

Hello,

My name is Mark Mangus. I'm sure you've read through a lot of these so I will try to make mine brief.

In April of 2009 I was involved in a major accident where I almost died due to a subdural hematoma; a bleed inside my skull. A fantastic neurosurgeon in Austin Texas saved my life, but recuperation from my injuries was long and hard. During this time of healing I quite often found myself reflecting on the things I've done with my life. I was an accomplished musician, an audio engineer, I've traveled, I have family and friends who love me. I didn't have a career I loved.

For as long as I can remember I've been interested in how things work. Not just that a VCR works because you plug it into an outlet, pop a tape in it, and press play, for example, but how that piece of machinery works on a fundamental level; as well as why the pieces work together like they do, and who thought to put these pieces together like this in the first place. I've taken my guitars and amps apart to try to repair them and modify them myself plenty of times. How does an instrument make what we call sound, and what is sound really. The ear and the eye are both transducers so it makes sense to me that sound and light must be linked in some way. How and why? Stars, galaxies, black holes, time, existence, so many questions, but how do I find the answers? Where are the answers? Physics!

Physics excites me. I'm hoping I will be awarded this scholarship because the only thing standing between a relatively timely graduation and me is money. I've taken classes in several different fields over the past ten, or so, years because the courses sounded interesting, and I wanted to see what their respective fields of study were about. The music, the philosophy, everything else I've studied both in school and on my own have been leading me to Physics for a long time. And all it took was a brush with death for me to finally realize this!

Now that I've finally figured out what I'm going to do with the rest of my life, I'm asking you to help me get there. To help me get to the point where I can design new ways to propel pioneering wanders through the cosmos, to prove or disprove the existence of the Higgs boson, to develop the next life changing piece of technology at Bell Labs, or to figure out why superconducting materials work and how can we make room temperature superconductors. Maybe I'll win a Nobel Prize. I'm on my way, and I will do it one way or another. Every little bit of help along the way will get me there faster, and will be much appreciated. I hope you will help me.

Thank you for taking the time to consider me for the Wally Stoelzel Physics Scholarship and Fellowship. I look forward to hearing your answer soon.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Mangus Jr.