**A hallmark of the Columbia experience is being able to learn and thrive in an equitable and inclusive community with a wide range of perspectives. Tell us about an aspect of your own perspective, viewpoint or lived experience that is important to you, and describe how it has shaped the way you would learn from and contribute to Columbia’s diverse and collaborative community. (200 words or fewer)\***

I was a very timid child. I couldn’t even strike a simple conversation with someone, causing my parents to enroll me in a taekwondo club to build my confidence.

I remembered feeling apprehensive and hesitant to kick when dozens of sets of eyes were on me during my first sparring session. Afterwards, Sabom - my taekwondo instructor - pulled me aside. He said, “Don’t think too much, just kick! Eventually, the wall limiting you will crumble.”

Trying to do my best to change, I followed instructions. As I landed more kicks in my next sparring, I heard cheers. More kicks equaled louder cheers. The energy I felt from the cheers became confidence that would strip away my timidness. I would remember their cheers whenever I needed a confidence boost, the sound becoming a confidence generator.

At Columbia, I wish to develop a community where I can impart knowledge about my sustainable confidence energy generator. I wish to be part of the Columbia health and wellness program and help create a supportive environment for my peers who are low on confidence through bonding exercises and workshops focused on building confidence through martial arts.

Hi David,

Thank you for your essay. I think you can edit the last paragraph to add more about how you changed after discovering the confidence energy generator. Did you find yourself speaking more? Taking more initiative? Being inspired to make change? Be specific about how this experience changed you and how you want to bring this to the Columbia community.

C.G.