Peter Zhang
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Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing express my interest in the software engineering internship at Viasat. I am an intended Computer Science undergraduate student at UC Berkeley with a passion for solving real world problems with quantitative approaches. My passion, technical experience and interpersonal skills align with Viasat's mission to connect people.

In summer of 2019, I worked at the National Institutes of Standards and Technology on a novel, "root-and-rule" approach to natural language processing. In addition to developing preprocessing tools to spell check corpora and log acronyms, I showed that the root-and-rule approach improves the performance of topic models. The work taught me conventions for developing large projects while also exposing me to various frameworks and languages. This summer, I returned to NIST as a research assistant in the Applied Economics Office. I assisted the development of Edge$, an online cost-benefit analysis tool for helping communities evaluate disaster risk management investments. To guide users, I wrote a case study of wildfire-resistant retrofitting for a vulnerable community in California. I bug-tested the software and worked with reviewers to publish a 20-page user manual. The research and writing process taught me communication skills and instilled an attention to detail, making me an effective team member. Both experiences impressed in me the discipline to meet deadlines, the ability to adapt to new environments, and the initiative to seek innovative solutions.

I currently work as a part-time debate coach at The Bronx High School of Science. In weekly practices and one-on-one drills, I prepare students to succeed at the highest levels in Lincoln-Douglas debate. Since beginning in August, I endeavored to inspire passion and discipline in the team, ultimately helping multiple students reach elimination rounds at national tournaments. A deep reserve of empathy, patience, and persistence were key to my approach.

I draw on numerous technical experiences to contribute thorough and creative work in a timely manner. I excel in team projects by coordinating and empathizing with co-workers. I am fully confident that my passion and skillset fit perfectly with the internship. Please do not hesitate to contact me for questions or additional materials. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Zhang