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AVID IV

Dr. Howard

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Over my time spent in High School, I have encountered a lot of experiences that have shaped my educational journey and outlook. Some of the most important are the time I have spent as the president of the Girls Who Code Club, being the team leader of the Computer Science UIL team, participating in the Science Olympiad, and the MIT MITES semester program.

The educational challenge that shaped my complete world was finding out that I have dyslexia during my freshman year of high school. This was a turning point that reshaped my understanding of my entire world. I finally understood why spelling simple words like “fifth” felt impossible and why writing assignments took me twice as long as my peers. I no longer had to hide my misspellings under poor handwriting. This diagnosis was both a relief and a challenge, requiring me to adapt to a new way of learning and a brand-new reality. I had to now give myself grace when I stumbled and find effective strategies to succeed. I developed specific techniques to manage my dyslexia, such as slowing down while reading and breaking tasks into smaller manageable parts. Additionally, I started using text-to-speech and voice-to-speech software with my assignments. These adjustments improved my reading and writing skills and significantly boosted my confidence and resilience, teaching me to approach challenges with a proactive mindset. Having these supports made me feel more confident in myself and in turn, led to putting myself out there and applying for opportunities like MITES.

MITES Semester has been a completely transformative experience that has allowed me to connect with like-minded peers, dive into challenging coursework, and participate in fun projects in both my Core and Project classes. It gave me a place where I felt like I could truly fit in and thrive. This experience fostered my love for helping my community by creating an opportunity where I can do a project that can change my community with the class “Mapping Justice”. I used ArcGIS to create a map that highlights disparities in the education system, allowing me to work on a project with real community impact. Computer Science UIL has also been an experience I feel truly proud of.

Being the team leader of Computer Science UIL has been a very impactful journey from founding the team to being able to compete at regionals after winning at district. I have been able to freely communicate with my peers about a topic we truly love and want to commit to longer. Districts was a very eye-opening and new experience that changed my worldview on Computer Science as a whole. As it can bring together people from many different backgrounds. It showed me that I can make a change and be a representation of other people who hold the same dreams as me. While competing at district and regionals I saw that I was the only African American person and woman to be competing for computer science. It showed how Computer science is still a male-dominated field and that I can make difference in it now and in the future.

All together these experiences have worked together to shape who I am today. They have not only shaped my skills and knowledge but have also deepened my understanding of myself and my potential. They’ve instilled in me resilience and a drive to create meaningful change both in my community and within myself. They make me ready to take on the future and to continue growing, learning, and making an impact in the world.