



June 2026

I am happy to recommend Aryan Baliga for your scholarship program. Aryan was in my Physics class last year and he is in my AP Physics class this year.

Albany High School is a rigorous college-prep high school. My course, AP Physics, is a high-level science course which emphasizes problem solving, conceptual understanding, and lab work in preparation for the AP Physics C: Mechanics exam.

Aryan is a **cheerful, capable student who enjoys challenging problems**. He is **easy-going and collaborative**, communicates easily with adults, and is a leader in his lab group.

For the all-class Rube Goldberg machine after the AP exam, Aryan and his partner **built a creative segment**. They used a rolling ball from the previous group to trigger a plunger cart which pushed a block off the table. The falling block pulled a string to trigger a projectile launcher, launching a ball into a funnel and down a ramp, where it knocked over dominoes into a cup attached to a string over a pulley. The string pulled a block up, releasing a billiard ball down a ramp to turn on the switch for an air track for the next group. He and his partner **worked efficiently** during the build time and **persevered through challenges**. Their section **worked perfectly with no interventions on the final run**.

For his AP Build (maker) project after the AP exam, Aryan and his partner **built a self-correcting gimbal mechanism** to demonstrate one component of a self-landing rocket. They ordered a printed circuit board, soldered on the electrical parts, and designed and 3D printed the mechanical parts. For their in-class presentation, they demonstrated that when tilted, the servo motor corrected for the tilt by adjusting the thrust direction.

Aryan took excellent photos for the Physics Photo project. His photo of a marble entitled, "Reflection and Refraction" was voted **our best photo last year**. His photo of a lightning strike entitled, "The Path of Least Impedance" was voted our **second favorite this year**. In both years, his photos were selected out of 100+ photos from our school to be **submitted to the AAPT (American Association of Physics Teachers) High School Photo Contest**.

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Darren McNally, Principal
Michelle Lau-Seim, Asst. Principal
Ena Dallas, Asst. Principal

From conversations with Aryan, I understand that he is interested in pursuing mechanical engineering. I'm confident that he will thrive in an academic or engineering environment and will be an asset to your scholarship program.

Sincerely,

Valerie Risk
AP Physics teacher
Albany High School, CA
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