To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Liya Hagos. I was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I was always one who excelled in my studies and set an example for my siblings as the oldest in my family. Information Technology always has been my interest, but there were limited opportunities reserved for the more wealthy to pursue the field in my home country. I ended up attending university in Ethiopia and then came to the United States five years ago, where my new journey began.

During my time back home, I graduated from high school and got the chance to attend Mekelle University. I was then fortunate enough to receive the opportunity to come to the United States through a program called Diversity Immigrant Visa. I shortly began taking classes since my degree from Ethiopia was not considered for most job opportunities. I was determined to capitalize on the opportunity that so few were given to come here by obtaining my degree in nursing. I reached my second year in college, and I was unfortunately unable to continue my education. Even though education was a major key to success and to helping my family, my family always has and always will come first. I left all my family back home with the hope of transforming their lives and providing them with everything they needed. Unfortunately, that was not possible for me since I was not making enough money to even get by. That was when I decided to put a hold on my education and work three jobs so I could adequately provide for myself and my family.

A couple years have passed since I came to that decision, but the desire to go back to school was always in the back of my head. This time around I wanted to pursue a field that I truly was passionate about, not something that was just about making money immediately, which was my thought process with nursing. I have always been interested in technology but didn’t know where to start. I looked into some bootcamps, but the costs were a huge barrier; I simply could not afford any of them. I decided to begin networking with those in different tech sectors and came across social media post about Year Up. I then went on to find someone who attended Year Up. he raved about the program and the pathways it opened up for him to pursue his dreams. It was then I chose to more thoroughly to look into the program and apply.

Since childhood, I wanted to study something related to IT but as a person who grew up in a third world country studying information sounded like luxury. After moving to the US I tried teaching myself the basics of computers and enrolled in free classes like SQL and SharePoint, which I am hoping will help me succeed in the program. Even though it took me a while to realize that this could be a path I can take and become successful, I am glad I finally found a program that will help me achieve my goal. As I learned Year Up can help create a chance for people with limited opportunities to navigate the IT and professional world.

In conclusion, my time in the United States has definitely presented many hurdles I’ve had to jump through, but I still continue to be an optimistic person who believes I can accomplish anything I put my mind to and effort into. I believe that Year Up is the best program to help me achieve all of my future goals and change the trajectory for my family and people. I would be honored to be chosen as a participant. Thank you for your time and consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Liya Hagos