

****Most Notable Information****

Name: Connor Magnuson

What are your future goals and plans? I plan to major in Computer Science (B.S.) in the Grainger College of Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign before entering the field of software development. My dream job since I was in middle school has been to be a software developer for SpaceX.

Senior Year Awards:

- National Merit Finalist
- DAR Good Citizen Award Essay Scholarship

Please list any school activities, organizations, groups, or teams in which you have been or are now involved.

Band

- Participation: Freshman - Senior
- Jazz Band Participation: Junior - Senior

Math Team

- Participation: Sophomore - Senior

Robotics

- Participation: Sophomore - Senior

Science Olympiad

- Participation: Sophomore - Senior

Tech Team

- Participation: Junior - Senior

NHS

- Inducted Spring 2023

List or describe your involvement in community, civic, church, or other service-related activities.

Community Service/Volunteering

- As of Spring 2024, I have **over 530 volunteer hours in high school**
 - A large majority of these hours came from volunteering weekly for 2 ½ years at the New Life Tabernacle Food Pantry, a free pantry in Roscoe, IL, where I helped sort, pack, and distribute food and other items. I also wrote them several pieces of software, as described below.

Please list any offices you have held, awards or honors you have won:

Band

- Alto Sax Section Leader: Sophomore - Senior
- ILMEA District Band Qualifier: Sophomore, Junior, (Senior TBD)
- Rockford Wind Ensemble Honor Band Qualifier: Sophomore

Math Team

- Awards:
 - 2022: Individual Geometry - 8th Place ICTM State Competition
 - 2023: Oral Competition Team - 1st Place ICTM Regional Competition

Robotics

- Placements (Team):
 - 2022: Regional Tournament: Finalist Alliance Captain
 - 2023: State Tournament: Finalist Alliance 2nd Pick

Science Olympiad

- Awards:
 - 2022: State Tournament: 1st Place Cybersecurity
 - 2023: State Tournament: 1st Place WiFi Lab

AP Classes

- AP Computer Science Principles:
 - Perfect 5 Exam Score: Only 335 students (0.29%) out of ~115,000 test takers; I obtained as a freshman (my first AP class); See more in these news stories:
 - [Rockford Christian High School student tests among best in the world \(RR Star\)](#)
 - [Inspiring 815: Connor Magnuson \(WREX\)](#)
- AP Scholar with Honor (achieved 2023)
- 5 on every AP Exam taken (9 exams)

Other

- 2024 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist (Selection Index Score 220)
- 2023 Youth Volunteer Service Award Recipient - All-American Soap Box Derby (read more [here](#))

****Information about specific AP Exam results and standardized testing scores can be found in [this document](#).****

Tell me briefly about your outside hobbies or interests not already mentioned. Explain what you enjoy about each specifically.

Outside of school, my largest hobby is Soap Box Derby Racing. I've been racing since 2015 and have placed 5th and 6th in the World Championships, having been there 6 times. I enjoy that SBD racing allows me to apply the math and science knowledge that I learn in school to the real world, spend time with my mom and dad, meet people and make friends from all around the country, and practice good sportsmanship.

Please discuss what things are most important to you. What do you value? How would you like to be viewed by others? What are some of your most STRONGLY held personal beliefs?

I believe strongly in integrity, discipline, hard work, and service. In all that I do, I strive for perfection and give 110% effort to ensure the greatest chances of success possible. I also greatly enjoy volunteering my time and helping others out, whether that be providing homework assistance to peers or helping teachers and the community accomplish intensive tasks or prevail through hard times. I hope that others view me as a kind, honest, hard-working individual.

What are your biggest personal weaknesses and how do you try to compensate for them?

By far one of my biggest personal weaknesses is extreme O.C.D. / perfectionism. I've been known to spend hours trying to get every last homework problem perfectly correct and I often get mad at myself for missing even a singular point on any assignment, test, or quiz. I'm not happy with anything less than 100%.

I'm attempting to change this during senior year by making sure that I prioritize my life and mental health over my grades and by not stressing over 98s and 99s. I'm striving for a happy medium between academic excellence and sanity.

Is there something else you feel I should know about you, the nature of this letter, or your specific situation?

Other Notable/Interesting Facts About Me:

- For the last 5+ years, I have been a co-developer on a Soap Box Derby race tracking app that is used at over 15 race cities around the country (and expanding)
- In high school, I wrote a software program for the food pantry I volunteered at to replace their paper bookkeeping, saving the director several hours per month and making the customer experience quicker and more seamless
- When I was in 7th grade I wrote programs that several teachers used in class, including one that integrated with Quizlet sets
- I have my own logic game in the Google Play Store that I wrote in 2019 (7th-8th grade): [here](#)
- There was only one class that I took in my first three years of high school where I did not achieve 100% in every quarter

What is your GPA? Unweighted: 4.0 // Weighted: 4.45 (Co-Valedictorian)