**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. (500 words)**

Growing up in Indonesia, an archipelago with over 17,000 islands, I would frequently visit the ocean. However, when I visited Bali last summer, it was upsetting to see the overexploitation of marine life and pollution around the area. Knowing I could’ve done something to protect marine life, I participated in the Kurma Asih Sea Turtle conservation and helped them raise funds to preserve the Olive Ridley sea turtle population: one of our local keystone species marine ecosystems.

After being a member at this conservation, I witnessed the dedication each volunteer put into protecting these turtles. They worked long hours and even spent their weekends cleaning the beaches, building and expanding the turtle shelters, and ensuring that the ideal temperature was maintained for the eggs to hatch. Despite all that, the program received limited funding from the government and donors due to their lack of exposure.

Noticing this, I decided to use the recent popularity of tote bags and recycled-material shirts to both raise funds and garner more exposure for the program. To create a long-term impact for these turtles for future generations to follow, I designed the merchandise with infographics concerning conditions of the Olive Ridley turtles and utilized the “#savetheturtles” hashtag and posted regular Instagram stories to capture the turtles’ daily shenanigans. Moreover, I also incorporated direct marketing via Whatsapp while also adding the link to the Kurma Asih conservation for people to directly connect with us.

A few months later, we were delighted to see that people showed interest in the turtles and wanted to contribute. In the end, we managed to raise enough funds to shelter 389 eggs!

The efforts we made in social media and merchandise sales have enabled the local government to expand the Kurma Asih conservatory and renovate it so that it can be more welcoming for tourists and supporters to visit.

Without realizing it, the time I spent with Kurma Asih and the turtles further fuelled my desire to commit to bringing environmental awareness everywhere I go.

At UMich, I want to start by working with the Ross green team to develop restoration initiatives like campus farms and take part in environmental events to protect and promote ecological health in the area around the campus. Additionally, I will expand my knowledge about future ecological challenges and learning cutting-edge technologies that I could use to help the kurma asih conservatory streamline their operations.

Hi Axell,

Good job on showing your ability and initiatives in helping a cause that matters to you. To help the admission committee get to know you even better, I suggest that you include an anecdote or a personal belief so that they can understand why you’re deeply passionate about this environmental cause. Including a background story would also give your essay that unique touch.

Moreover, for the UMich part, I saw on their website that they may have something that you’d be a fit for: <https://planetblue.umich.edu/campus/get-involved/pba/>

You can mention in the last paragraph that you’d be excited to be a Planet Blue Ambassador.

# Planet Blue Ambassador

Are you interested in campus sustainability? The Planet Blue Ambassador program is the entry point to sustainability at the University of Michigan. Our goal is to empower you with the information and resources you need to live, work, learn, and play sustainably at U-M.

Here are some their goals in progress:

## Goal in Progress—Fuel Efficiency

**0%**

REDUCTION IN VEHICLE CARBON OUTPUT (TARGET: 30% BY 2025)

## Goal in Progress—Waste Reduction

**13%**

## **Goal in Progress—Community Engagement**

U-M is investing in programs to educate our community, track behavior and report progress over time toward a campus-wide ethic of sustainability.

Personally, I think with your previous successful effort at Kurma Asih, you’d be great at helping them accomplish their goal for community engagement. You can mention some of the actions that you’d like to do at UMich as an ambassador.

Good luck!

Melinda