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## The Passion That Drives Me

Ever since I was a young boy my interests have been eclectic. I've tried many things from basketball to poetry and throughout all these hobbies the one thing that has held my unyielding attention has been music. In my early childhood I was serenaded by the soulful reggae of Bob Marley and the energetic drumming of Oakland, California's street performers, which developed into my strong love for the power of the blues and conscious hip hop. I have taken classes exploring music, made my own with the trumpet and digital production software, and attended many concerts in a range of all sorts of genres. Through this exploration of music, I've noticed that it has an innate ability to bring people together. It is a language that anyone can understand.

The question of "what do you want to do when you get older?" has been one that I have given a lot of thought to and eventually I made the decision that I want to do something that helps people and feels fulfilling (pretty broad; I know). So, I believe that music therapy is something that I can truly give my full effort. I am fascinated by the human brain and how it works. I think it is something capable of creating things that may never be thought possible and therefore it is important to understand. The idea of being able to help people; to open their minds and lessen symptoms of mental illness is one that inspires me greatly. Seeing as music is almost a form of therapy for me, I think I could really help people to utilize music in their pursuit of happiness and betterment.

This goal has inspired me to begin my own research into music therapy and its effectiveness. I have written an essay about the effectiveness and accessibility of music therapy that explores the possibilities of

implementing music therapy into developing countries with high rates of mental illness and low access to therapeutics. Through these studies I have found that music therapy shows promise as an alternative to typical psychotherapy and medication because of its high variability in methods of practice and its' ability to connect across language barriers. It is a field that is extremely dynamic and has proven to be effective in treating disorders such as anxiety, depression, OCD, and in some cases autism.

I see music as a well of potential that can be utilized for the good of people all over the world. I have seen how the groove of modern jazz can make even the grumpiest people tap their feet and how the fiery energy of Latin pop can unite people of all different backgrounds. To me, music is the thing that keeps me working towards a bigger goal and keeps me happy while doing so.