

Scholarship Application Materials for Alston Clark

Essay:

Reaching For The Stars

When I was seven years old I got a telescope for Christmas, and had an extremely hard time finding anything. After tinkering with the magnification, I finally focused on a star. That telescope taught me the beginnings of a skill that I would use for the rest of my life, problem solving. My primary career aspiration is to use a background in science and engineering to solve problems, in order to make our universe a better place. Receiving the Dr. William W.L. "Bill" Taylor Memorial Science Scholarship will allow me to focus on being the best student possible and ultimately create unique solutions to some of the world's toughest problems.

There are multiple events and programs that have contributed to my deep desire to pursue a career in the STEM field. The scholarship I received to attend *Space Camp* in 2010 and 2011 took my involvement in science and engineering from a keen interest, to a passion. In fact, it was at *Space Camp* that I was introduced to computer science for the first time. I vividly remember the programmable robot module. While advancing through multiple stages of learning to program the robot, I got stuck and remember thinking, "I know I can figure this out." Little did I know that a few years later I would be pursuing a bachelor's degree in computer science and repeating that same "can do" mantra over and over in my head.

Although I am extremely passionate about the STEM fields, my passion is not limited to personal enjoyment; I also love sharing my enthusiasm with others. As an aspiring innovator, I feel it is my responsibility to spread the word about STEM to younger students. A lot of students become bored with science and math classes because they

cannot connect with class lessons or visualize practical applications in everyday life. Therefore, whenever I encourage middle or high school students to pursue careers in STEM, I use relevant and authentic examples. I have the opportunity to provide such encouragement when I volunteer as an assistant robotics coach at the NASA Goddard space center chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers.

Whether I am helping students learning to improve the drivetrain of their robot, writing code, or still looking at stars with my telescope, I love to learn and I love to create. This is a passion that I will pursue with vehemence for the rest of my life. If I am fortunate to be awarded this scholarship, I will contribute to the Inspire Project mission by persistently learning more effective ways to use computer based technologies to help people maximize their potential.

Letters of Recommendation:

HOWARD
UNIVERSITY

Office of Undergraduate Studies

December 3, 2015

Dear Scholarship Selection Committee:

It is a pleasure and honor to recommend Mr. Alston Clark for your scholarship opportunity. I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Clark for over a year, as part of my work as a joint faculty and Director of the Honors and Scholars Development office at Howard University. Our office provides outreach to honors and other high-achieving students, in order to promote scholarships, fellowships and other prestigious merit awards. Mr. Clark has been actively involved with our office, and I have had the opportunity to work with him as a scholarship applicant and a mentee.

Last semester, I invited Alston to participate in a panel at a local private school in Maryland. He spoke openly to parents and students about his positive experiences at Howard, while promoting that students consider applying to Howard or other historically black colleges and universities. As a communicator, Alston is extremely articulate, poised, mature and well-spoken. In addition to being a thoughtful communicator, I have called upon Mr. Clark, on many occasions to reach out to and mentor younger students at the university.

As a student in our College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science (CEACS), Mr. Clark is both an academic and an entrepreneur. He has engaged successfully in a variety of entrepreneurial projects, while also focusing on what new theories, approaches and ideas he can take away from the classroom. While he is focused on entrepreneurial pursuits, he has made it clear that he values the classroom experience and views receiving a college degree as a badge of honor.

Coming from a sizeable family, Mr. Clark has made applying for scholarships a part-time job as part of his studies. I have encouraged many other students to do the same, but Mr. Clark is seriously committed to self-funding his college education. If I could write him a large check, I would; as I feel as if this mature, deserving and dedicated young man is someone who is primed to both succeed and make a positive impact on his world with his determination, dedication and attitude toward humanity. Alston Clark is genuinely a good person who cares about his society and how he can give back as an innovator and entrepreneur. I highly recommend Mr. Clark for any and all endeavors, and I look forward to watching what this young man produces for the world in his lifetime.

Sincerely,



Kari Miller, Ph.D.

Director, Office of Honors and Scholar Development





To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Alston Clark. I have had the pleasure of getting to know him while serving as the Chairman of the Department of Computer Science at Howard University.

I have had the opportunity to teach a wide variety of students a fast paced Lean Startup curriculum. However, few were as open to learning and embracing new concepts as Alston. From day one, it was clear that he was not there just for the grade; he truly sought to better his own entrepreneurial, technology, and marketing skills to put them to use in a startup setting.

Alston's breadth of knowledge related to startups is due to his extreme diligence, hard work, and innate affinity towards entrepreneurship and technology. I was never disappointed with Alston's work for my class. While enrolled, I witnessed him develop, validate, and pivot a business idea with a team of his classmates. His idea's are potentially disruptive, but more importantly his hunger for success and knowledge is insatiable.

A candidate such as Alston would greatly benefit any program, as he is highly professional and kind. Because of the above stated facts, I give my highest recommendation to Alston Clark.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Legand L. Burge, III'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Legand L. Burge, III, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair

Transcript

HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Office of the Registrar
Washington, D.C.

Date Printed: 10-Mar-2010
Page: 1

Student: BRU 00011810

Record of: **ALBION BURN CLASS**
8100 Colver/11/10 010
Elmer Springs, MO 20113
United States of America
Send to: ALBION CLASS
Course Desc: **Subgraduate**

Current Program: **College's Package of Entry into Comp Sci**
Major: **Computer Science**

REG. NO.	C	COURSE TITLE	CRS	CRS	PTS	PTS
00011810	C	COMPS 1101	3.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
PLACEMENT CREDIT AWORDED BY THE INSTITUTION						
201018						
00011810		COMPS 1101	3.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
00011810		COMPS 1101	3.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
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00011810		COMPS 1101	3.00	0.00	12.00	12.00

***** COURSED ON 2007 COMPS *****
***** COURSED ON 2008 *****

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HOWARD UNIVERSITY SEAL

TRANSCRIPT OFFICIAL AND
VALID ONLY WITH SEAL
SIGNATURE AND SEAL

