

Rotary Scholarship Essay

I have been interested in giving back to my community since I was 8. I was gifted my first sandbox game that Christmas, which was Minecraft. The idea that I could create experiences for others to enjoy was so exciting. Ever since then, I've been pursuing my game design career. I recently have been accepted to DigiPen Institute of Technology to continue my studies in the game industry where I want to keep giving back to my community and give a voice to those that cannot voice their own. Until then, I have been giving back to my community in many ways.

I was a part of a teen board for a group called Teens for Teens. In Issaquah there is a teen café called, The Garage—its purpose being to give teens a safe space after school to hangout, work on homework, do arts and crafts, etc. The Teens for Teens group's purpose is to speak on behalf of the teens going to The Garage and make decisions for the betterment of The Garage. We meet every other Wednesday and discuss upcoming events and possible events in the space. As a group, our job was to be honest, if an event didn't sit right with us, or another group that we didn't quite see eye-to-eye with reached out to us to promote them, we would have to honestly deny the opportunity. Our other job was to be fair. We were representing the teens going to The Garage, and to get honest feedback from average The Garage goers, we'd have to give our fair unbiased answers. As a group we grew much closer together and earned mutual respect through dedication to the betterment of our community—even though we maybe didn't agree on some things. On the occasion where we didn't agree with one-another, we would have to make major compromises—which was tough on some of the heavier topics we'd cover. We also attended panels, where we would answer questions in front of our community—and answer questions they had—on many topics such as, LGBTQ+ rights, our thoughts on the global warming crisis, and how social media impacts us.

At my high school—Issaquah Highschool—I ran the music theory club for a couple years (from sophomore year to the end of my junior year). During my time as club president, I got to spend some time learning about organizing groups and keeping attendance as well as various other organization skills to keep our club on track. We met every week and at the beginning of every club meeting I'd present a set of slides going over some fun facts in the music industry, and then we'd go over our music theory topic of the day. There were some weeks though, where I may forget to make the slides, and I'd have to be honest with my group—they were always very forgiving. I as club president, made sure that everyone's voice was heard by creating democratic voting sessions to determine the projects we'd work on although, sometimes we'd run into a tie, and we'd have to conclude as a group—which we often had no problem doing. This overall built new friendships within the group and I felt as though I'd earned the respect of my peers by supplying a creative space for us to work where we could all collaborate and learn together.

I also worked part time at a couple different jobs during my school years. This allowed me to work honestly in a group—of what was at first, complete strangers. I had to consistently take in the interests of my peers in these groups which allowed us to become closer and earn each other's respect. During these jobs there were compromises made that I had to learn to adapt to which has given me the experience necessary to become a better applicant for future employment.

I believe that I deserve the Issaquah Rotary scholarship because I am hardworking and determined to make my community a better place. DigiPen Institute of Technology specializes in the development of video games which is the perfect route for me to make Issaquah a better place. Games have been proven to bring communities together and provide unique perspectives in a medium that makes heavier topics more digestible. By earning this scholarship, I will help bring my community together honestly, with utmost attention to fairness and earning the respect of others by bringing attention to the Issaquah area through the success of my future games and their accreditation to the service I've been allowed to serve to the Issaquah area.