*Farrell*

*✅* **UMich -  Everyone belongs to many different communities and/or groups defined by (among other things) shared geography, religion, ethnicity, income, cuisine, interest, race, ideology, or intellectual heritage. Choose one of the communities to which you belong, and describe that community and your place within it. (298/300 words)**

I was excited that middle school allowed you to bring your electronic devices, but it turns out that that led to students on their phones, texting each other despite being in the same room.

Itching to do something about the situation, I brought two paddles and a ping pong ball to school and asked a classmate to play with me on a dusty, unused table at school. At first it was just us, but eventually our yells of victory and defeat caught others’ attention. I invited more people to play, and others joined on their own—the same students who had been fixated on their screens. It was satisfying to hear sounds of interaction instead of just keyboard clicks.

Through shared enjoyment, the component which groups people together, I created a community of physically active people engaging in small talks and laughter.

However, one of us left for basketball, hinting he lost interest. Here, I noticed the fragility of enjoyment. After days of observations, I figured that the missing glue of this community was variety; all our games were repetitive. Gluing the community together requires variety in the games we play.

From then, I started to practice challenging techniques at home—spins, chops, ghost-serves, and flicks—all of which cause the ball to move oddly. I gradually used these techniques at school; my friends were initially bewildered but were quickly engaged as they tried to come up with techniques to counter them. As a result, existing friendships strengthened through their rejuvenated enjoyment of this common interest.

Gluing a community together is indeed exhausting, but the rewarding results motivate me to continue in the communities I’ll belong to in UMich.

Hi Farrell,

Thank you for your essay! Writing about being an initiator that brings a community together is a strong choice because it lets schools know that you are a leader and are willing to act. Your drive to make ping pong interesting is to bring your community together, so I think the hole in your story is why do you mind if they are playing basketball since they are still being part of the community? You can clarify this by emphasizing the community you want to sustain: your classmates as a whole or the ping pong group. If it’s your classmates, I think you should try a different approach to your essay and say that ping pong is for those who enjoy it and want to keep trying new moves. If it’s the ping pong group, keeping people in it would be your main goal. After talking about the community, you should emphasize your main goal in it. You are the leader because you started it and are finding new ways to improve it. Make sure that you make it clear that *you* are the one keeping things running in the group.

C.G.