

University of California Application, Prompt for Freshmen Applicants

Describe the world you come from — for example, your family, community or school — and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations

Throughout my life, I have found endless beauty and wonder in the creatures of the natural world, especially insects. Insects, with their intricate patterns and behavior, have always had a unique presence in my life, and my overall amazement of them has culminated into a dream of pursuing a career in biology or entomology. This aspiration is derived from my desire to learn more about the world around me. However, like the carefully sculpted honeycomb of a beehive, my dreams and aspirations were shaped by several different people and several different groups.

My family played a key role in cultivating my passion for nature. My parents gave me my first introduction to the world of science and nature, as they were the first to take me outside, into the environment of Chicago, Illinois, where I grew up. I visited the local zoo dozens of times and spent hours helping my father tend to his garden. There, I became more familiar with plants and animals, including the insects I have grown to love so much. My parents' own appreciation for nature also inclined them to take me on camping trips, where I was able to experience whole new ecosystems. Their interest in my passion allowed me to form my dreams of exploring the world more, and drove me toward the world of nature and science.

At school, I became acquainted with the sciences and formed a definitive opinion on what it was I liked about them. In my junior year biology class, I partook in long and complex labs, which made me realize how I could find a permanent place working in the sciences, especially with entomology.

My friends, community, and my own maturation helped shaped my interest in entomology as well. As I learned more about insects, I noticed that my peers were learning less. Soon, their own childlike fascination with the small creatures turned into misconceptions and fear. Seeing this, I was motivated to teach people about these animals that took up nearly 80% of all life on the planet. I decided to focus my Girl Scout Gold Award on insects. My project involves a series of presentations teaching children about arthropods and why they should be respected instead of feared. This ongoing project has given me the joy of seeing the lights in the eyes of children as they learn about the fascinating world of insects. My passion has also culminated in my senior year scientific research project, which focus on the predation methods in a particular type of assassin bug. I hope this research can pinpoint any means for using insects to control agricultural pests.

Spreading my knowledge of insects has helped me understand my passion and my desire to seek a career in the biological sciences. Each part of my world has shaped this dream, and I am excited to see what this world has in store for me next.

Word Count: 483