Everyone belongs to many different communities and/or groups defined by (among other things) shared geography, religion, ethnicity, income, cuisine, interest, race, ideology, or intellectual heritage. Choose one of the communities to which you belong, and describe that community and your place within it. (300 words)

I became interested in basketball since the sixth grade. Not long after, I joined a basketball club called “Sahabat” – Indonesian for “Friends” – which comprised of peers from different schools and daily doses of drills and scrimmages. From a loner to a team player, from shy to sociable, from timid to confident: I owed all this to my “Friends.”

Initially, I was a self-conscious kid playing solely for self-improvement, a very tunnel-visioned mentality. After a few games, “Sahabat” kept suffering losses. I asked coach, “Why do we keep losing?” His answer was simple: improving one’s skill is important, but growing as a team is even more so. Thus, I put more effort into interacting with my teammates: getting to know them through chit-chats, making jokes together, sharing our day-to-day lives, and, eventually, having team dinners. As our chemistry improved, we molded into one cohesive unit. Next thing we knew, “Sahabat’s” wins gradually improved, we won the city championship and lost only 2 games the next season.

I owe my personal growth to “Sahabat.” It changed me from a reclusive to a sociable person and allowed me to develop empathy towards people different from me. The current me has made an impact on my team as the motivator inciting friendly competition: skills plus bonds equal teamwork plus wins. I’m confident I can contribute to the University of Michigan and make an impact as I‘m driven to build awareness of diverse cultural backgrounds and encourage people to step outside of their comfort zone and embrace them.

Hi Octavio,

There are 2 parts to this prompt: details about the community, and how you contributed.

You talked about the community, the effort you put to bond more with your teammates, and how that impacted the team. In my opinion, it would be better to elaborate these further. Please refer to the comments section.

I also feel that you’re describing how the community has changed you as well. If this were to be included, it should only be briefly mentioned, but should not be the focus of the essay.

The main ideas should still be about the community and how you contributed/played a role – to show your character and how you could later contribute to the University of Michigan.