**Prompt 1: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.**

Under the blazing sun in the Middle East, I am greeted with blasts of scorching heat. Sweat leaked from my head and sizzled as it collided with the asphalt road. Out of the corner of my eye, I see a thin figure and I turn to see a malnourished dog limping down the road. Its hunger was apparent from its rib cage protruding out of its body. Its crusted tongue dangled from its withered mouth. “Should I give it food?” I thought. But before I could even attempt to move, the stray dog became aware of my presence and bolted out of sight. The reality set in that I was unable to help and my heart sank. If only I could do something to help them…

Stray animals will travel long distances to scavenge for food. Unfortunately, they will go so far as to venture into the city where the consequences can be fatal since they will get shot by the police in Oman. Conducting research has seared these facts into my brain. If I really wanted to help these animals, I should tackle the problem of scarce food sources because it is the driving factor as to why they travel great distances.

After brainstorming, I opted to build an automatic animal feeder because it could feed strays and eliminate human presence so they do not feel threatened. This is vital considering their poor treatment from residents. It was also the most practical option because it would help them directly. I felt like I finally found a purpose because my engineering skills can be harnessed to help countless lives.

The first prototype I constructed was a feeder with a plywood base and a remote food dispensation feature. It takes advantage of the abundant sunlight in Oman through the use of a solar panel. But were these features adequate? To reach the machine’s full potential, I wanted an expert to inspect it so I got in contact with BAWABALI, one of the biggest animal rescue shelters in Bali, Indonesia. With their guidance, I developed a plan to build a new prototype specifically for their main shelter which will directly support the rescued animals.

I designed the second prototype using CAD in Indonesia. It allowed me to create a significantly more effective dispensation system as well as a more stable frame without physically making anything. This proved especially useful when I showed BAWABALI my latest design because it allowed them to visualize the product and determine the best place for it within their main shelter. After receiving their approval, I started building the device.

The whirring of motors and the clanging of food pellets against the metal bowl could only mean one thing: the feeder is functioning at last. Bursting with joy, I observed the machine operate expeditiously here in Indonesia. I was excited to donate the feeder to BAWABALI and see it in action. I was anxious to see how the stray animals would react. Additionally, I thought it would be helpful to donate dog food since the majority of their rescued animals are stray dogs.

This experience has made me more confident in my ability to help this community because there were times throughout this journey where I doubted myself. Moreover, it demonstrated the value of engineering as it helps those that are in need. I desire to have more opportunities like this where I apply my knowledge to address real life problems and create meaningful solutions.