed my video to the auditory, the entire school was applauding loudly to me for a long time. That was one of the happiest moments in my life. While writing this I still get shivers in my body. I uploaded all those four videos to YouTube, if you want to take a look on them, my YouTube channel is www.youtube.com/user/Aglartur.

I told you major information about me and here is some minor information.

I enjoy alpine skiing since age 9. I love mountains, also I love speed and adrenaline skies give me. I’ve trained Kung Fu for 4 years during the middle school. I continued training at Boston last spring. Unfortunately, recently my doctor told me that I can’t do the sports that put a lot of physical load on my skeleton, because I have a deformation of a rib cage – my xiphoid process is too deep and it doesn’t allow lunges to breath for a full volume, so I need to remove any stress until my skeleton finally grows up. That’s pity, since I love Kung Fu, performing martial arts with my body, swords and staff. I also have been swimming for 3 years during elementary and middle school. I took one year of a table tennis classes around that time. Also I studied chess for almost 4 years, but now I play it from time to time. At the high school I participated in math Olympiads, where highest level was some prize place on the city stage, probably third place. I participated a little bit in physics Olympiads, but switched to math later. In the last year of a high school I participated in scientific projects contest, where I was working in applied math section, and I won silver medal on the national stage. In the college I do volunteering with PMD – People Making Difference. We made LEGO RNA and DNA kits for high schools, which is MIT’s project, we helped in preparing for farmers conference, also I have been an elf for the kids in the Halloween event we’ve done with PMD. I’m continuing volunteering with them. Also I learned cooking during my freshman year and I love it. I’ve done several chocolate and apple pies, baked fish with honey-mustard sauce and other delicious dishes. I love improvisation while cooking, mixing different spices and seasonings. Of course, sometimes the result isn’t quite good, for example it wasn’t a good idea to stuff potatoes with honey and bake them. But I like experimenting on the kitchen, if I have time of course. I also love programming for its structure and possibilities it opens. I can create whatever I want and if my knowledge isn’t enough for some problems I simply go to Internet and study about it until I get it. I also enjoy computer games I play with my friends from time to time. I prefer real-time strategies, but I do like first-person shooters and role-playing games.

I’m curious person, I was extremely curious in the childhood, I remember I was asking a lot of “why”-s to my parents, who gave me the answer or provided me the book where I can find an answer. Nowadays I’m still curious, but I can find most of the answers in the internet. Life is also very interesting for me, because there are a lot of things that can be discovered. I always want to know how different things work, what are the inner mechanisms that perform the work. It is applied not only to the psychical mechanisms, but also to psychological and mental mechanisms. After I understand how something works I try to apply it to something else or use it in some way. I love creativity and thinking outside the box, I hate gray mediocrity. I love to know interesting people, know different points of thinking. Personally I think that I’m an introvert type of person, but I love being in a company of friends. I enjoy travelling and learning about new cultures. After I arrived to the United States I think that you can learn something about almost any culture here. I also love psychology - my mom is psychotherapist so she had some influence on me. I’ve read books about different psychological aspects varying from light/dark rhetoric and body language to mental traps and archetypes. Also my mom shares a lot of wisdom with me and my sister.

Now looking back in time I realize how much energy my parents put in me and my sister. Also there is a lot of energy and support that my grandparents, aunts and uncles gave me. In my culture the extended family plays a big role in person’s life, since we socialize closer with each other. I know that I’m extremely lucky and grateful for my family. They gave me the chance to explore the world of science, music, sport, fantasy, psychology. I’ve seen various parts of the Earth. And now I want to continue exploring all those things in the university, and I think that MIT is the best choice.