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**Sample essays 2023**

**Babson College**

**Roommate Letter Anonymous**

**Write a letter to your first-year roommate at Babson. Tell him or her what it will be like to live with you, why you chose Babson, and what you are looking forward to the most in college.**

Andrew,

I look forward to meeting you and starting our experience together at Babson. Since I am fairly certain you know nothing about me here is a little background. I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago. From a young age I have had an interest in investing that has intensified throughout my life. But what really defined my youth was sports. For as long as I can remember I have been playing soccer, skiing and golfing. Up until high school, I played for the Chicago Kickers Soccer Club. Being a top ten team in the country I had many great experiences traveling and playing all over the country. Although not nearly as competitive in golf, I have been playing since a young age and have had the pleasure of competing in several tournaments.

Each of these was very important to me; however, it was my dedication to skiing that has been most important throughout my life. Since the early age of three, when my dad pushed me down a hill on skis for the first time, skiing has grown to be a bigger and bigger part of my life to date. This passion for skiing eventually led to my decision to pursue a ski academy halfway across the country in rural Vermont at Green Mountain Valley School (GMVS). GMVS has allowed me to continue my pursuit of both soccer and skiing, while allowing me to develop new passions as well, such as my involvement with the sound production for the theatrical performances.

My ever-growing interest in investing culminated this past summer in an Internship opportunity with Balyasny Asset Management (BAM). BAM is a multi strategy international hedge fund that currently manages several billion dollars in assets. This experience has solidified my dreams of one day opening and running my own hedge fund.

Looking to the future, I can assure you I will be an easy person to live with. Over my years at boarding school I have had the opportunity to live with four different people in various rooming situations ranging from doubles to quads. Many people would describe me as being highly opinionated and strong willed, but would just as quickly agree that I have discovered that it is necessary to be easy going to make living situations work. Each of these students that I have lived with have had very different personalities, schedules, work habits, and sense of hygiene; however, not once did I encounter major issues with any of them, and in fact each of them has become a close friend of mine after the experience.

I look forward to the unique and innovative approach Babson takes to business school, and am eager to get as much out of the program as I can before going off into the business world. Seeing as investing is such a passion of mine I hope to become heavily involved in the investment clubs Babson offers. Drawing upon my experiences throughout my life, I look forward to running my first major business endeavor with my fellow classmates in the upcoming year and I hope to gain the confidence of my peers so that I might be put in a position of leadership.

Aside from the obvious benefits associated with Babson and its successful approach to business, I am looking forward to the opportunity to continue my current interests outside of school, first and foremost through the Babson Ski Team but also potentially the soccer team or golf team as well as other experiences such as studying abroad and various clubs and organizations that find to be of interest.

I have always enjoyed the Boston area and cannot wait to experience the full breadth of what the city and Babson have to offer. If you get the chance, I would love to hear about who you are and what you hope to get out of your experience at Babson.

Also we need to get the whole TV, refrigerator, who’s bringing what situation figured out, so please give me a call or write back.

Jack

123-456-7890

**David Wolkoff's eBay Store David Wolkoff**

**Common Application. Topic of your choice.**

When I was fifteen I borrowed $200 from my father, bought a broken Sidekick phone on eBay, watched YouTube videos to learn how to repair it, and re-sold it for an $80 profit. That was the start of David Wolkoff’s Store, an eBay business, which has Gold Powerseller status and over 700 unique positive feedbacks. I had never used eBay before buying and selling the Sidekick. I became interested overhearing a friend tell how he sold a phone, and found after some research that he had undervalued his. I decided to try to do better.

At first, I bought individual phones, repaired them, and sold them as “refurbished.” Soon, however, I discovered that I could make a larger profit in less time if I bought phones with common defects in bulk and outsourced the repairs. As I began to feel a mastery over my business and expanded into different types of electronics, eBay changed its policies, undermining its individual merchants. A number of small businesses left eBay. I decided, however, to take my name to heart and fight Goliath.

I took two weeks off from conducting business to study the new rules, and strategize how to stay in business; I was not going to let policy changes discourage me from pursuing my hobby, my job and my passion. Therefore, I decided I needed to sell internationally where the large corporations that eBay was now favoring did not or could not do business. The customs regulations seemed daunting at first, because of the precise details necessary and to complicate matters, eBay’s rule changes in this period were frequent, and I needed to adjust plans two or three times to accommodate them.

I soon realized I could sell products unavailable, or more expensive locally because of currency rates, in Europe, Asia and Australia for a premium price, which increased my income and saved my business. Also, I implemented the use of drop shipping, where I have items sent directly from manufacturers to the customer so I took no inventory risks and saved on shipping.

I serve individuals where Amazon and Best Buy don’t compete. In the past three weeks I have shipped a Nokia N900 Smartphone to seventeen countries and two states, including Israel, Australia, Ireland, U.K., France, Mexico, Cyprus, and Malta. Electronics leave my house in the suburbs and a few days later end up with someone in London, Seoul or Sydney; I find this fascinating.

Dealing with people internationally has given me the confidence to hire a software developer in Pakistan to help create an iPhone application. The developer and I spoke over Skype and exchanged comments as if we were neighbors. The application, which is called iSiren, has been accepted by Apple Inc. and is now available for sale in the iTunes store. It has been downloaded over 10,000 times in just over two weeks of being ‘live’.

Running David Wolkoff’s Store for the last few years from the headquarters of my bedroom has been a true ‘hands-on’ learning experience. The global economy has made my business possible; however, I still focus on satisfying each customer as an individual. This is my hobby, but I love excelling at it, and having my customers believe they are dealing with a store, not a teenager.

**Summer Business Jake Nolan**

**Common application: Pick your own topic.**

I stepped out of the train. People pushing and shoving, back and forth, loud noises echoing down the narrow walls into the abyss. Searching for a way to the street, I too pushed my way through the barrage of people searching for the streets above: New York, New York. Up the escalator I went, briefcase in hand, sport coat thrown over my shoulder. It was a hot summer day. As I stepped into the open air, the confined sound of people conversing in the subways below slowly faded and was replaced by the bustling sound of the city’s traffic.

How did I get here? My attention was immediately turned to the task at hand - catch a cab to Brooklyn for the meeting. As the cab pulled out into the heavy midtown traffic my mind began thinking again how had I arrived at this destination. Some time late last spring, classmate and business partner Marika Wei invited me to her home to discuss my employment with her family’s security camera manufacturing company (ILDVR). I remember arguing with my mother because she would not let me meet with the Weis until my homework was done.

Marika Wei and I had developed Flash-Me™, an interactive flash-card application for Apple’s iPhone and iPod Touch. The project, which was a resounding success, appeared prominently in numerous national publications. The Wei family, business owners themselves, were impressed with our endeavor and offered me a job working on the executive team for their company while they were in China for the summer.

The school year was over, exams complete and the summer allowed me to direct my efforts full time to ILDVR. I was in the office daily and our sales began to take off as a direct result of my increased marketing effort. During this time, I also attended Brown University for a summer program in economics. Everyday between classes I would have telephone calls with the office, conference calls with regional distributors, e-mails, internet sales literature to review, and new products to evaluate. So when the Weis asked me to travel to New York for the weekend to meet with a potential new distributor I jumped at the opportunity.

A first class train ticket from Providence, Rhode Island to New York City and I was on my way to Brooklyn to negotiate a critical deal with a future Northeast distributor. I am sure if my parents had known what I was up to that Saturday, they would have dropped dead. The Weis, on the other hand, did indeed drop dead when I reported to them that I secured the signed contract which granted them the exclusive rights to distribution for the Northeast United States. By the end of the following week the distributor had placed a six figure order with ILDVR. Back at Brown, I scrambled around the library for hours finalizing my economic final paper on the “Effects of Long Term Deficit Spending”.

The experiences of working in the business world of ILDVR and studying economics at Brown reinforced one another in a profound way, further whetting my appetite to continue expanding my knowledge.

But sadly, before I knew it, I was back in Miami preparing for my first day of my junior year. After experiencing such success in both the business and university context, it was something of a letdown to come back to high school. After discussing with my parents whether to continue and expand my hours with ILDVR or focus my energy on my junior year academics I arrived at the decision that it would be beneficial for me to focus on my school work, especially since I was considering early admission.

In the interim, I have satisfied my entrepreneurial passion by continuing to promote a corresponding project of Flash-Me™ dubbed SnapStudy™. The website would allow users to study right from their computer, expanding our potential market from iPhones and iPod Touches.

Now I feel anxious for the greater challenge college presents as I look forward to knew knowledge and new applications as well as pursuing my interest in business. I have finished my coursework early and have made the decision to sell SnapStudy™ in order to free my entrepreneurial imagination for new projects. I look forward to bringing my passion, invention, and motivation to the university level where I can network and further cultivate my ideas with fellow students and faculty, while simultaneously testing them in the world of business.

**Common App Essay- Central Story Anonymous**

**Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.**

It happened out of sheer stubbornness. Seemingly overnight, I went from being a cross country runner to the girl on crutches. I thought it was just a cramp. All runners have them from time to time, no big deal, right? I stopped running, stretched (big mistake), and ran through it (bigger mistake). The day after, I took my time warming up. My coach, noticing my discomfort, approached me, but I shrugged it off. Still, the discomfort persisted. I paced myself and repeated “keep going, the pain is in your head” as a mantra to myself. The next day I couldn’t even make it past the first mile. I had ignored my coach’s suggestion to take it easy; I was fine, why give up? I didn’t want to seem weak, and I didn’t want to be the first one to stop running. I was pigheadedly intent on finishing my 3 miles.

A few X-Rays and MRI scans later proved that the pain was not in my head after all. A torn tendon and several fissures in my femur were the cause for my discomfort—cue the crutches. My Hispanic and ever hyperbolizing mother enforced the doctor’s orders to the letter: no physical effort, no activity. To complain about meals in bed, full nights of sleep, and less time spent in school-related activities seems odd for a teenager. When those things also mean being confined to the parameters of an 11 x 13 ft. room on a bed for the greater part of every day, however, those complaints start to make sense. My routine was totally thrown off, and I felt as though my life was thrown in disarray. From 3 to 5 PM every day I could no longer attend club meetings or practice with my teammates. Instead, I either went home or to the doctor’s office for physical therapy. I asked the club sponsors to fill me in via e-mail about what happened at the meetings, but it wasn’t the same as actively participating. Most of them told me not to worry, to take it easy and then get back to being involved when I was well. I missed the feeling of being useful and quickly became frustrated with my newfound idleness.

Helping out with my family's garden restoration project was no longer going to be possible, because there would be too much heavy lifting and moving around involved. Our usual monthly beach cleanups were out of the question, too. Most of the events that I am involved in involve physical activity, which was precisely what I could no longer do. I did not want to “take it easy;" I wanted to do something. I was bent on being engaged and participating in something, so I started to do some research and found an organization, DoSomething.org, made up of 2.4 million young people. The organization has a series of campaigns that run at all times simultaneously, many of which are creative and possible to plan and carry out in the confines of an 11 x 13 foot room (with a little help).

I signed up online, talked to a club sponsor, and launched a chapter in my high school via our Key Club. The other members of Key Club quickly became excited about the campaign and the service drive ideas that I shared with them. My personal favorite was a school-wide awareness campaign I co-headed to inform people about the dangers of distracted driving, complete with police officers as guest speakers and info-graphics designed by me. In the past year, we have collected over 200 cell phones to be refurbished for victims of domestic abuse, designed 5 boxes full of birthday cards for homeless teens, and been a part of the largest ever national peanut butter drive to fight hunger. My stubbornness put me in crutches, but that same persistence to not “take it easy” helped spur me to make a difference in peoples' lives. I know that this same persistence will motivate me to find my next cause and have a much greater impact in the future, in college and beyond.

**Trail of Breadcrumbs Chandranata Rekso Sosrodjojo**

**Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.**

My eyes were greeted by the luminous glow of fluorescent lights and sterile white walls of Rumah Sakit Bunda (Bunda Hospital). This was a stark contrast to the escalating chaos and barbarity in the dilapidated Indonesian streets. In due time, the quagmire of rape and murder that pullulated the streets, spawned the notorious 1998 Indonesian Reformation. These white walls did not shelter me for long. I could not hide behind my own race. I was born a Chinese Indonesian, the ultimate scapegoat for the devastation to come. In 1998, this heated pocket of conflict finally burst, bludgeoning my homeland. Amidst death, life was thrust upon me in the form of a shrieking wrinkled baby girl, my sister. In an instant, if possible, the one-year-old me felt a moment of pure and raw happiness.

Almost half a decade later, the happiness I reveled in was dashed by so called 'disagreements'. The unfortunate differences between my parents had slowly ruptured their love. One cannot be a squabbling child in the midst of crossfire. It was not a premeditated decision but a necessity for me to then become my own parent. I was orphaned on that day. I was abandoned. I was thus obliged to be the father and mother to my sister and myself. I learned to become my own person, I had to. This was the 10-year-old me; tall and lanky, walking through the muddy aisles of the wet market, treading across the linoleum floors of school, wandering through life on my own.

I refused to succumb to the suppressed anger that infested my home. I refused to spew the same venom my parents have. I refused to take up the gauntlet of revenge upon my parents. I thus tamed the raging child within me to persevere and shoulder the responsibility of becoming a father to my little sister. This engendered a quiet strength that has become unique to my character and persona. I drew upon this strength to shelter my sister from my parent's blunders and fight for a future untainted by my past. In time, I too garnered the patience and capacity to forgive the flaws of my parents. By transforming my childlike mentality and adopting that of a father, I learned that forgiveness is a contribution from the soul and maturity of the mind is an ongoing journey.

Spurning my childhood and accelerating the process to adulthood was painful, but I was roused by the fear that my sister would be consumed by the same grief I faced. It took patience to have the small têtê-à-tête's with my sister, grasp the hair raising issues of a girl's adolescence and handle the nauseating "boy issues". Upon reflection, I realize perhaps my greatest achievement is my sister, her childhood is a product of my perseverance and struggle. As such my first decade of living has taught me my first life lesson; the difference between existing, surviving, and living. I existed in the silence and shadow of my parents' loveless marriage. I survived a broken home. I am now finally living.

Ultimately, I became the Hansel from my own Brothers Grimm's folktale. I was trapped in a gingerbread house, and was expected to be devoured by the witches and demons of my past. But I refused to stoop so low that my lips would kiss the grounds of my predestined fate, for it would mean my voice would forever be but vibrations through this earth. I thus followed the trail of breadcrumbs home. Although all there ever was, was a house. Not a home. But that is not where the story ends. The story ends when I build my own home on the tainted grounds where the hollowed house stood.

**Pitching a Venture Anonymous**

**In a short paragraph, please briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences. (250 words)**

He had a complete poker face when I asked for $250,000. This man was on the panel of investors to whom I presented my entrepreneurial venture as part of a scenario analysis project during *The Fullbridge Program*, a rigorous business boot camp for college students wishing to solidify their business skills. This was not just another summer class where I would sit in a room for an entire day, staring at a whiteboard; I actually had the chance to take an active role in business as part of my learning.

After absorbing various concepts in accounting, finance, business valuation/analysis, and cash flows, we applied our knowledge by examining Harvard Business School case studies, many of which shed light on the seemingly dull beginnings and rises of many successful companies today. Then, at the end of the course, my team of three created and developed a business model for a new entrepreneurial venture in the clean-tech industry. Our team went into Shanghai’s central business district, conducted market research and interviews, and assessed consumer preferences on clean-tech. At the end of this simulation, we successfully developed a minimum viable product, along with revenue projections and risk analyses. Then, we pitched everything to a board of venture capitalists. After seeing a business idea grow from inception to completion, I could truly understand the skills I had gained: skills relevant to the real world.

**Looking Down Anonymous**

**Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?**

Above the clouds, on the peak of the mountain, I stand, overlooking the vast silhouette of slopes and trees, contemplating the infinite possibilities of routes to take.

I watch other skiers play “follow the leader” down the groomed trails, repeating someone else’s path over and over again. The rusty “Off-Piste Area” sign on the side beckons me past the frozen orange rope. This is my destination. Seeing not a single skier and no fresh tracks to lead the way, I thrust myself off the ledge, down the welcoming abyss. In front of me, trees appear out of the mist. I turn and swerve briskly to avoid collision. Out here, nothing is set. There are no boundaries. I need to make all the right calls. I am knee deep in fresh powder, plowing down the mountain. My heart is bursting out of my chest. I push down hard to one side, turn, and stop. Such split-second decisions in the backcountry are the difference between an amazing run and a frantic tumble to the bottom.

Pausing to catch my breath halfway down the mountain, I look back up, seeing the path that I carved through the trees, the path that I created. Looking down, I contemplate what new path I will soon create. Spotting a patch of undisturbed powder, I take off in that direction. My skis are the first to touch the snow, the first to carve the path. I can turn left or slide right, go between trees or over logs. The pure snow and equally pure freedom lead to new challenges, new drops, and new exhilaration. I look down the slope, and decide how to make the best of it. I could glide between vegetation or dig through deep powder and drops. These different elements of the slope define the skier.

Speeding down the mountain, I whirl fine powdered snow up and around myself, into my face as I ski through. Our army of skiers, boring through the snow, seems unstoppable, wielding fervor and amazement. Leading the pack, I’m not exactly sure of where we are, but I’m certain of what we’re doing and where we’re going. Pushing on, we brave through the blinding blizzard, dodge the trees, and swiftly leap across the drops, nearing the frontier.

Traversing the edge of the mountain, I see things from different perspectives, and I feel different. I could have followed the groomed snow made by another man, but instead, I created the path that led me here, I made all the turns that brought me here, I led myself here. With the small town at the bottom coming into misty but sweeping view, we’ve succeeded. I triumph, sitting near the edge, sipping on a lukewarm but soon to be ice-cold canned coffee, and appreciating this moment. This moment challenges me to exude confidence and enterprise in all areas of my life, to strike out into the mist and defy boundaries. I can envision the finish line and my end goal, but the process is not clearly defined. Diving into the haze is the only way to discover such opportunities, such sparks of creativity that would render a ski run, or any pursuit, amazing.

**Containing Multitudes Serina Lee**

**Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.**

A scrawny boy in beat-up velcro sneakers ran past. Our tour guide Mohammed sighed heavily, “Angel Park is probably the only place where a young boy could be young. Outside, he's probably the head of the family, working three jobs to secure meals for his sisters, because his parents are in jail or killed.” I thought of my twin brother slouching comfortably on the sofa holding an Xbox controller, and knowing that mom is cooking steak for dinner.

Honestly, when I signed up for the Social Justice Academy at the University of Pennsylvania, I was anticipating lectures on broad topics like racism and feminism and probably a few interesting reads. So I was really nervous when we toured Eastern State Penitentiary. One former inmate, Jesse Krimes, informed us of how the government inflated his crime on the records to pressure him to snitch. He also showed us the intricate, slightly faded landscape on his prison wall, made by years of gathering magazine pieces and pasting them to form a design, partly to avoid losing himself in solitary confinement.

The amount of shame I experienced was unspeakable, because the night before I imagined the inmates as insane men; I had plotted to wear baggy clothes and hide my phone from them, all because of my own prejudice and ignorance. I realized that many of them are normal people with soft spots in their hearts, who will always be judged by one crime committed when they were young and headstrong. Is it fair? “Don’t fight fire with fire, fight fire with water,” as the play *Hello! Sadness* puts it. If we are fighting criminals by harming them psychologically with isolation and prejudice, we are essentially forcing them to remain criminals. There must be a less divisive way, one that encourages reform.

On the way back, I conversed with Professor Tony Montiero about the racism in the criminal system, the injustice of solitary confinement, and the idea that progress under new laws is a mere illusion if nothing within the culture changes. I’m beginning to grasp that these issues are interconnected, and I can’t consider, for example, sexism without pondering its similarity to racism.

These thoughtful conversations, with professors and friends, were the fuel of my growth. I cherish these conversations, because they made me reflect, intensely. They made me more aware of how fortunate I am and of the responsibility that comes with growing up privileged.

During the last hours of the academy, some friends and I gathered for the usual goodbye. But there was more. I mentioned that I would incorporate elements of other injustices like sexism and racism into the homelessness project I started last year and foster the open and non-judgmental community we found at academy. Hannah will start a Feminism Club in her Quaker school. Stephen shared ideas on starting a gay rights rally in his school. As more of us shared, power and mutual support were built. I left with the weight of my newfound sense of responsibility and thirst for thought-provoking conversations. I am forever grateful for this summer that, as Walt Whitman writes, “contains multitudes,” because I learned to connect with people, connect with their knowledge and problems, and connect with their kindness. I gained the maturity to utilize these connections not just for myself, but to impact people in need.

# Familiarity Anonymous

## Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

“Entonces, Max, ¿dime porque has venido a España?”

I stared blankly at my host Dad while trying to catch a glimpse of how large his moustache really was, as he glanced over his shoulder towards me, his car narrowly avoided the oncoming traffic. His words were ringing in my head.

"So tell me, Max, why have you come to Spain?"

These were amongst the first words I heard upon my arrival. I nodded and smiled, yet understood nothing but my name. I stumbled upon School Year Abroad (SYA) Spain while exploring alternatives to my daily routine. To some, and understandably so, London is remarkable. To me, London had become the norm. For over 2,000 days I had walked through the same school entrance, passed the same painted letters declaring The American School in London as I bounded up the stairwell, and listened to the all too familiar sound of the morning announcements at the start of each day. My life had become repetitive, and I needed a change from what seemed to be an unending cycle.

As soon as I stepped foot in Zaragoza, I was immersed in a completely different culture: residing with a family that didn’t speak a lick of English and taking a standard American curriculum in Spanish. In retrospect, I wasn’t entirely prepared for such drastic change.

As my host Dad and I attempted to forge some sort of communication during that car ride, a feeling of pure dread overwhelmed me as we neared my new street. I felt like a stranger to everything around me. I was alone, knew no one, and had a house but not a home. As I followed the man with the moustache into the Almingol household, the then unfamiliar smell of paella wafted through the air.

Food became a medium that my family and I could enjoy together. Meals began in speechless unison, and eventually became the foundation of our most memorable moments: my younger brother Markos and I managed to quarrel early on about whether Chelsea or Barcelona was the better club as we heartily dug into our meal. Months later, my father brought a newspaper to dinner, and to our delight opened it to a photo of him taking part in a political protest, his moustache enormous as ever. The passage of food went both ways: I would cook up my signature scrambled eggs on Sunday mornings, before my family prepared a feast of meats and vegetables. We scarfed it down, leaving our fingernails laden with grease.

During these meals, the TV was always on. The Spanish news presenters provided a soundtrack to each moment in our abode whether in the living room, kitchen, or laundry room, and I literally felt I couldn’t escape the flickering screens and unintelligible chatter. But the seemingly meaningless tradition of relaxing as a family in front of the television became a powerful connection. After dinner, we’d sit in companionable silence, as our dog Nemo attempted to clamber onto the couch, and let the voices wash over us, hearing the words yet giving them little thought. Surrounded by the unfamiliar, everyone connects through their similarities, and TV was our channel of communication.

Nine months later, my final banquet, a concoction of cooked yellow rice and stewed rabbit, staked its claim as a paella of the highest grade. We demolished it. I was no longer tentative or reserved; I was one of the Almingol family. With the TV on, my words flowed over our food, yet it was not my fluency that brought us together as a family. It was the cadence of the newscaster and the warm scent of paella.

“So, Max, why have you come to Spain?”

I went to Spain seeking change. I was consumed by another culture, and yes, I have a more global perspective, yet what I truly gained from the experience had less to do with the language I spoke, and the country I was in, but with the family who had embraced me.

# Never Too Young for Economics Anonymous

## Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

The smell of delicious, warm, chocolatey cookies filled the car, and four pairs of hands rushed for the first of these decadent desserts. My family is usually not aggressive, but with cookies around, it’s each person for himself. This memorable childhood tradition left me with something beyond a satisfied stomach. Every time we went to a drive-thru for freshly baked cookies, my parents handed me the change to save in my piggy bank. As my coin collection grew heavier, I learned my first economic lesson: “It’s not about how much money you make, it’s how you save it.”

From a young age, my parents enforced the idea that money was earned. Growing up, I learned to decide between spending my $20-per-month allowance on a new trendy dress or on hot chocolate for my frequent study sessions at local coffee shops. Little did I know that with every decision, my 11-year-old self was computing the opportunity cost and comparative advantage of each choice.

In high school, after joining a business club called DECA and taking a marketing class, I learned about finance, marketing, and economics through creating several thirty page mock business plans that had in-depth research and expenditure spreadsheets, which helped me foster knowledge about the business world. Through an immense amount of perseverance, I won first place at the California DECA state competition. This year, I serve as the President of my school’s DECA club, which had the most qualifying members out of all other California DECA clubs to the International level competition. Through my involvement in DECA, I’ve learned to organize large-scale conferences, work in groups, behave professionally, and speak effectively in front of crowds.

However, in order to expand my knowledge in the economics of businesses more, this past summer, I seized the opportunity to study micro and macro-economics at a community college. Unlike many other subjects I had studied before, I could see how theories such as monetary and fiscal policy were applicable in my lifetime, such as during the 2007-2009 Great Recession. Also in summer, I applied this newfound knowledge from my economics classes to my marketing internship at a local start-up company called KidzToPros, which connects aspiring athletes to coaches. I vigorously researched, collected data, and organized outreach activities. At the start of my internship, in May, the company was just in San Francisco Bay Area, but by August we had expanded our outreach to eighteen major cities around the country, acquired over 19,000 new children participants, and got eight new company partnerships. I saw how similar marketing plans I wrote about in DECA were put into use into a real company and how successful they were.

Not many of my peers have had the opportunity of receiving an extensive background in a subject they love. More importantly, not many students are even given the opportunity to fall in love with economics in high school due to the lack of exposure. In order to expose less fortunate students to economics and make it more easily accessible to them, I initiated my own project. I contacted local family shelters and started an after-school mentoring program based in a family shelter at Richmond as well as at my local junior high school to introduce students to the business world and show them how learning about economics can start with a simple piggy bank. My hope for teaching the underprivileged about personal finance, smart saving, and entrepreneurship, is that at least some of them could begin taking steps towards breaking the poverty circle.

By teaching basic concepts to seventh and eighth graders, students were introduced to economics and business early on, unlike most students who only take Economics for one semester in senior year. Learning about economics both inside and outside of the classroom has allowed me to apply textbook learning to real life to see the unlimited ways economics can be applied in our world.

**My Unconventional Path from China to Babson Qingyang Wang**

**One way Babson defines itself is through the notion of creating great economic and social value everywhere. How do you define yourself and what is it about Babson that excites you?**

Raised in China, I did not follow the mold of a “traditional” Chinese girl. I never liked to sit down and practice calligraphy or stand still to play the flute, or be told that I should not major in anything related to business and politics, since that was “suited for males”. Instead, I loved being adventurous and running outside to discover where the ants went after the rain, and discussing where the money went after the economic crisis with my peers in school; studying in America, I challenge school policies I believe need changed and am fearless to run for difficult leadership positions. Now I am ready to take on more rigors challenges in society.

I define myself as someone passionate about international studies and effective leadership, so Babson is truly an inspiring place. I wish to double concentrate in Leadership and Global and Regional Studies at Babson to take one step closer to my dream—establishing a self-funding NGO on a global scale, to eradicate preventable childhood diseases and utilizing my leadership to build a better and brighter future for suffering children. Babson’s unique programs, institutions and opportunities will bring me one step closer to realizing my dream.

The Leadership concentration will teach me to influence others positively, and build effective teams, while the Global and Regional Studies concentration will allow me to explore different global communities and cultures and have a deeper understanding of regional politics and globalization. These are all useful resources which I can take one step closer to my ultimate goal.

Aside from Babson’s unique concentrations, there are many other parts of Babson that truly attract me. One of the core learning goals at Babson is entrepreneurial thinking and acting, which I believe is most important factor for success in making an organization. I know that studying at Babson will prepare me to grasp any opportunities that appears in front of me. Also, I am excited to possibly join the Center for Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership. This will empower me to become the female leader I aspire to be: one who is reliable, effective and innovative and makes a positive impact, starting in the community around me. Outside the campus in Massachusetts, the semester in San Fransisco program would allow me to experience a variety of organizations, including many start-ups, which I can learn how to successfully start a self-funding NGO myself.

I am not afraid of the obstacles in the future, because Babson could prepare me to become a compelling leader and an NGO starter with a global entrepreneurial vision. Babson is the place for me to start chasing my dreams.

**Jaggery Shyla Singh**

**"The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience? (Common App essay)**

The alarm heralding the dawn becomes redundant as a mix of dread and excitement has kept me up all night. It’s 5 am. Today I will compete in my third Junior National Equestrian Championship in Pune at the National Defence Academy.

I’ve determined that today will be different. My first Junior National in Kolkata in 2014 began and ended catastrophically. I leased a horse, Legal Steps, who I rode for the first time a day before the championship. It was an unwise step, as I didn’t have the chance to connect with him. The day of the competition, Legal Steps bolted towards the surrounding woods. Did he sense my fear? Despite managing to get control of him, I realised the futility of continuing as he would remain uncooperative. Withdrawing from the event, I lost all confidence.

Yet, when peers suggested that I was fearful, that perhaps this transpired because I was a girl, I found these explanations unsatisfactory. I began recognising the root cause of the catastrophe: I had forgotten my primary motivation for riding, my love of horses. Perhaps my Kolkata debacle stemmed from overlooking this true essence of equestrianism? Riding the leased horse, I had felt like a novice. I had forgone establishing a connection with Legal Steps, focusing only on competing rather than understanding him. The Kolkata experience led to the realisation that I was riding mechanically, simply to win.

Seeing this from the sidelines, my coach, Mrs Sodhi, told my father that to move forward, I had to rekindle my bond with horses. The initial step in the rehabilitation process was buying my own horse, Lodrino, a gorgeous dark bay Holsteiner gelding. Lodrino was crucial in my return to winning ways.

I first met him with a welcome gift of jaggery (unrefined sugar) in my outstretched palm. He not only accepted it with unbridled enthusiasm but also butted my shoulder for more. I was besotted! The first time I rode him, I knew he was special. Every movement bespoke a perfect balance between elegance, power and control. Trust is the key element in controlling a 1200-pound animal with just leg pressure or a rein-tug. I sensed that I could trust Lodrino. But could he trust me? I spent the first few months intuitively understanding his responses and his endearing idiosyncrasies: that he would never advance in a lesson without a “jaggery inducement,” for example. I also discovered him to be the quintessential thespian, invariably putting on a show before an audience. He started responding to my aids and taught me to love horses and competing again. This happened only once our relationship blossomed into a close bond.

Together we enjoyed pre-competition rituals, such as my braiding his hair the night before competitions. Lodrino knows when he is competing and is a prima donna in the show arena. Even if a laggard during practice, the chime of the start bell in the competing arena brought out the actor in him! Often, when I was unable to give an aid fast enough, he preempted it and began executing the movement. And as I saluted the judges after a dressage competition, Lodrino bobbed his head, thanking the judges and stealing my thunder! My deepening relationship with Lodrino had me focus on something beyond technique or peer opinion: on the profound truth that there is no bond stronger than that between a horse and its rider.

Today, pre-show jitters dissolve into thin air as I sit on Lodrino. He reassures me. Much has changed over the eight years I’ve been competing. In Pune, I focus on winning to affirm my progress from someone too afraid to compete to someone whose passion drives her to excel in equestrianism.

My third Junior Nationals culminates in victory. Lodrino and I win together: our amazing bond is the overarching reason for my tasting success again!

**Why am I interested in Babson College Oscar Zhang**

**Why are you interested in Babson College (200 word maximum)?**

Strongly believing profits and social responsibility need not be a zero-sum game, Babson’s curriculum dovetails with my desire to be a social entrepreneur.

In today’s reality, those who want to make a positive difference to our world not only require empathy and vision but also entrepreneurial and technical knowhow. From pitching to donors and institutions to researching on the Bloomberg to compiling code for fundraising platform, leveraging and refining these skills with the help of a Babson education will ensure I realize my full potential.

To pursue my passions in various disciplines, I plan to enroll in EPS3503: New Technology Ventures to solidified my understanding of technology in business; I also hope to take EPS3501:Entrepreneur and Opportunity and EPS3583:The Enlightened Observer to pinpoint business opportunities in social trends and issues. Academics aside, I am attracted to Babson’s very international student body. This vibrant diversity will undoubtedly increase my intercultural acumen. I look forward to sharing my multicultural background to my peers at Babson.

With a degree from Babson, I will be ready to tackle global issues with meaningful vision and decisive action.

**Packet of Tissue Anonymous**

**Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.**

“You are going to a boarding school in Singapore,” said my parents one day.

The decision to send me off to boarding school came as a surprise for my family’s acquaintances. It came as a shock to me --- especially since I did not even know what the boarding school would be like. Even with people questioning the situation, my parents stood firmly on their ground. I, on the other hand, was ecstatic about the new environment I was going to be a part of. Being an only child, my friends were like my siblings. What they learned from their older siblings, I learned from them. They have always been the roots of my personal growth. To have more of them was a marvelling experience.

Moving to Singapore was a huge whirlwind of “new.”There was no one telling me when to shower, when to go out, what to eat, and what to do. For the first time in my life, I felt in control of my time and space. But that did not last too long. “Don’t spend too much money on Starbucks”, “Don’t eat too much McDonalds.” Don’t. Don’t Don’t. The speed of the internet connection would have found it hard to catch up with the speed of my parents’ instructions. Their instructions have always been rooted at one thing: financial planning. I did not understand why they were worried. Even so, I did what they asked: kept track of my spendings. Gradually, I became more sympathetic of their concerns. Sympathy, I learned, is a foundational experience for personal growth. My parents wanted me to understand the value of money --- and the hard work required to obtain it.

“How much for a packet of tissue?,” I asked an old lady. In Singapore, it is common for the elderly to work past their years to support themselves. “A dollar. Where you from?” I explained to her that I was from Myanmar, and that I was here for boarding school. Eager to strike a conversation, she told me about her life from the time she worked at a restaurant to being a single mother. “You so lucky. Thank your parents. I did not have any education. So look at me: I am selling tissues at 63.” And so I bought all the tissues she had to sell. All I wanted was a packet of tissues. But I got a valuable life lesson to appreciate what I have and to try harder. Personal growth came to me in many forms, including a packet of tissue.