To Anyone Interested in the Herbert Hoover Uncommon Student Award:

First off, I would like thank you for your interest in this scholarship opportunity. Being a 2001 Uncommon Student myself, I would just like to tell you what an amazing experience it was for me. I was chosen as an Uncommon Student for my Park Beautification project. Growing up in Clio, Iowa, I had always loved playing in our small park but after years of wear, the park was looking dismal. To add to it, our flagpole had been hit by a car due to it being located too close to a parking spot. I took it upon myself to revitalize the park, replace the flagpole, and fly a flag from the U.S. Capitol that was donated by Charles Grassley. I also arranged a flag dedication ceremony during our annual town festival to dedicate the flagpole to the town. This project was one of the scholarship winning projects of 2001.

I chose to go to Simpson College after graduating from high school. Simpson had heard about my honor and I was told that I would not need to send in references due to the impression that was made from winning the award. I was interviewed two times on TV to talk about my experience and was also featured in numerous newspapers, including the *Des Moines Register*.

Coming from the smallest school in Iowa (8 people in my class--all girls--and I'm not lying!), I never thought that I could compete in a statewide scholarship. I was extremely intimidated as you might be feeling now. Trying to think of a project idea was also very difficult. My suggestion is to look around you. Explore your interests or seek what needs to change. The project can be anything you are interested in. Think Big!

Make sure you will be able to complete your project if you are chosen. When writing the proposal, be as detailed and specific as possible. Obviously things will change and you might not know everything you plan to do but the application is where you sell the project. Talk the talk! You will also need to relate it to the skills of Herbert Hoover (be it in the areas of leadership, community service/humanitarianism, entrepreneurship, conservation, or technology). If your project is chosen (sometime in April), then you will have till approximately October to complete it. Again, be as specific and detailed as possible; send in pictures if needed. Paint the selection committee a picture of your idea. They see multiple applications and you need to make yours stand out and be memorable.

The Herbert Hoover Uncommon Student Award has been one of the most rewarding experiences for me. If chosen, you will meet about 14 other students like you. Just for taking the time to fill out an application makes you uncommon. I guarantee your peers will not take the time to do it because the process will take a lot of thought, time, effort, and creativity. Who has time for that when you are involved in extracurricular activities, getting ready for prom, or doing homework? That is why this scholarship doesn't appeal to everyone…only to the uncommon person who takes the chance.

This scholarship does not grade you on your grades, test scores, or essays, just the ability to put your mind to completing something. I strongly encourage you to participate. The Herbert Hoover Library Association is well respected and encouraging. The members of the Library Association still keep tabs on me (as well as all of the twelve generations of students, now going on thirteen) and do everything in their power to help you succeed. And with the honor of being a Herbert Hoover Uncommon Student, success is exactly what will happen.

If you have ANY questions about this scholarship, please email me. I have personally been through the application process, the presentations, and even been on the selection committee. I wish you luck in the application process and on finishing up your Junior Year!

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