***UC essay prompt 1***

*Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time. (350 words)*

“Mathematics is my life just like mango is my favorite fruit”

I had hoped to join a Math club at school, but there weren't any. So, five of my Math-enthusiast friends and I started our school’s first academic club - the Mathlete club - hoping to build a community that changes people’s lives by sharing Math-related topics, experimenting with them, and improving their math. Attracting new members, however, was a challenge. Students would run off after hearing “math,” thinking it was demanding, stressful, and lame.

I noticed many students in school were struggling with Math. I saw this as an opportunity to help them and expand the club. I arranged my specially-made weekly MANGO (MAth-biNGO) at the school's cafeteria to gain their attention. Here, everyone can play and the first five winners would earn free tutoring sessions. I believe in making math fun and less intimidating by creating a safe space for students to open up about their math struggles that could affect their wellbeing: I would arrange biweekly potluck events to relieve their stress and bond with them. I also made sure the club has props ready for math demonstrations.

When word spread of our free foods, surprise math-quizzes for delicious mango snacks, and fun math demonstration, more people began to get attracted as they wanted to try out the club. Fun equals happiness, which then equals motivation to learn math. As a result, our members’ math grades improved, which attracted more members. The cycle continues.

Now, four years later, the Mathlete club has 81 members. We have helped them have fun with math and improve their grades in the process. My time as the co-founder of the club has not only confirmed my thesis of “fun math plus listening ears equal motivation and progress,” but also made me happy to be able to make a difference in my peers' lives (both academically and in real life) with math. Thus, Mathlete club has strengthened my conviction to continue using math, leadership, and communications to change people’s lives. Just like how I would continue to eat mango forever.