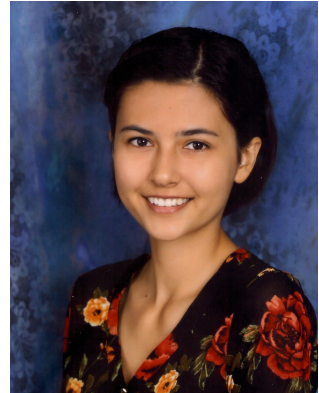


## **A Closer Look at Sydney Davison**

From her multicultural upbringing and social awareness, to her desire to blend computer science with the arts; Sydney Davison has a unique set of qualities that will help enhance college campus culture and academics. The following three essays provide an in-depth look at Sydney.



### **Code For Good**

I have an engineering mindset and love to solve problems, but I also value using that knowledge in meaningful ways that will benefit society. My mom is from Cambodia and through her, I have a deep connection with the people of Cambodia. I always wanted to help the poor there somehow but felt there was so little I could do on the other side of the world. I decided to work at my dad's company, Lahuna, and build a website that creates referrals for a taxi driver in Siem Reap, Cambodia that my mom knows. His name is Kimlean, and he uses the money he earns as a taxi driver to pay for food and education for poverty-stricken children at a school he runs. Kimlean believes that by teaching kids English, they will be better prepared for a career in tourism by the time they are adults. Siem Reap is home of the world famous Angkor Wat Temple and the growth in tourism there provides Cambodians the opportunity to work in higher paying jobs. Creating this website was the perfect work experience for me because I was able to do something I am good at, and love doing while helping less-fortunate people thousands of miles away. Because software can be created remotely and can be implemented on a global scale, I believe computer science offers me the potential to create technology that can help a great number of people no matter where they are in the world.

To succeed, engineers must first understand the problems they are trying to solve. Not only do they need technical expertise, but they must be grounded and have a broad knowledge of social sciences and humanities. A college education will help me become a well-rounded, socially aware computer scientist that can address challenges people face, on a personal level. I hope to participate in research and internship opportunities that apply what I learn in the classroom to real-world projects where technology is used to make a positive impact on the world.

## **Artistic Engineer**

Ever since I was a young child, I have had an inquisitive mind. I loved to play video games, but I always wondered how the games worked behind the scenes. I was particularly drawn to games like Roblox and Minecraft because they allowed the users to customize the game environment so that it behaved in new ways or looked differently. Because of this continued interest in how games work, I decided to take coding and engineering classes during high school. My favorite class was Intro to Engineering where we uploaded programming instructions to a circuit board that allowed music to play. This was a perfect opportunity for me to use my technical engineering skills, along with my artistic side and my passion for music. I am very involved in school bands, such as marching band, jazz ensemble, string ensemble, and drumline. Because of my deep understanding of music, I was able to help other students understand how the coded frequencies and tempo formed songs.

In addition to my passion for music, I also enjoy being creative with visual art. I love to paint as a hobby, and I am very interested in learning more about how technology can be used to create art through computer graphics, animation, and visual effects. In my coding class at school, we are learning how to use binary metadata to map colored pixels on a virtual canvas to create landscape images, such as the sun setting over the ocean. Rather than using paint and a brush, we use digital information to set the RGB (red, green, blue) color intensity at various points on the canvas, allowing us to blend colors and get the desired effect we are looking for. In college, I hope to explore more opportunities where I can use computer science to be creative with music and visual art.

## **Diverse Mediator**

I have grown up in a very diverse, multicultural environment. My mom is a genocide survivor from the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. She was separated from her family at age eight and dodged bullets while escaping to a refugee camp in Thailand. She has given me a great appreciation of Asian culture and cuisine. Also, having come from a poor, humble, upbringing, my mom has shown me how to appreciate the simple comforts in life and how not to be materialistic. My dad grew up as a surfer and lifeguard in the idyllic Southern California beach town, Laguna Beach. Through his example, I have learned how to enjoy time outdoors hiking, camping, and playing at the beach. He has also greatly influenced me in subjects that my mom never had an opportunity to learn such as music and engineering. My mom has shown me the importance of family members supporting and taking care of each other. Whereas, my father has instilled in me independence, strength, and confidence. My parents have greatly influenced me in very different ways and given me an understanding of how people from completely different backgrounds can form a deep connection and strengthen each other.

Given my diverse background and upbringing, I often act as a mediator, harmonizer, and peacemaker among my group of friends. A lot of my friends are individually different from each other and have unique personalities, backgrounds, and interests. There are some intellectuals, some band kids, and some that are more sports-minded, but we all enjoy spending time together. I believe I play an important part in keeping us together as a cohesive group by helping to reconcile disagreements that arise. When there is a conflict, I try to identify what the differences are, suggest compromises, and ease tensions by facilitating open communication. In college, I hope to contribute to the campus ecosystem by using my diversity to help bring others together so that they can form meaningful and beneficial bonds with each other, regardless of their background.