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To whom it may concern,

I am writing this to express interest in this internship opportunity.

What I love about design is its intentionality — a lot of it is about solving problems in a more strategic way than people might usually think. That's how I like to think about the difference between art and design when people tell me that they're not artistic enough to be a designer. Art is meant to be interpreted in many different ways by many different people, while a design is really meant to elicit an intended interpretation or reaction. For example, an art piece might make you ask questions, while a piece of design might provide the answers. Good design is deliberate and data driven.

Uniquely, I have experience in design, computer science, and logistical management. Outside of academics, I worked at CITRIS Foundry as a part time Social Media/Brand Strategist and Visual Designer, an on campus startup incubator for hardware. During my time there, I collaborated with another visual designer. While she was incredibly enjoyable to work with, our ideas did not always align. Through this experience, I learned a lot about articulating why I thought we should go with one design instead of another and being able to backup my opinion with concrete reasoning other than aesthetic purposes.

Additionally, I am also an Executive Director for Cal Hacks, the largest collegiate hackathon in the world. As an organizer for such a large event, that takes pretty much all school year to plan, I have essentially learned to push and sell a product. It has also taught me to manage a very large scale project, with over 3,000 attendees and $250,000 in funding. I'm able to execute a bigger picture concept, while also paying attention to fine details.

Furthermore, I spent last summer as a UI/UX Design Intern at Halfy Hour, a startup based in Berkeley. Working at such a young company, quick design sprints and lots of iterative design were crucial to our growth and success. As sole UX designer, I hosted meetings over video call to remote developers in Russia. I found it challenging to articulate the importance of my designs for them. Being contracted foreign developers, they weren't as invested in our product as I was. Even with finalized designs, I led several development iterations until our product met our designs and expectations.

I'm a strategic designer and developer who believes that every design decision should be deliberate and data driven. With my technical programming experience, I have an understanding of the technology stack and a good sense of constraints and opportunities. It also teaches me to pay attention to edge cases; making sure all my interactions function properly for all use cases saves a lot of time and frustration in the development stage. My experience in logistics management allows me tackle projects at vastly different scales. My unique profile helps me understand the production process from several angles.

Best,

Cathleen