

## **Spring Leaders of Change 2018 Remarks**

**Brian Seo  
Alliance Stern Mass, Class of 2018  
Harvard University, Class of 2022**

Good evening students, parents, and Alliance Young Professionals Network board members. My name is Brian (Hyun) Seo, and I'm a senior at Alliance Marc and Eva Stern Math and Science School. First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank the Alliance Young Professionals Network for selecting me as one of the Alliance Gayle Miller Leaders of Change Scholarship recipients. I am very humbled and grateful to be here, amongst other phenomenal individuals.

When I was eight, I immigrated to the United States from South Korea, not knowing a single word in English. In elementary school, I was always by myself because I couldn't speak the language. All I had during recess was my soccer ball. In middle school, I was afraid to talk to my peers or teachers because all I got in return was people making fun of my accent. These experiences motivated me to find something different in high school. A school where I can feel like I'm home despite my differences. Thankfully, I found Alliance Stern MASS after browsing different schools in Los Angeles through Google. Since then, I have met many wonderful supporters who have positively influenced me. I still remember the moment when Mrs. Cuadra, my sophomore counselor, told me that I had the potential to go to a four-year university. At that time, I doubted the notion. My parents didn't go to college, they don't speak English, and I didn't have any resources that would help me with the college application process. Fortunately, many people decided to help me. Mrs. Cuadra, Minds Matter of Los Angeles, and Mr. Mahoney, to name a few.

As a Dreamer and first-generation college applicant who comes from a modest financial background, applying for and getting to college has not been easy. However, the support and love I received from various people helped me believe in myself. It was in fact what drove me to keep walking towards my goal. And today, I am humbled to announce that I will be the first person from my family to attend college. Starting this fall, I will be attending Harvard College with a concentration in economics.

Also, I am aware that Boston can be very brutal especially during the winter, and I am so thankful that this scholarship will help me pay for my winter clothing in addition to the many other expenses like airfare, books and living expenses. It will also help me pay for my summer work-study so that I can spend my summer interning at a non-profit in Boston that provides opportunities and resources to underprivileged students.

This is a very humbling moment for me.

Thank you for providing me with so many opportunities and resources. Thank you for seeing my potential and believing in me. I hope to sit where you are sitting today in four years, congratulating our new Leaders of Change Scholarship recipients. Until then, I will keep walking towards my new goals.

Thank you.