

Maia Mongado

Michael C. Rothberg Scholarship Essay

Reading about Michael Rothberg's story, one thing that struck me was the vast variety of things he was involved. He not only achieved professional success in a multitude of topics like computer science and finance (and even combined them), but he also donated his time and resources to multiple causes like the research of multiple sclerosis and cancers. On top of that, he was a skilled athlete. As I reach a point in my life where I face many choices about what to do, where to go, what to study, and what I want the rest of my life to look like, I find myself pulled in many different and often seemingly unrelated directions. On one hand, I would love to do research in computational biology and genetic engineering; not only is the science fascinating to me, but there is also the potential to save millions of lives: after all, there are thousands of genetic diseases caused by a single letter mutation. At the same time, I am interested in English and media studies; as a Filipino, I have yet to see much positive representation of people like me (and many other minorities) in the media and I would love to not only study this but help create more representation to show the next generation that anyone can truly be the protagonist of a compelling story. I have often found these two desires at odds with one another, but stories like Mr. Rothberg's show me that it is possible to be involved in many seemingly unrelated things and excel at all of them, and also connect them in creative ways to enrich them. Mr. Rothberg's story inspires me not to give up on any of my goals, but to work hard and pursue all of them.