

## **Soumil Goyal Lamar Hope Scholarship Application**

- **Colleges/Universities I have applied to:**

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Rice University
- Stanford University
- California Institute of Technology (CalTech)
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI University)
- University of Texas at Austin (UT)
- Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech)
- Purdue University

- **Extracurricular and community activities:**

- Clubs/Teams:

- Discobots FRC, Vex, Combat Robotics, and Outreach Teams:

- Grades 10-12
- Description: Manage 80+ members & 10 teams to create industrial-level, internationally accomplished robots; made team history in most awards each season. Won Vex Worlds 1 of 1 Inspiration-All-Star Award, Vex State Amaze Award, Vex State 3rd Rank, 2x General Motors Industrial Design Award, FIRST District Engineering Inspiration Award, and 17 other trophies.

- Robust Adaptive Network (RAN) Disaster Response System  
Project Development

- Grades 11-12
- Description: Invent & lead a novel solution to disaster response with support of the Mayor of Houston, Taco Bell Foundation, DiscoBots, ION Houston, and more. Won the Ambition Accelerator Top Voted Idea; "Inspirational" - Mark King (Taco Bell CEO).

- Houston Center for Taekwondo
  - Grades 9-12
  - Description: Learn & compete under the World Taekwondo Federation for sparring, forms, and weapons. Help guide ~10 state-level competing students. Won Gold Medal in Worldwide Taekanagwon Open Poomsae Championships.
- Lamar Competition Speech & Debate Team
  - Grades 10-12
  - Description: Competed nationally; guided 50+ students in NSDA, TXFA, UIL and HUDL tournaments; managed through administration to handle organizational tasks. 2 out of 2 time NSDA Nationals Qualifier, 2nd place speaker in Texas District.
- Pedal Power Community Project Development
  - Grades 10-12
  - Description: Houston Resilience Design Challenge Prize Winner. Pedal Power is a Solo community welfare project of off-grid, resilient, and climate aware power generation solutions. Won \$750 from NWF and installed the project.
- Screen Salvagers
  - Grades 11-12
  - Description: 480+ pounds of polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) and polycarbonate collected from waste to reuse in educational engineering projects.
- Lamar Theatre Company & International Thespians Honors Society
  - Grades 9-10
  - Description: Acted in various lead, sub-lead, and technical roles for play productions; coordinated productions, rehearsals, and competitions amongst ~50 members. Achieved highest rating at largest thespian competition in Texas.

- Lamar Competition Mathematics Team
  - Grade 12
  - Description: Compete at a regional and state level in 3 events; manage and mentor 15+ students in competition, SAT, UIL, and higher-level mathematics. Won 6th place in UIL Advanced Math, 7th place in UIL Calculator Applications, and 7th place in UIL Number Sense.
- Boy Scouts of America
  - Grade 9-10
  - Description: Achieved Star ranking in USA's largest troop. Also volunteered to guide younger scouts in new skills & activities; organized camps and lessons for my patrol.
- Lamar JROTC
  - Grade 9
  - Description: Ranked till S1 in the Battalion and achieved the Superior Junior Cadet Decoration Award.
- Community Projects & Activities:
  - Autodesk University Industry Talk Host:
    - Spoke to international leaders, executives, professionals, and businesses on “How to Advance the Future of Engineering Education”.
  - Teen Leadership Summit:
    - Nominated and attended the West Houston Teen Leadership Summit targeting community issues in the local community and government.
  - AYM/DAVSS:
    - My Sunday school for learning about Hindu culture and volunteering in various community activities & Indian festivals.
  - RAN: (see above)
  - Veterans Pin:

- CAD-designed, and 3D printed a wearable pin for US veterans at Veterans Day 2023.
- Screen Salvagers: (see above)
- Discobots Outreach:
  - Visit middle schools, conduct community service, and run tournaments on behalf of the robotics team. I also recruit schools without any robotics programs to join our team to give students access to robotics competitions.
- Pedal Power (see above)
- Scouts/Den Chief (see above)
- Lanier Robotics:
  - Head coach for Lanier Middle School's robotics teams.
- Taekwondo (see above)
- Lamar IB Ambassador:
  - Represent Lamar's most rigorous academic program and mentor younger IB Diploma Candidates.
- Lamar Neighborhood Ambassador:
  - Represent my Lamar neighborhood and problem-solve community issues through the school.
- Schoolhouse.world:
  - Tutor international students on SAT, Physics, Math, and more online.
- Ion prototyping Lab:
  - Internship where I maintain a community makerspace including restoring an industrial CNC machine.
- Lamar Computer Science National Honors Society:
  - Support growing computer science literacy through various community events and projects.
- Lamar National Honour Society:

- Volunteer through regular community service activities both in and out of the school; NHS scholarship finalist (further results pending).

- **Office/Leadership positions:**

- Vex Robotics Competition Team 2587V, 2587S, and 2587K: Captain
- FIRST Robotics Competition Team: Captain
- Lamar Honors Debate Competition Team: Captain
- Discobots Combat Robotics Competition Team: Captain
- Lamar Texans Theatre Company: Officer
- Computer Science Honour Society: Officer
- Robust Adaptive Network Project: Founder, President
- Pedal Power Project: Founder, President
- HC Taekwondo Competition Team: First Degree Black Belt
- Discobots Community Outreach Programs: Captain
- Boy Scouts: Star Scout Rank, Den Chief
- Screen-Salvagers: Founder
- IB Diploma Ambassador
- Arya Yuva Mandal: Prefect
- Lamar Cybersecurity Club: Officer.
- Lamar Chess Club: Officer.
- Lanier Competition Robotics Team: Coach

- **Jobs:**

- My US Visa status does not allow for me to have any real job or employment, but I have still committed to career-readiness with many internships.
- Ion Prototyping Lab (Internship)
  - June 2023 - Present
  - Description: The ION Prototyping Lab is a local makerspace. I restored their professional CNC machine for community use, maintain their industrial manufacturing & engineering equipment, and assist in their showcase/demo projects.

- Dwayne Publishings (Internship)
  - October 2023 - Present
  - Dwayne Publishings is a local authoring business. I recovered their 8+ year old website from SQL injection spam attacks and re-made their entire e-commerce platform (with better security) to restore their online bookstore.
- Steps For Dancing (Internship)
  - July 2020 - Present
  - SFD is my mother's dance school business. I designed and programmed stepsfordancing.com to create and maintain their online presence. I also handle some marketing activities. These actions have attracted ~20 new customers.
- Champion Cubers (Self-started business)
  - July 2019 - Present
  - Champion Cubers is a small business I started which teaches children to speedcube (solve Rubik's Cubes as quickly as possible). I have had 11 clients through weekly online and in-person classes and one summer camp.

- **Essay:**

Born in India, raised in Singapore, and now studying in the US, my high school journey posed numerous challenges, particularly in adapting to the American education system. Contrasting with the norms in India and Singapore, I encountered language barriers, cultural disparities, and the complexities of grading systems and college admissions.

One significant challenge was the discrepancy between my academic performance and GPA. Despite all my grades being 98+, my GPA lagged behind my peers due to unfamiliarity with American grading intricacies. While others exempted PE classes and strategically selected electives to boost GPA, I had no idea about these crucial strategies. I wasn't able to explore opportunities like pass/fail options for certain courses and curating a high-ranking schedule. In my home cultures, such systems did not exist.

Furthermore, navigating the college admissions was another journey through the unknown. Coming from a foreign background, I lacked the insight and resources that many of my peers had access to, including test preparation, college advisors, and participation in resume-filling competitions. As a result, I was heavily disadvantaged when competing for admission to prestigious colleges and universities.

Despite these hurdles, my high school education has been invaluable. Rigorous coursework, extracurricular activities, and personal growth have equipped me with a deep understanding of diverse subjects and valuable skills. Participation in varied extracurriculars has nurtured a unique interdisciplinary perspective, fostering creativity and innovation in problem-solving.

Looking forward, I aim to pursue higher education, leveraging interests in engineering, computer science, and public-speaking to address community challenges. While the road ahead may present its own set of unknowns, my experience of 'fighting in the fog' from my high school experience makes me confident that the resilience and adaptability I have developed throughout my high school journey will serve me well in overcoming any obstacles that may arise.