

Rice University writing supplement

Rice University Writing

Please explain why you wish to study in the academic areas you selected above.

There wasn't any one defining moment on my journey from young LEGO-player to Autodesk Engineering Conference Guest Speaker. Rather, it was a long series of broken parts, programming glitches, and tiny victories that showed me the enchanting potential of engineering and computer science.

However, today my sights are on goals that extend beyond conquering robotics tournaments and winning trophies. Instead, I aspire to pioneer robots, tools, software, and concepts that have the power to improve the world. To realise this vision, I understand that I must propel myself forward, refining my skills, expanding my knowledge, and amassing invaluable experience. In this endeavor, Rice's ethos of impact-oriented research and innovation calls me. Rice stands as a unique institution that channels resources through real-world companies, organizations, and missions, all of which wield the potential to generate tangible, lasting impacts. This approach represents my aspirations of combining technical knowledge in global issues.

Based upon your exploration of Rice University, what elements of the Rice experience appeal to you?

My Pedal Power community project— a stationary bicycle that charges one's electronic devices through their own pedalling —required the fusion of scientific concepts, engineering skill, artistic design, computer modelling, persuasive communication, and relationship building that brought the project to fruition. This project, famous in my school for encouraging exercise, demonstrating off-grid power solutions, and raising awareness of electricity wastage, epitomises my belief in tackling substantial challenges through a synthesis of interdisciplinary skills.

When doing my college research, Rice stood out to me because of its motto: "*Letters, Science, Art*". To me, this motto represents an environment that tackles challenges through cross-disciplinary collaborations, open curriculums, and personalized learning. This line struck a chord with me because interdisciplinary learning is my forte. Just like with my pedal power project, whether in the robotics team, theatre, taekwondo, or more, many of my proudest accomplishments stem from leveraging diverse blends of abilities.

Essay Selection

Rice is strengthened by its diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders and change agents across the spectrum of human endeavor. What perspectives shaped by your background, experiences, upbringing, and/or racial identity inspire you to join our community of change agents at Rice?

Please write an essay on the topic selected.

Being born in India (the country of my heritage), lived in Singapore (the foundation of my childhood), and now residing in Houston (the stepping-stone of my future), has exposed me to various perspectives and unique standpoints, but one of my most transformative experiences has been in through my Taekwondo journey.

A few months after I joined my Taekwondo school, I was struggling with balance and technique in a basic sequence of moves. While the senior instructors merely advised repetition, it was then Master Blazek who recognized my struggle and approached me with invaluable insights.

Noticing I was turning my waist too much during my kicks, he created a creative yet effective routine. He asked me to kick a foam helmet he tossed into the air. By throwing it to intentionally exploit my tendency to over-rotate, this exercise helped rewire my muscle-memory and significantly improve my balance. Taking this advice to heart, I went on to win a Gold Medal in the International Open Taekwondo Poomsae Championships, a testament to the profound impact of Master Blazek's teachings.

Two years later, as I earned my first black belt, he offered me a unique opportunity to become a junior-instructor. I eagerly accepted, excited to pass on the technical knowledge and experiences I had gained under his guidance.

In one of my early teaching sessions, I observed a student, Yash, struggling with his taekwondo forms. He executed the sequence of moves with a lack of strength which was sure to reduce his competition scores where "expression of power" is awarded points. I saw my initial state of unaware inaccuracies in Yash's attempts. At this same moment, I saw an old foam helmet in the corner, inspiring a creative teaching exercise.

Holding the helmet in a loose grip, I encouraged Yash to punch it out of my hands. He started with lazy taps, but the novelty of knocking the helmet away and watching me retrieve it unlocked a new excitement in him. Gradually, he started to launch the helmet across the room. This exercise helped Yash build the confidence and energy necessary to infuse a newfound vigor into his forms. Asking him to re-do the sequence but with the addition of this power, the immediate results were undeniable, each move now showcasing a burst of force and energy.

Satisfied with his improvement, I emphasized the importance of practicing with power, not just as

preparation for potential self-defense, but also as a means to develop strength and agility.

Learning from Master Blazek and mentoring peers like Yash has been a transformative experience. These opportunities of mentorship have been instrumental in my personal growth. Master Blazek's technical expertise, wisdom, and genuine care have shaped my journey to become a "Master Goyal" not just in the dojang, but in global communities that solve pressing issues. My perspective as an effective mentor and a passionate leader beckon me to carry forward a legacy of expertise, wisdom, and selflessness, empowering my peers and I to tackle extraordinary challenges together.

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**Honor System
acknowledgement** SOUMIL GOYAL

