



HARVARD COLLEGE

Office of Admissions and Financial Aid  
Personal Interview Report

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: Thang Quoc Dien

Freshman Staff: LLO

**3+** ACADEMIC

Cum laude potential. Good grades and mid-600 to low-700 scores (29 to 32 ACT)

- Love of Learning - Rating - 'outstanding'
- Intellectual Curiosity - Rating - 'outstanding'
- Intellectual Originality - Rating - 'outstanding'

**Supporting Comments on Academic Rating**

Thang has perfect grades in a wide range of classes, but his SAT score is on the lower end of the Harvard average (2090). He is extremely high achieving - He mentioned he wished his SAT score was higher, though this total score is way above average for most universities. He is modest about his academic achievements but it became clear throughout the interview that he sets very high standards for himself and strives for excellence. In particular, I was impressed with his curiosity - He has both a strong skillset in math and science classwork and a deep interest in the arts and social impact. He spoke at length about his interest in other cultures, and about how his classwork and service trips have broadened his perspective on topics like racism and discrimination.

Exposure to various points of view is a common theme in many of his experiences: Discussing such topics in classes is what drove him to participate in the International Youth Media Summit, where he worked on a discrimination PSA in Serbia, as well as what drives him to spend a lot of his free time on YouTube and Tumblr, trying to understand world cultures through the way other countries and groups discuss/frame political issues from around the world.

**2** EXTRACURRICULAR, ATHLETIC, COMMUNITY, EMPLOYMENT, FAMILY COMMITMENTS

Substantial school-wide, regional or state recognition; major contribution/leadership

**Supporting Comments on Extracurricular Rating**

Thang is very involved in his school and community, and I had no doubt in meeting him that his involvement was a genuine commitment and were deeply fulfilling and important experiences for him. Thang is very involved in his school's student government (Associated Student Body), and is also the President of the Key Club, meaning he must attend and play an active role in all service events. He was particularly proud of his involvement in Key Club, and I could tell that his appointment to president was something he valued as a part of his identity within his community. I particularly enjoyed hearing about this involvement in the International Youth Media Summit. He traveled to Serbia to film a PSA on discrimination, which combined his two interests of social impact and the arts. He has a wonderful passion for all subjects - He is interested in art, film and the impact of media on cultures, but is proud of his math and science skills, and he gracefully has focused his attention on extracurriculars that are clearly interesting and fulfilling to him given those interests, and not just those that would help round out a resume. In fact, he is quite modest overall, despite being very proud.

**3+** PERSONAL QUALITIES

Above average personal appeal and character

- Openness to new ideas and new people - Rating - 'truly unusual'
- Contribution to college life - Rating - 'outstanding'
- What kind of roommate would this student be? - Rating - 'outstanding'



Applicant: Thang Quoc Diep

**Supporting Comments on Personal Qualities Rating**

Thang was born in Vietnam, so English is not his first language, though he speaks English quite well and is very funny and energetic. He seems to be very social - He often mentioned his friends, and how building a community of new friends and meeting people from all over the world was what he was most excited about for college. We met at a local coffee shop and twice during our interview, classmates (who was unaware he was on an interview) stopped by to say hello. Though this may be an unfair judgement, it appeared to me that both students that came by were from different social circles, and it became apparent to me that Thang may be friends with a wide variety of students in his school. What was most striking about Thang was his fun, casual nature but impressive, understated maturity. He speaks about his interest in social impact and what he has learned from his classes in a confident, mature way, but is comfortable being a bit silly and portraying a warm energy that I found very inviting. Though he didn't emphasize it in the interview, I got the sense that he is deeply social and very well-liked by his classmates. He has most likely faced the challenge of moving to the US, and he briefly mentioned that English is not his first language which is sometimes a struggle, though I didn't pick up on any struggle at all. In fact, I didn't realize he was not born in the states until he mentioned it (there didn't seem to be any cultural disconnect, etc). It is clearly not something he has let get in his way, and I got the sense very quickly that he has not made him any less social with his classmates.

**2- OVERALL**

Clear Admit; one to recruit

- Rare and rewarding exchange of ideas
- Diamond in the Rough

**Supporting Comments on Overall Rating**

I was very impressed with Thang overall and he's a student I would love to see at Harvard. I found him to be incredibly smart, passionate about his leadership roles, and deeply curious about the world and academia. Most importantly, he is very humble. It became clear to me throughout the interview that he is very high achieving, but he did speak about his academic accomplishments without me pushing a bit. I loved his curiosity about different fields and the way that he spoke about his interests in math/science versus an appreciation for the arts. He strikes me as someone that would take full advantage of leadership opportunities at Harvard, and would be an active participant in the classroom. While he is incredibly smart and I would imagine could excel at Harvard, he would also be a warm friend and well-liked classmate. He appeared to be very social, have a good sense of humor, and be very interested in culture, healthy debate and community. He also mentioned a desire to leave his comfort zone on the west coast and have a new experience - I think Harvard could open up even more potential for him.

