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Why Me?

I feel as if I have already experienced so much within what feels like a short amount of time. The last 10 years of my life have been nothing but a journey full of hardships, hard work, and determination to better myself in every way possible in both my personal life and academically. In this essay, I wanted to take some time to discuss why I believe I should be selected as one of the Global Shop Solution Awards recipients by discussing some topics about myself such as my employment history, why I chose my MIS degree at SHSU and what I plan to do with my degree after graduating.

If I were to ask myself 10 years ago where I'd see myself in 10 years, I would not have imagined that I would be working within the IT industry. In fact, I am currently employed as a managed services engineer at a cloud consulting company named 3Cloud. Fortunately, 3Cloud is not my first role, which I have since had 3 previous IT roles within the last 5+ years at alternate cloud consulting companies as well. Prior to getting into the IT industry, I was an infantryman within the US Army where I served 4 years while stationed at Joint-Base Fort Lewis McChord, and prior to the military, I was a certified pharmacy technician with experience working at both a retail and hospital pharmacies.

Working within a pharmacy was both challenging and exciting as it ended up being a great overall experience and a strong introduction to a more professional workplace environment. I worked within a pharmacy setting for roughly 2 and a half years before deciding that maybe being a pharmacy technician wasn't necessarily what I wanted to do in terms of a

professional career. As a pharmacy technician, I knew that the next step for me was to go to school to work towards becoming a pharmacist, but unfortunately, I was not really able to afford school during that time. With that, I had made one of the most challenging decisions that I probably have ever made, and that was the decision to serve my country as a infantryman within the US army.

During those 4 years of service, I had learned more about myself than I think I may have ever learned without serving. Within this time, I learned a lot about self-discipline, self-motivation, the determination to always better myself and to never give up on personal goals and aspirations. Because of this, I decided to continue pursuing my education while I was still enlisted within the military, which eventually led me to earn my associates degree from Central Texas College during my last year in service. From that moment, I knew that my education journey was only getting started and I felt extremely motivated to continue that journey when I left service. Within my last year of service, I decided that I wanted to take my career in a different direction towards a much different path, which was the path of working within the IT industry.

In partnership with Microsoft, the military had a program called the MSSA, that would allow for me to get IT certified through Microsoft, which would help up and coming veterans like myself, gain the ability to become employed within the IT industry. For the last 6 months of my military career, I was accepted into the MSSA and would eventually graduate from there at the end of the program's 6-month timeframe.

Because of the MSSA program, I was able to get hired at a cloud company named 10th Magnitude where I was able to get my first role in IT as an entry-level cloud migration engineer. From there, I was continuously learning all sorts of new industry tools and techniques that

allowed me to be successful within my role, which eventually led to me obtaining a senior engineer title at the end of my tenure there. During that time, I was able to get my AZ-900 AZ-104 Microsoft cloud certification, which then eventually allowed me to obtain my role at Ahead. At Ahead, I was able to utilize both my certification and previous hands-on experience and apply them to a much larger role which was becoming a managed services cloud engineer. This new role propelled my growth due to the many different learning opportunities that were available to me, such as being able to work with whole customer environments as well as transitioning to a technical consultant type of role for many large customers.

Overall, I had realized a few years back that being in the IT industry was what I wanted to do as a career, as there were tremendous opportunity for career growth in almost any direction within it. I knew that I loved being a cloud engineer within these roles, but I also knew that I wanted to be someone that was able to take on a much larger role on a managerial level later within my career. Because of this, I decided that an MIS degree was the right fit for what I wanted for what I wanted to do. With an MIS degree, I can continue to grow my technical skill set and knowledge while also having an educational background in management, which ultimately felt balanced to what I wanted to be able to do later down the road in my career.

After graduating this upcoming May, I plan to fully utilize my degree to work towards getting into a managerial role within 3Cloud within the next year or so. Since graduation is already around the corner for me, I have already taken steps with my current leadership to take on additional opportunities within the organization to prepare myself to take on these kind of roles. Furthermore, this also allows me to be able to apply to some of my dream job opportunities with companies such as Google and Microsoft, since many of these roles have a degree requirement and have a better chance at hiring consideration.

Over the last 10 years, I have had incredible experiences that have taken my life and career in an amazing direction. Because of these experiences, I have instilled within myself to have a strong work ethic, to stay disciplined and focused, and to be grateful for the many opportunities that I have had thus far. Due to my strong employment history, my reasons for choosing this degree and my future intentions in leveraging my degree, I believe that I should be a selected recipient and would be absolutely honored to be selected to receive the Global Shop Solution Award if chosen.