**PERSONAL HISTORY STATEMENT**

My journey towards pursuing a graduate degree in computer science is deeply rooted in my personal background and experiences, which have shaped my academic pursuits, values, and aspirations. Hailing from a middle-class family in Kolkata, India, my fascination with technology and computer science began with limited resources and exposure. Despite financial constraints, my family instilled in me the importance of education, fostering a relentless pursuit of knowledge.

Overcoming barriers to access higher education has been a defining aspect of my personal history. The decision to pursue a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science was met with challenges, including financial limitations and a lack of educational infrastructure. However, my unwavering determination and the support of my family propelled me forward.

Understanding the barriers faced by others has been central to my commitment to equitable access to higher education. As a student, I actively participated in initiatives to bridge the digital divide, organizing workshops and mentoring sessions for underprivileged students. Recognizing the gender disparity in STEM fields, I volunteered for programs aimed at encouraging young women to pursue careers in technology. By sharing my journey and experiences, I aimed to inspire others to overcome obstacles and pursue their academic dreams.

My academic service extends beyond individual mentorship to initiatives promoting equitable access. Volunteering for URECKON, the largest tech fest in my university, I actively contributed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment. In my role, I advocated for the participation of students from diverse backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of representation in technology-related events.

In my research pursuits, I directed my focus towards issues of inequality and underserved populations. My exploration into Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) and Application Development was motivated by a desire to understand the potential impact on marginalized communities. The comprehensive paper I authored delves into the nuanced landscape of CBDC within the context of India's financial ecosystem, addressing potential challenges and opportunities for underserved populations.

Leadership among underserved groups has been a cornerstone of my extracurricular activities. Leading a group in a poster competition and spearheading the Green Sight Project at the Smart India Hackathon demonstrated my commitment to leveraging technology for social impact. Through these initiatives, I aimed to showcase the power of computer science in addressing environmental challenges.

As I transition to graduate studies, my commitment to advancing equitable access to higher education remains steadfast. The opportunity to contribute to the inclusive academic atmosphere at the University of California, Berkeley, aligns with my values and aspirations. I am eager to engage with initiatives that promote diversity and create pathways for individuals from historically underrepresented groups to thrive in the dynamic field of computer science.

In conclusion, my personal history has not only shaped my academic journey but has also fueled my commitment to breaking barriers and promoting equitable access to education. As I embark on the next phase of my education, I carry with me the lessons learned from overcoming challenges and the passion to contribute to a more inclusive and diverse academic community.

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