

Tony Hyun Kim
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Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Orloff
Apt. #6F
1400 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94109

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Orloff,

My name is Tony Hyun Kim, and I was the recipient of the Orloff award for scholarship in physics this year. I am writing to thank you for your support of our studies. In particular, I am much honored to have been granted this recognition, and also wanted to let you know that the award came at a very fortunate point in my academic and professional career.

In one more day, I am graduating with B.S. degrees in physics and electrical engineering. In the coming fall, I will be returning to MIT, in order to pursue a master's degree in experimental quantum computation. This is a field that combines my fascination with physics with my penchant for tinkering and technology. I would like to invite you to peruse a recent proposal document for my master's project, which I find very exciting (if I may say so myself!):

<http://web.mit.edu/kimt/www/6.UAP/MEng%20proposal/proposal.pdf>

My longer-term plans are to attend graduate school in the field of atomic-molecular-optical (AMO) physics. However, in addition to these technical interests, I have a very different passion: foreign languages and cultures. Your award, it turns out, allows me to pursue my varied interests simultaneously, as I will shortly explain.

Long ago, my father has instilled in me a particular point-of-view regarding academics. When I was an elementary school student in South Korea, he would ask me each morning before he left for work, "Hyun, why do we attend school?" This question was given to me almost every day of my elementary school life. The "correct" answer, which I learned by rote, was the following: I worked hard at school, so that as an adult, I have the means to pursue whatever path that interests me.

My family then immigrated to the United States when I was about ten years old. The sole reason for this move was to provide a better education for me and my sister.

With my undergraduate education now behind me, I have found my father's principle to be completely true. For instance, due to my technical background, I have received job offers from three different countries from across the world. Of these, I have accepted a position in the image processing group in the MRI department of Siemens Healthcare in Erlangen, Germany. There, I will improve the imaging process by correcting for errors such as patient movement, magnetic field distortion due to Eddy currents in the apparatus, and so on. As you know, MRI is one of the most successful engineering projects that grew out of modern physics, and it has tremendous consequences for society at large. Of course, the spoken language at Siemens is German. Hence, my decision to attend Siemens this summer was one that resulted from each of the various interests that I previously mentioned.

At the same time, I have found that there are many practical difficulties I have to overcome on my path as an "international engineer-scientist." For instance, companies and universities overseas offer unfortunately only meager salaries, since as a US-educated Korean student with my particular set of

rather itinerant goals, I bring only short-term commitment to the organization. One of the sacrifices I am making is therefore to live without financial stability – living essentially paycheck-to-paycheck – for the next few years. At the same time, I am adamant about becoming financially independent from my parents, who now have to support my younger sister's college education.

As a consequence, I had doubts about being able to make ends meet in Germany this summer. However, your monetary award (when distributed over the three months) actually increases my monthly budget by 30% or so. As you can see, your support makes a significant impact on my financial situation for the coming summer. I will use the award to help take care of basic needs such as housing and food.

I would like to thank you again for your support of the physics undergraduate program. For me, the award came at a very opportune time, giving me the means to *realistically* pursue my interests. Now, in my poor German:

Wenn Sie Interesse haben, über meine Erfahrungen in Deutschland zu wissen, würde ich gerne Ihnen periodisch Bescheid geben. Falls gewünscht, bitte schreiben Sie mir einfach ein Email an kimt@mit.edu. Ich bin sehr begeistert, diesen Sommer meine MIT-Ausbildung anzuwenden, und ich würde sehr gerne Ihnen davon erzählen.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung, und liebe Grüsse nach Kalifornien,

Tony Hyun Kim