

## SUPPLEMENTARY ESSAY SAMPLE

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When I summited my first 14,000-foot peak, I was only seven years old. What started as an ambition to leap over every mountain stream and race my younger brother to the next overlook transformed into a seemingly endless trail of switchbacks. It was cold, with no trees to protect me from the howling wind and nothing to look at but barren rock in every direction. I greatly underestimated the resolve it takes to reach a summit. Climbing that first mountain was the most physically demanding thing I had ever done. Although I had thoughts of quitting and had to stop every ten steps to catch my breath, I made it. I was proud to stand on the first summit. I looked down to where I had been earlier and felt an overwhelming sense of accomplishment seeing how far I had come. My chest was heaving and my legs were burning, but I had proven to myself that I could climb a mountain.

Over the years, I have summited eight additional 14,000-foot peaks, each with a unique set of challenges and rewards. Mountain climbing challenges me and teaches me skills that benefit me in all aspects of life. Climbing has taught me the significance of being prepared. Climbs of this difficulty require a predesignated route as well as an understanding of the trail. I have learned the concept of time management. Mountain weather is unpredictable, and climbs begin before sunrise to ensure the summit can be reached before any vicious mountain storms arise. Climbing has taught me to be a forward thinker who always ensures that I have a route back down. I have learned to set goals and never lose sight of the summit. When the summit seems out of reach, smaller goals are needed to motivate me along the way. I have learned to silence doubting voices and sometimes just go for it. I have surprised myself by discovering I can do much more than I sometimes think possible.

Not every summit can be reached on the first attempt. This year, I tore my ACL in a soccer game on the first day of school. That ended many goals I had set for my senior year. Just like I do with rocky mountain paths, I turned my initial disappointment into motivation to rehabilitate stronger, faster, and with confidence to overcome any obstacles. Whether it is in hiking Colorado Fourteeners or in my everyday life, I am determined to push past barriers and reach my goals. My collegiate goals include studying pre-medicine while also competing on the Track and Field team. Accomplishing this will require me to use every skill I have acquired through climbing and then some, but I accept the challenge and embrace the hard work necessary to ascend. Although my resolve to climb the Colorado Fourteeners started modestly, I have the notion that someday I might do all 56, and keep climbing.