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Personal Statements  
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**2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.**

Growing up I was never a great student. I would not get the grades I desired simply because I did not understand the material that was being taught. This conflict caused me to fall behind in my classes, so I averaged C's and D's. At the time I did not know what to do since I was the only one in the class who did not understand. I tried getting help from the teachers, but they were too impatient and unhelpful. I then began to start thinking about what I can do. My friend at the time was very smart, he would constantly make the honor roll and he had an A in every class. I told him I needed help with my classes, but he assured me he was too busy to tutor me and handle school at the same time. I then again thought I was out of hope until I remembered that he would never bring a lunch to school, because he would wake up too late. So I offered him a deal, I would bring him lunch everyday if he can tutor me for 1 hour everyday after school. When he heard this offer he quickly said yes, because he would always come to school hungry and he liked the food I brought. I was able to use my people skills and street smarts to know what my friend needed and wanted to convince him to tutor me. After I found that my teacher was no help, I did not give up I kept looking for a resolution. I find out what people want or need, then I give it to them in exchange for their service. This is a trait that I had to learn going into the real world, because everyone is going to need or want something.

**3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?**

Before high school, I was never the type of person to raise my hand or speak in class. I was too shy and was very uncomfortable about going outside of my comfort zone. I never really thought of myself as an intellectual speaker, or a voice for my fellow students, but outside of class my peers would agree with some of the things I said. One day during class we had a mock trial, there were 8 people on the Supreme Court to judge the fate of the person being accused. Each member gets to state their opinion to come up with a final result. After my group heard the trial we stepped outside to come up with our decision. As soon as we got outside a girl in my class said that we should agree with whatever the most popular kid in the group said. The rest of my group did not say no, but I saw in their facial expressions that they did not agree. I shared how I feel as if everyone should get a vote and everybody's opinion was important. Nobody backed me up until I said things that were not similar to what the popular kid said, it turns out that 6 out of the 8 people agree with what I said, because they were thinking the same thing, but did not have the

courage to say it out loud. I did not think my voice matters, but that idea is false. By developing my skill of speaking my mind, I realized how I speak for people who have not developed this skill yet.

**5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?**

The most difficult challenge I had to face was starting at a different high school mid-way through my junior year. Before I came to Lincoln I was at a private high school, Archbishop Riordan and I was there from 2013 to 2015. Since I was a freshman at Riordan I made all my friends pretty quickly since we were all new at the school and wanting to meet new people. My time at Riordan was cut short, because my mom could not pay the tuition anymore. It was in November of my junior year that I had to transfer to a brand new public school, Abraham Lincoln High School. I was not ready for the big transition at all. This was my first time being in a public school, since I have been in private school all of my life. There were only 400 kids in my old high school, compared to having over 4,000 in my new one. The biggest problems were that I did not know anybody in my new school and the curriculum they were teaching was different, because it follows the SFUSD teaching system. I was already falling way behind, and I was the new kid that did not know anyone 3 weeks before the end of the 1st semester. I did not know what to do, I was back at square one which was making new friends and trying to get at least a C in all my new classes. I then decided that this was my chance to see what I am really made of. I had to study everyday I got home. At nights I would watch extra videos to try to understand the subject more, losing large amounts of sleep. I even went after school to different teachers asking for help. I ended up getting grades from A's to D's at the end of my first semester. This did not bother me though, because of all the late nights of studying and all the online tutoring I did not fail one class and I am proud of that.

**8. What is one thing that you think sets you apart from other candidates applying to the University of California?**

The one thing that sets me apart from other people applying to the University of California is that I am very adaptable and can work through any situation I am put in. By being adaptable I can adjust to the life of college very quickly, since I can live with a new mindset of depending on nobody else, but myself. I have been placed into a situation where I had to change schools last minute without warning and it was the hardest thing I had to do in my life. I never thought that I would be able to develop this skill, because I have always been so comfortable in my old school. When I knew that I had to start fresh I could not let that slow me down. I have worked the hardest I have ever done in my life just so I can get by the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of my junior year. Even if I put in twice the effort I still got 2 D's in the end. Although I was sad about this, I was proud of myself. I knew that even if a D is barely passing, I still put in my blood, sweat and tears into that grade. I could have easily given up and sleep every night knowing I was failing, but that is not

who I am. I would sleep on my desk 4 hours before school started, because I was studying all night. All the failure I went through only brought out a better version of myself that I did not think existed. I would have never thought of myself being this determined 5 years ago. I am excited to think about what else I can become when I get to college.