Name of activity: Classical Piano   
Years active: 14

Position held: co-head of piano club and organizer of the classical chamber music mud-week program, basically take part in any event that needs a pianist  
Weeks per year (average): 54  
Hours per week (average): 8  
Description of activity and any accomplishments: I went to a music school in Xiamen for 9 years (primary and middle school) and studied piano. I practiced 1.5 hour on average per day and took 2 private lessons per week. I studied classical music theory as well during my time in the school. I organized a concert after graduation. When I graduated from the music school I ceased to take lesson for a year but continued to practice. I continued my study in Milton Academy by going to the New England Conservatory prep school and resumed to practice 1.5 hour daily. I took both private lesson and advanced classical piano seminar in sophomore year (I repeated sophomore year in Milton Academy). In junior year I take private lesson for classical piano. In our school, I perform in basically every event that needs a pianist.

What you learned –

It is very hard to conclude what my study in classical music has impacted me, for it has basically made me who I am. I would rather talk about it in future conversations.

Name of activity: Jazz   
Years active: half a year (jazz piano) roughly 3 years with gaps in between (saxophone)

Weeks per year:54

Hours per week: 10

Description: I audit advance Jazz class in our school, in which I play the saxophone. I take jazz piano, jazz history, jazz theory, and jazz style lessons in NEC prep, play in an ensemble, and practice almost daily. I began to play jazz the past summer, and I found that it is such a fascinating genre that, even though I am not very gifted in this area and my ears aren’t as used to jazz chords as they are to classical chords (which makes it extremely difficult), I cannot persuade myself to give up.

What you learned:

I would say that jazz change my life. I used to not believe in the ideals associated with the American dream because what I observed for the most part is the oppression of identity of the minority rather than the success of cultural integration. Jazz teaches me that the fruit of this melting pot can be something invaluable and captivating and that this one thing can only be created in this place. And now I like this country a lot more.

I love the idea of jazz: melody tells the audience about the band’s cooperation, solos express each performer’s individuality, and successful comping requires the generosity of the pianist to feature the soloist.

Instead of being merely the media through which the composers’ thoughts are conveyed, I am now creating and performing the music that springs from my own imagination.

Since jazz is more widely accepted by audience than classical music, I receive more positive feedback from my audience through their facial expressions and body language, and the fact that my music pleases the audience always brings me ecstasy. Therefore, now I realize that the nature of performers is to serve, and that the happiness of serving outweighs the happiness of self-appreciation.

Name of activity: Guitar  
Years active: classical guitar 2 years (roughly) flamenco half a year

Weeks per year:54

Hours per week: 3-4

Description: I played guitar for a year and a half in middle school, and quitted playing in 9th grade. Last summer, during my stay in Barcelona, I ran into a guitar school and could not resist the temptation of the smooth, round, and warm tone of a guitar. I decided to learn flamenco from a Spanish guitar teacher and to learn classical guitar from a teacher in Milton.

What I learned:

When I was in my teacher’s guitar school in Spain, I had the opportunity to meet his father. I first saw him in a practice room producing a high-pitched and squeaky sound with a violin. I observed him for a while, thinking that it is quite courageous for an old man his age to play an instrument. Later, I learned that he mastered almost all the orchestral instrument and decided to start playing the violin in his seventies. I have never had so much faith in the passion and love for learning. Having grown up in a traditional, exam-oriented public school system, I have to admit that I used to enjoy learning because of the sense of accomplishment brought by good grades rather than the process of learning per se. However, as I began my junior year, I realize that I love every moment of learning, both in and after class, and

Name of activity: Outdoor activity   
Years active: one and a half

Weeks per year: Fall season (climbing)/ throughout the year

Position held: board member of the outdoor program

Description: I climb during fall season for 2 years.

Hours per week: 25 minutes(board meeting) 10 hours(fall season climbing)

What I learned: I have never been afraid of learning new things or getting out of my comfort zone. The fact that I love climbing simply justifies my decision to try new stuff.

Climbing also helps me realize the possibility and potential that lies within my body. Most of the time during climbing, we always find ourselves reaching the handholds that we never believe we would reach if we just stare at them and cringe without even trying. This sport best illustrate the beauty of challenge.

I also get to know interesting people who enjoy challenges and have inspiring stories to tell.

Name of activity: Choir   
Years active: 7

Weeks per year: during school year

Hours per week: 1 hour

Description: I was a member of a choir for 5 years and of another choir for 1 year. I was a member of gospel choir in Milton during sophomore year.

Name of activity: Community Service   
Years active: one and a half

Weeks per year: during school year/ Spring of 2016

Hours per week: 40 minutes/ 2 weeks

Description: Help to train the middle school choir

I went to Belize this spring with the community service program in Milton. We helped with the construction of a school in Caye Caulker.

I would say that the trip itself seemed a bit hypocritical for me due to the fact that we spent a considerable amount of money on flight, hotel, and meals, which could have been used to hire local workers to finish the construction.

What I’ve learned: I love meeting people from distinct culture. I was able to become close friends with girls from Belize and learned about their life and their dreams.

Name of activity: Spanish   
Years active: since this summer

Weeks per year: every week since this summer

Hours per week: 7 per day when I was in Barcelona (5 weeks) 3.5 per week during school days and 2.5 per day during Christmas break

Description: I am gifted in terms of learning new languages. I learned German for 2 years in middle school but did not have enough time to continue. As I came to Milton, I chose to take Spanish at first, but the progress was too slow, and I decided to transfer to Latin. Yet I realize that I still wanted to learn Spanish. Therefore, I spent a lot of time learning Spanish this summer and continued to learn during the school year. I love those moments when I recognize the connections between Spanish and Latin!

Name of activity: Worked for a student charity   
Years active: one

Weeks per year: school year

Hours per week: 1 per day

Description: After finishing the application for U.S. boarding high school, I worked as a group leader for a student charity in my old school. We organize monthly performances and jumble sales to raise money to support a primary school in the suburb. We also provided community service opportunities for high school students all around our city.

What I learned: I improved my ability of organizing large-scale events, including taking care of every detail, communicating with both adults and peers, and motivating my teammates to continue the work. As a student charity in the best Chinese public high school in our city, we had to deal with the blames from teachers and parents who worried that our work would affect their children’s grade. The belief that my work would help kids in the suburb right in my city was strong enough to support me to deal with schoolwork, charity work, blames from others, and doubts from myself all at the same time.

Name of activity: JV Ice Hockey   
Years active: 2

Weeks per year: winter

Hours per week: one and a half per day

Description: Forward (sophomore) Goalie (junior)

What I learned:

I volunteered to play goalie after our last goalie graduated because our team was facing a dilemma. I always love responsibilities, although it comes with pressure. Although it is sort of stressful to be an unexperienced goalie who always let in goals during games while all your teammates work so hard to score, I am becoming more capable of dealing with the pressure.

Name of activity: Tutoring   
Years active: one and a half

Weeks per year: during school year/

Hours per week: 70 minutes

Description: I am a chemistry, math, and Latin tutor.