**Charlie Nitschelm: Short answers and Essay questions**

**What do you think makes you unique?**

I believe I am unique because I consistently am working towards my long-term goal of becoming an essential part of humanity's work toward the exploration of and eventual colonization of Mars. I intend to work for Elon Musk at SpaceX as an engineer, and I am working hard to do what I need to do, even in this early stage of my career, to achieve that goal. Many people are either unable or unwilling to recognize that they cannot reach lofty goals without first achieving smaller ones. I am unique in that I see life as a series of small steps all leading to the same place-- Mars.

**How do you think your friends would describe you?**

My friends humorously describe me as a "Queen Ant." Although most men would take that as an insult, I love this characterization. A queen ant oversees a highly efficient team made up of specialized workers who use their individual abilities for the good of the whole colony. When I work in a group setting, I always look for the strengths of each individual in the group and figure out how that person can help the group project.

My friends have also stated that I am "an extremely passionate worker." During my senior year of high school, FIRST Robotics came to the school. As a rookie team, we were disorganized and confused. When the season began and the rule book was released, I read the entire handbook the first day. When we gathered the next day, I led the team in going over all of the rules and making sure everyone understood. Also during that first meeting, I formed committees with group leaders to work on different elements of the robotics mission. My friend Matthew, the other senior on the team, noticed how my organization of the team showed leadership skill and a knack for efficiency. That is when my team started calling me "Queen Ant."

**Write briefly about a time you had a disagreement with a peer and how you worked through it.**

During the summer of 2015, I worked as a counselor at the camp I had attended for the previous ten summers. Near the end of the summer, the counselors have a night off where they are encouraged to compete in a scavenger hunt. I created a crew committed to winning first place. One of the objectives sent us on a car trip to Boston. On our way back, we needed to complete one more task to win the Scavenger Hunt. As we pulled into Walmart to complete the last task, my friend told us that he needed to get back to the camp immediately. He explained how he had forgotten that he had been late coming back to camp on his last day off and that he would be penalized if he didn't get back to camp one hour early this time. At first my friends and I were angry. After all, we had spent the past nine hours trying to win this competition, and now Eliot was preventing us from completing our final task. However, it soon became clear that Eliot was very upset by the situation - perhaps far more upset than we would be by losing the competition. In the end, we decided not to complete the competition and go back to the camp early so that Eliot would not be penalized. I believe we made the right decision, because sometimes helping another person is the right thing to do, despite the consequences.

**What qualities or skills would you have to offer your host institution and community?**

During my middle and high school years, my mother and I faithfully watched repeats of the NBC Situation Comedy "Seinfeld" each day at 5 pm. And as we lived our lives, we inevitably found ourselves exclaiming - "It's just like that time in 'Seinfeld' when..." In one episode, the character of Jerry Seinfeld's mother says to Jerry, "How can anybody not like you?" After that, my Mom would often say to me: "How can anybody not like you?" Of course, this was all in good fun, but we both know what she meant. In "Seinfeld," the main character, Jerry Seinfeld, is rather unassuming and generally inoffensive. People tend to like him. And this has been true in my life as well. I am easy-going, not overly opinionated, accepting of people's differences and mindful of their talents and proclivities. I feel that my amiable nature and my ability to get along and work with everybody will make me an asset to the host community and institution. After all, viewers wanted to have Jerry around in their living rooms for nine years. Why not me?

**Describe a situation in which you have had a significant responsibility and what you learnt from it.**

No one was there for Danny, a friend of mine from high school, after he graduated. His family has little money and provides no guidance, as his mother is a disabled hoarder too distracted to pay attention to Danny's problems, and his older brothers are criminals. In high school, Danny thrived because the school community embraced him and Danny embraced that same community back. With a ready smile and a quick wit, Danny learned to ingratiate himself with others by always being kind, respectful and helpful. In turn, he was admitted into the "club" of more privileged children. I never thought of it that way at the time - but I've since learned this to be true. When Danny graduated and went off to a distant college paid for by aid and money he made from working, I learned that the high school, our friends, and our community had been Danny's family, and that without our continued support, he was slowly falling apart. He started using drugs, drinking each night, and, sadly, crying into his pillow as he fell asleep. I didn't know this at first, but I found out when he came home over Christmas break. Danny confessed to me that he was "always sad" and planning to drop out of college. He had no plan. He had little hope. Taken aback by this transformation of my normally jocular buddy, I decided I needed to take responsibility for helping my friend. The first thing I did was reach out to other friends and one of our teachers from high school who had shown particular interest in Danny. I arranged for that teacher to contact Danny and spend some time with him. I also gathered together our close friends, and we each told Danny how much we had admired him in high school and how we will stand by him when he needs us. I contacted the local university, where I attend school, and found out how Danny could transfer, should he choose to do so. I brought Danny into my university to see if he could apply to be a Residential Assistant in one of the dormitories in order to receive free room and board. Most of all, I reassured him that he could reach out to me anytime and that I would do all I can to help him. Only time will tell how Danny will whether this crisis in his life. He decided to return to his university after break to finish the academic year with the intention of transferring to the local university that I attend next September. Maybe he will. Maybe he won't. Regardless, I will keep in touch with him throughout the semester and do what I can to help him. I feel good that I acted as best I could to help my friend. I have been relatively fortunate in life. Some others, like Danny, have it harder. By learning of Danny's struggles, which had been rather hidden from me during high school, I recognized that life is not always easy. There are always people who struggle and who have less than I do, whether it's monetarily, emotionally, or otherwise. When opportunities arise again for me to take responsibility for something important, like the struggles of another human being, I will take this role again.

**Why are you interested to study in the United Kingdom and the institute you have chosen? We would also like to learn how you feel this would be a transformative experience for you and what you hope to gain from the experience:**

I attended public school in the small New Hampshire city where I was raised until last year when I graduated and continued on to my state public university, located twenty minutes from that same small city. While my experiences in my community here in New Hampshire have been positive, I am aware that they are rather insular. If I am accepted into the Scotland Fulbright Program, it will be my first exposure to life and learning in a foreign country. I believe that this exposure will be transformative, as it is my belief that new experiences, especially the opportunity to interact with people different from oneself, leads to personal growth.

If I am admitted into this program, the experience of living and learning in a new country, with students from all different parts of the United States, with whom I will have the opportunity to collaborate and innovate, will give me a far broader vision and perspective than I have had thus far in my life. New Hampshire is a highly homogeneous state, and most of my classmates are native born, so I do not have much opportunity to interact with people from foreign countries or even other American experiences. My greatest exposure to those from other cultures was when I attended summer camp and many of the counselors came to work there from foreign countries.

I understand from reading about your program that the Scotland Summer Program will afford me the opportunity to explore and study the themes of Technology, Innovation and Creativity both at the University of Strathclyde and the Glasgow School of Art. This collaboration between two universities attracts me. I have had opportunities to participate in effective collaboration, and I have become a true cheerleader for a collaborative approach to problem solving and innovation. I believe a collaborative model for creative and innovative work, both in technology and otherwise, to be the best option in many instances.

While working in my robotics clubs, our approach has always been a "team approach" and we have collaborated and learned from other clubs and community groups. While working in theater, I have seen how the combined creativity of all the members of the cast, from the director to the stage hands, all contribute vitally to the ultimate creative product. Of course, I am also aware that sometimes collaboration and teamwork can be difficult, as people may not know how best to work together. Egos and communication problems, as well as lack of direction or leadership, can stall the creative process, rather than encourage it. I experienced this when my classmates and I formed an a Capella singing group at our high school. Since we did not have an effective method for handling our creative process and decision making, we did not succeed as we had hoped. That is why I believe that institutes such as yours, that give students the opportunity to learn the skills needed to work together effectively, in a way that encourages creativity rather than institutionalized thinking, are sorely needed if the United States is going to continue to be an innovative leader in the world, especially in the technological fields.

If I am admitted to this program, when I return to my mechanical engineering studies at the University of New Hampshire, I believe the experience will inform and inspire my studies and my future career. When I am tasked with working on an engineering problem, I believe that the skills that I learn from your institute will inform my thinking, and I will be able to share those skills with my fellow students and co-workers.