

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

Julia R. Masterman School

1699 Spring Garden Street

Philadelphia, PA 19130

Dream to be Excellent

Recommendation for Denny Cao

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Denny Cao. Denny is a bright young man who takes challenging classes, participates in extracurricular activities, and explores interests outside the classroom. I have been his school counselor since the 2021 academic year and it has been a pleasure to learn more about him while we worked through the college application process.

Denny attends Julia R. Masterman, a college preparatory high school which in 2022 ranked as the number one public high school in Pennsylvania and tenth public high school in the nation by U.S. News and World Reports. Every year, hundreds of students throughout the Philadelphia area apply for admission to Julia R. Masterman School, where only 115 ninth grade students are accepted. All of Denny's coursework has been at the Honors and AP levels. Having already taken AP Calculus BC, the highest level math course offered at Masterman, Denny is also taking Discrete Math at a local college. Academically, Denny has excelled in our high achieving and academically rigorous college preparatory environment and he has continuously earned a spot on the Honor Roll. Recently Denny was named as a Semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Competition!

As a first generation college student, Denny wants to major in Computer Science and minor in Business Finance. Denny has used the time over the summer months to participate in activities that are of interest to him. Denny has always been surrounded by technology and curious about how everything worked. This curiosity quickly turned into a hobby and Denny began taking online courses such as CS50 at Harvard University, Summer SteppingStone Scholars BLI Computer Science at University of Pennsylvania and CbK@WorkReady where he learned web development with HTML/CSS. The final project of the CbK Summer program was working on a social impact project. Denny's focus was on at-risk students and how their struggle limits their educational opportunity. It was then that Denny recalled what has been ingrained in him, 'my parents always preached that education is the pathway to success', so Denny's goal was to spread that awareness via his final project. This past summer Denny participated in MIT's MOSTEC program and Rozella is what resulted. Rozella?, yes the robotic dog that was able to travel using GPS coordinates. Ever ambitious, Denny continues "tinkering" on Rozella making improvements.

As a member of the Masterman community, Denny has been a member of the Robotics Club and Orchestra since he was a freshman. As an orchestra member he played the violin at seasonal concerts and at the annual school musical. As a Junior he was the Co-President of the Programming Club, a member of Junior Varsity Ultimate Frisbee team, Varsity Volleyball and a member of both Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field teams. He enjoys running as it 'lets me clear my mind and allows me to have tangible evidence of improvement'.

As you can see, Denny has many positive attributes that have helped him to become a well-rounded student. In closing, I recommend Denny with the utmost confidence and without reservation to your university. Feel free to call or email me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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School Counselor

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