If you could only do one of the activities you have listed in the Activities section of your Common Application, which one would you keep doing? Why? (Required for all applicants.) (150)

I would continue to dance. It allows me to create and has proven to me the power of dedication and commitment. It is my passion, my art. When my steps are timed perfectly with the music, I feel peaceful harmony. Hours of training and learning from my fellow dancers only fuels my passion, as I become more self-assured with my steps. Participating in competitions, regardless of whether I win or lose, only makes me stronger, because the next time I aspire to do even better.

I dance to reach my happy place. I dance to prove to myself that I’m capable of doing so. I dance to inspire. I dance to be a part of something greater than myself, to be a part of a team, a family. I dance to depict a story, to express myself. I dance for the thrill. I am proud to call myself a dancer.

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)

One community I belong to is my high school robotics team, a melting pot of different backgrounds, ages, cultures, and ideas. Essentially, it’s a welcoming safe-haven where anyone can fit in, a character revealing and development program filled with unimaginable comradery. The team is very competitive, but it's the leadership and cooperation skills that are learned through the robot development stages that makes team members stand out during tournaments.

Being the first female captain of the robotics team, I also work on club promotion, whether it be through advertising or rewarding the team for their amazing efforts during the FEC competitions. I work on both the hardware and software development teams. I am also responsible for mentoring the freshman, planning parts to order, and organizing groups and competition details.

I keep morale high during competitions, but I’m also the enforcing project manager when need be. As captain, I take pride in being an encouraging and charismatic leader and teacher. It is my highest priority to make the Chelmsford High Robotics Team a safe, expressive milieu of all its members. Doing so creates a truly brilliant atmosphere filled with creative, innovative, and intelligent ideas. With such a support system in place, we can learn and grow from our diverse perspectives.

My robotics team has shown me the power of hard work and communication. My community extends beyond myself, to what is yet to come. For this reason, I hope to expand my community to the BBA Tech Club and the Indian Subcontinent Business Association (ISBA) next year at U Michigan. I aspire to be a positive addition to the Michigan community.

Describe the unique qualities that attract you to the specific undergraduate College or School (including preferred admission and dual degree programs) to which you are applying at the University of Michigan. How would that curriculum support your interests? (550)

Every couple of years my family embarks on the 8,122-mile voyage to Bangalore, India to visit our family. Those memories are stained, however, with moments of stepping around the litter piled high on streets and the smell of garbage following you as you walk. The increase in undisposed trash is directly related to the depletion of clean water and air and a subsequent incline in disease as well.

For this reason, I aspire to build trash collecting robots that can collect and transport trash to newly constructed landfills or recycling centers, while also being able to withstand the rugged terrain of India’s streets and its infamous tsunami-type rainstorms.

While this may seem like an overzealous and daunting task, U Michigan has exactly what I need to pursue my aspirations. Undergraduate research opportunities are widely available in the topics I am interested in: computer science and robotics. The opportunity to apply classroom instruction to real-life engineering problems to create something that I am passionate about is not something every school has. My first step would be to consult faculties such as Associate Professor Deanna Gates and Associate Professor Jason Corso both whose research on human-robot interaction, machine learning, and robot cognition can kickstart this project.

For me, teams projects are the most exciting aspect of U Michigan. Most of the life-changing projects we hear about today in technology are rarely created by one person alone. I’ll be surrounded by people pushing me to set the bar higher for myself, allowing me to grow and learn from my fellow peers instead of competing against them. For this reason, my next step would be to create a team of diverse individual and creative thinkers who will challenge my take on a solution, showing me simpler, more innovative solutions to a problem. Each of us come from different backgrounds, and working together will exemplify the power of communication and the tenacity required for success.

Our team will then sketch a rudimentary design for our robot. Now comes the cycle of building and testing prototypes, each iteration building upon the last until our team has ultimately created a fully functioning robot capable of completing the desired task. This is where funding comes into play. By working through opportunities such as the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, Vertically Integrated Project Research Teams, or the Blue Sky Initiative, we will get a hands-on opportunity to travel to India and build/implement a fully functioning trash-collecting robot.

These robots will revolutionize the future, solving problems of disease and famine. The development of such technology will empower others to join the cause, whether it be through funding or manpower, creating a more sanitary and safe milieu.

Society is reliant on technology and being a part of this ever-growing industry will pave the way for what is yet to come. I want to prove that women can make a change and encourage other girls to take a stand as well. I’m not just another statistic of women in STEM, I’m strong and resourceful, hardworking and motivated. The next time I walk on India’s sidewalks, I’ll no longer see people coughing from the polluted air, but instead taking in deep, clean breaths. I’m an intelligent leader who’ll reinvent society one wrapper at a time.