

We would like to know more about your interest in NYU. What motivated you to apply to NYU? Why have you applied or expressed interest in a particular campus, school, college, program, and or area of study? If you have applied to more than one, please also tell us why you are interested in these additional areas of study or campuses. We want to understand – Why NYU? (400 word maximum)

I always had a keen interest in numbers, probability, and finance. Early on, I could run numbers quickly: calculating sales tax, analyzing probabilities, and visualizing complex mathematical models in my head. After taking AP classes in economics and statistics, I became intrigued with the mathematical representations of economic markets and statistical models, sparking my desire to pursue a career in that field. I set my sights on becoming an actuary since risk management intrigues me and allows me to use my talents in quantitative analysis. However, few schools offer a comprehensive study in that field, which makes Stern the perfect fit for me as the curriculum combines my interests and career goals.

At Stern, I will have the privilege of studying actuarial science, while also obtaining a business degree. The ability to tailor my education with the actuarial science concentration allows me to develop skills in statistical analysis. Through the intense rigor of the concentration requirements STAT-UB 21 “Introduction to Stochastic Processes” and STAT-UB 15 “Statistical Inference and Regression Analysis,” I will be given a stepping stone into quantifying social situations while stimulating my mathematical intrigue through advanced fields like stochastic calculus. I am eager to pursue this course of study to enhance my career development.

The Bachelor of Science in Business Program excites me, as it entails a well-rounded yet intensive study in core business disciplines. However, what draws me to Stern is the emphasis on gaining a global perspective, which is crucial in today’s rapidly changing world economy. Through the International Business Exchange Program, I will be able to gain a first-hand cultural experience that will mold me into a global citizen and business leader. Not only will I be taking courses in the most prestigious business schools across the globe, but I will also have new doors opened for me to network with alumni.

Why Neuroscience?

Imagine all the stars in the universe. The brain has a thousand times the number of synapses, making neurological errors a near certainty. I learned this fact firsthand as a 14 year-old, when I suffered from sleepless nights because of an uncomfortable, indescribable feeling in my leg. It took months of appointments and tests to be told it was a condition called cortical dysplasia. Even after the diagnosis, there is no cure.

I am lucky. My condition does not severely affect my quality of life. However, I know this is not the case for everyone. After this experience, I took AP Biology and attended a neuroscience program, which reinforced the subject as my future calling. One of the most impactful lectures discussed the plight of healthcare in developing nations. Newborns with extreme neurological deficits are common, but finding treatments is not. Without prenatal care, this is becoming a growing epidemic, leaving millions of children helpless.

With a degree in neuroscience, I will gain a strong understanding of neural tube development and neuronal migration in infants. I will then become a neurologist, specializing in pediatric care. I hope to work for humanitarian organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders, in Africa, where HIV and polio are rampant, as are numerous other diseases.

Imagine the stars once more. From across the world, I will look at the same stars in the future, as I help children secure the ability to not only look at the stars, but do much more.

Diversity Essay

When I joined the Durham Youth Commission, a group of students chosen to represent youth interests within local government, I met Miles. Miles told me his cousin's body had been stuffed into the trunk of a car after he was killed by a gang. After that, my notion of normal would never be the same.

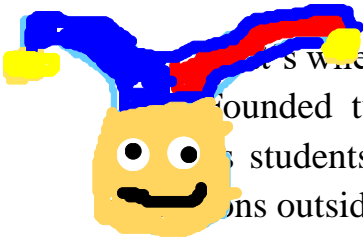
A melting pot of ideologies, skins, socio-economic classes, faiths, and educations, the DYC is a unique collaborative enterprise. Each member adds to our community's network of stories, that weave, bump, and diverge in unexpected ways. Miles talked about his cousin's broken body, Witnessa educated us about "food deserts," supervisor Evelyn Scott explained that girls get ten-day school suspensions for simply stepping on another student's sneakers, and I shared how my family's blending of Jewish tradition and Chinese culture bridges disparate worlds. As a person who was born in Tokyo, lived in London, and grew up in the South, I realize difference doesn't have to be an obstacle to understanding. My ability to listen empathetically helped us envision multifaceted solutions to issues facing 21st-century youth.

My experience in this space of affirmation and engagement has made me a more thoughtful person and listener. I want to continue this effort and be the woman who both expands perspectives and takes action after hearing people's stories. Reconciling disparate lifestyles and backgrounds in the Commission has prepared me to become a compassionate leader, eager to both expand perspectives and take collaborative action.

Activity Essay

I live in the suburb of Los Angeles, California, known to its residents as the bubble. It has the perfect weather, location, and schools. As amazing as it sounds, however, growing up in La Cañada Flintridge has its drawbacks: the community pressures adolescents to achieve success through mainly academic means. While this approach isn't necessarily wrong, it can be difficult, particularly in my high school, to thrive in a creative and imaginative way.

Sophomore year, my friends and I began to wonder, What if the teenagers of La Cañada had greater opportunities to express themselves. To pursue their creativity. To follow their dreams.



It was then when we decided to start the Catalyzing Creativity Club. Founded two years ago, the Catalyzing Creativity Club (C3, for short), provides students in our community the opportunity to pursue their passion and interests outside the classroom.

Some of our opportunities include: a yearly music festival for our community's young aspiring musicians that showcases local talent to the masses and scouts; a technology expo, which allows students to be rewarded with funding and demonstrate their coding abilities to prospective companies; recording sessions for aspiring musicians, photo-publishing competitions, and a variety of guest speakers ranging from nineteen-year-old college seniors to millionaire entrepreneurs. In addition, we have a blog for aspiring writers to publish their work and are holding a shoe drive for underprivileged athletes.

As vice president of finances for C3, I work to ensure we can fund these activities. I handle our bank account, fundraising, and organize the event planning. Moreover, I make sure that C3's activities and finances are approved by and follow the guidelines of my high school. This role is crucial, as we work to achieve non-profit status.

Even though C3 is only a few years old, I believe it is already making an impact in the community. As we grow and the opportunities we provide become more popular, our hope is to inspire our peers to follow their dreams and burst the La Cañada Flintridge bubble.

Do re fa mi, re do fa mi, re do sol fa mi re mi re. Have I completely lost it? Should I be locked up in a mental hospital chained to a chair? No. Then what are these utterances coming from my mouth? Music.

I have devoted thousands of hours of my life to playing the santur, a classical Persian instrument that originated in the Middle East. Some people think I'm strange: a Persian redheaded Jewish teenager obsessed with an ancient musical instrument. But they don't see what I see. My santur is King David's lyre: it can soothe, enrapture, mesmerize.

The santur also allows me to connect to my culture and Persian heritage, and to visit Iran of the past, a culture rich in artistic tradition. Sometimes I imagine performing for the king in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the santur sounds echoing through the Seven Hills of Jerusalem.

Today, some Americans view Iran as a land of terrorists, but when I play the innocent of Iran, the educated, the artists, the innovators, come to life. Iran is not a country of savages; it's Kubla Khan's fountain, an abundant source of knowledge and creativity.

Finally, the santur represents one of my remaining links to my grandfather. In the last few years of his life, Baba Joon did not know me as his grandson. Alzheimer's slowly took over his brain, and eventually he could not recognize me. Baba Joon grew up with the music of the santur and my father plays it in his car every day, so when I play, the music connects all three generations.

In December I'll be releasing my first album, a collection of classical Persian pieces. Proceeds from the album will go toward Alzheimer's research, as I hope to play some small part in finding a cure for the disease. My teacher is one of only a handful of santur teachers from Iran, and I sometimes wonder if the santur will soon become extinct, like the seven thousand endangered languages which may soon be gone.

Not if I have anything to say about it

Dear Christian,

The admissions staff at the University of Chicago would like to inform you that your application has been “put on the line.” We have one spot left and can’t decide if we should admit you or another equally qualified applicant. To resolve the matter, please choose one of the following:

Rock, paper, or scissors. You will be notified of our decision shortly.

Rock beats scissors, scissors beats paper, and paper beats rock. Wait... paper beats rock? Since when has a sheet of loose leaf paper ever defeated a solid block of granite? Do we assume that the paper wraps around the rock, smothering the rock into submission? When exposed to paper, is rock somehow immobilized, unable to fulfill its primary function of smashing scissors? What constitutes defeat between two inanimate objects?

Maybe it’s all a metaphor for larger ideals. Perhaps paper is rooted in the symbolism of diplomacy while rock suggests coercion. But does compromise necessarily trump brute force? And where do scissors lie in this chain of symbolism?

I guess the reasoning behind this game has a lot to do with context. If we are to rationalize the logic behind this game, we have to assume some kind of narrative, an instance in which paper might beat rock. Unfortunately, I can’t argue for a convincing one. As with rock-paper-scissors, we often cut our narratives short to make the games we play easier, ignoring the intricate assumptions that keep the game running smoothly. Like rock-paper-scissors, we tend to accept something not because it’s true, but because it’s the convenient route to getting things accomplished. We accept incomplete narratives when they serve us well, overlooking their logical gaps. Other times, we exaggerate even the smallest defects and uncertainties in narratives we don’t want to deal with. In a world where we know very little about the nature of “Truth,” it’s very easy—and tempting—to construct stories around truth claims that unfairly legitimize or delegitimize the games we play.

Or maybe I’m just making a big deal out of nothing...

Fine. I’ll stop with the semantics and play your game.

But who actually wants to play a game of rock-paper-scissors? After all, isn’t it just a game of random luck, requiring zero skill and talent? That’s no way to admit someone!

Wrong. Studies have shown that there are winning strategies to rock-paper-scissors by making critical assumptions about those we play against before the round has even started. Douglas Walker, host of the Rock-Paper-Scissors World Championships (didn’t know that existed either), conducted research indicating that males will use rock as their opening move 50% of the time, a gesture Walker believes is due to rock’s symbolic association with strength and force. In this sense, the seemingly innocuous game of rock-paper-scissors has revealed something quite discomfoting about gender-related dispositions in our society. Why did so many males think that brute strength was the best option? If social standards have subliminally influenced the way males and females play rock-paper-scissors, than [sic] what is to prevent such biases from skewing more important decisions? Should your decision to go to war or to feed the hungry depend on your gender, race, creed, etc? Perhaps the narratives I spoke of earlier, the stories I mistakenly labeled as “semantics,” carry real weight in our everyday decisions. In the case of Walker’s study, men unconsciously created an irrational narrative around an abstract rock. We all tell slightly different narratives when we independently consider notions ranging from rocks to war to existence. It is ultimately the unconscious

gaps in these narratives that are responsible for many of the man-made problems this world faces. In order for the “life of the mind” to be a worthwhile endeavor, we must challenge the unconscious narratives we attach to the larger games we play—the truths we tell (or don’t tell), the lessons we learn (or haven’t really learned), the people we meet (or haven’t truly met).

But even after all of this, we still don’t completely understand the narrative behind rock-paper-scissors. I guess it all comes down to who actually made this silly game in the first place... I’d like to think it was some snotty 3rd grader, but then again, that’s just another incomplete narrative.