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Graduate Admission Committee  
Halıcıoğlu Data Science Institute

Many software developers coin the term “Perpetual Beta” to a software product that’s improved upon but never published as an official release. In the philosophy of Stoicism, there is an endless cycle of improvement and the embracing of discomfort because it articulates that hardship makes us stronger. These two views of different fields of knowledge have been the main drivers of my work ethic, given the fact that they embrace whatever the game of life decides against us or in favor of us. As long as I remember, my drive for learning as a whole began with reading a collection of children’s themed encyclopedias with the characters of Peanuts, and from there, a search for further knowledge by pursuing a college degree.

During my undergraduate lectures, I initially found them underwhelming. However, the COVID-19 pandemic offered a unique opportunity for reflection within the context of history. This period spurred a personal transformation, fueling a stronger drive for self-improvement. Amid the turbulence, I embraced physical fitness and enhanced my analytical skills by studying academic papers. Overall, I evolved into a proud and ambitious individual, eager for continuous growth. On the seventh semester of my undergrad, we got the opportunity to write proper academic research papers and that activity made me consider the realms of research as an entire professional career when it felt that I was experiencing analysis paralysis about my future outside of undergrad.

Fast forward to Summer 2023, I got the opportunity to be one of the many promising students of the prestigious ENLACE 2023 Summer Research Program and the glimpse that it gave me about the realms of academic research solidified my resolute of pursuing higher education to fulfill my dreams and goals of moving knowledge forward, making me feel like a child with every new interaction that we had with our mentors and colleagues about their respective domains of knowledge. The project that was developed relates drastically to the labour that is done in Data Science; we were tasked to develop a DNN with Pytorch and get the performance plots and statistics to determine if the model could compete against a GNN that was developed for particle tracking at the Large Hadron Collider, and we found that the simplicity of a DNN could be as

accurate as the GNN, which was surprising to say the least. I never thought that a single project done in one summer could affect my worldview so drastically that it convinced me to pursue a graduate degree in Data Science. Given this, it'll be an honour to become a student of the Halicioğlu Data Science Institute and it's graduate program on Data Science.

For many, the world-renowned rigor of American Academia can be daunting, but for me it is necessary to mold better individuals capable of methodical research and reasoning in every other aspects of life, that is why I believe that pursuing the PhD in Data Science would assist my career. With this, I am truly committed to this academic journey, the University of California San Diego and the Halicioğlu Data Science Institute, and the community itself.

Although I've yet to have the pleasure and honor to meet the faculty members, the research focus of