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Applicant Name: Giulia Placucci

Opportunity has always been present in my life; I recognize all the opportunities available to me in the United States. Coming from Brazil, I was unfamiliar to such abundant opportunities for essentially all who desire it; never would have I imagine accomplishing as much as I have in public schooling had it not been for the opportunities I have been granted in this country. In Brazil, a decent high school education would cost thousands, but here in essentially "the land of opportunities," I have completed my high school education and received college credit while still in a public high school. I consider attending any university a privileged opportunity that many have, and a virtue to be able to graduate with a degree.

Along with educational opportunities, the U.S. presents immense job opportunities. My family and I have benefited greatly through the simple ability to work, where in Brazil we may have not been given this chance to provide for ourselves. I have taken advantage of the financial opportunities here by tutoring children and working at a restaurant since my freshman year of high school.

Living in the United States has also given me the opportunity to meet and learn from people of different cultures and background. Although diversity is abundant in Sao Paulo, my hometown, the respect for that diversity differs from the United States. Living here I have been able to learn Spanish through my community and academically. I have meet people from all over the world and experienced the "melting pot" of South Florida. My interaction with diversity has made me who I am today, and taught me to adjust and accept others.

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Living in the U.S. means not knowing if my parents will be able to pay the mortgage next month. It means being embarrassed when in fifth grade when career day came my mom never showed because she was a house cleaner. But it also means knowing that there is no such thing as pride when we need to feed our family, there is no such thing as "gimme" when our birthday comes around, but there is "I can". My parents have taught me that I can do what ever I set my mind to, and that determination is the difference between a dream and a goal. Fortunately my parents have always been able to provide for my basic need, but I understand that secondary schooling is an expense they will be unable to provide for. With two sisters already attending Florida State University, I recognize that I am going to have to find my own means of financial support through college.

I am grateful for the opportunities given to me, but that has cost me the majority of my family. Growing up in a huge family with nearly 50 cousins, I have never been lonely. Immigrating to the U.S. meant leaving all of them behind. Because we are so close to our family, the separating is a continuous battle of emotions.

Living in the United States means knowing I can, but most importantly, believing I will. The accomplishments I have been awarded here will carry me to those I have yet to receive.