Aziza Crowder

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Mr. Lucero

**Personal Statement**

Over the 8 years I have lived in San Leandro, the creek at the end of my block has felt more than home to me and I know every nook, corner, and short cut there is to it. The very first time I stumbled upon the unique creek was when the finality of my parents' relationship twisted into a painful reality for me during the end of my 8th grade year. I was not prepared for it and was stunned at the news that my dad would no longer be part of my life.

I had no place to go but I went outside for a walk as I usually did when I needed to clear my head. Before I knew it I arrived at the creek. Laid out in all its glory it was a sight like no other to me and being a lover of nature and explorer at heart I could not help but be lured in by its mystical presence. After that day I continuously came and took relief from my parents separation underneath the leaves of humongous Oak trees, the sound of a small stream running, and birds chirping all about the various vivid flower bed. The creek soothed any worries or problems I would have at home or school. It was my oasis that showed me how to cope when there seemed to be no hope. Unfortunately as I grew older my frequent visits to the creek turned to weekly visits, which trickled down to monthly visits.

Two months after starting high school I began to develop an identity crisis in which my only cure would be my old friend the creek. However, this time it did not have the same lure, and vibrancy that it had always possessed. The creek was slowly dying, and disintegrating in front of my eyes and there seemed to be no chance of a successful recovery of the devastation. Once lively and green now had shriveled leaves and withered trees. The sight was difficult for me to bear for I had grown with the creek and remembered all the cathartic, joyful moments spent there. I ran home desperately in search for the cause of the creek’s ill state of health. Pollutants. The venomous contaminants from the city were the reason my oasis was painfully wasting away. I began researching fervently for a solution and any miracle to help.

My love for the creek had ignited my conviction and passion for science and using it to help protect environment from any unforeseen contaminants. I soon became active in pro environment school clubs and endlessly persisted we spend all our free weekends helping to restore the creek. Hours were spent introducing chemical aids and plants to suck up the contaminants to the creek in a brash effort to save the one place that in a way saved me. I came to the realization that becoming a chemical engineer would be the perfect career for me seeing as I could help the environment through chemicals to fight the bad ones destroying them. Albeit my club’s intentions and I were for the best, our efforts remained ineffective, luckily the city multiplied our efforts after becoming aware of how much attention the rehabilitation of the creek was getting from the communities. They helped restore the creek to the best of their abilities. The thought of almost losing the place that had nurtured me was life changing for me. In that instant I knew that preserving, protecting as well as finding new chemicals and products to help our environment was my passion. It would be my turn to ameliorate the environment one oasis at a time, which is what I exactly plan to do and pursue once in college.