Biographical Information

Please enter your name as it appears on your passport and/or birth certificate

Name: Last _Costello_ First _Amanda_ Middle ______ SSN ***.**.** 1101

Do you have or have you gone by any other name? 

Last ______ First ______ Middle ______ Gender: □ Male ☑ Female

Street Address 1 9501 Bell Mountain Dr Street Address 2 

City Austin State/Province TX Postal code 78730 Country United States Valid until: 08-31-2013

Phone: 1512 - 4612897 Cell: 1512 - 4612897 SMS: 1512 - 4612897

Email address: acc256@cornell.edu

Citizenship Status: ☑ U.S. Citizen □ U.S. Permanent Resident □ Foreign National Birth Date: 06-23-1990


Home Country Address: 

US Military or Veteran Status: Currently enrolled in a Cornell Grad program? □ Yes ☑ No

Currently enrolled in Cornell Undergrad program? □ Yes ☑ No Term of Graduation with Bachelors:

Previously attended Cornell? ☑ Yes □ No If Yes, Start Date: 08-15-2008 End Date: 05-27-2012

U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents Only: The U.S. Department of Education requires Cornell University to report on the racial or ethnic composition of its student enrollment, but self-identification is entirely voluntary. Please answer the following two questions:

Are you Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or Spanish origin)? □ Yes ☑ No

Please select one or more of the ethnicities with which you identify:

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Black or African American ☑ White / Caucasian

☐ Asian American ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Were either of your parents awarded a bachelor’s degree? □ Yes ☑ No

Academic Information

Proposed Field of Study: Mechanical Engineering, M.Eng Proposed Degree Program: 

Proposed Term and Year of Admission: Fall 2013 Alternate Field of Study: Systems Engineering, M.Eng

List all colleges or universities you have attended or are now attending:

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Grade Point Average

| Undergraduate cumulative GPA: 2.6 | Out of a total possible 4.0 |
| Undergraduate major GPA: 2.8 | Out of a total possible 4.0 |
Academic and other employment related to your proposed field of study:
Position: Design Engineer  Employer or Institution: HelioVolt  
Nature of Work: Machine Design and Analysis  Dates: 06 / 2012 to ____ / ____  
Position: Intern - Mechanical Engineer  Employer or Institution: HelioVolt  

Academic honors, fellowships, scholarships, and other awards you have received:  

Publications and original work:  

Other languages you have studied (indicate the number of years):  

Names of any Cornell faculty members whom you have consulted about admission:  
Albert R. George  
Nadine Porter  

Other graduate schools to which you are applying:  
University of Texas - Austin  
University of Colorado - Boulder  

Unofficial Test Scores  

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Financial Support Application

Do you want to be considered for university fellowship and assistantships? ☐ Yes ☑ No
Do you want to be considered for university special diversity fellowships? ☐ Yes ☑ No
Are you applying through the Employee Degree Program? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☑ Not a Cornell Employee

List sources of non-Cornell financial support (such as fellowship or corporate support) for the coming academic year that you have already been (or will be) awarded or for which you have applied:

Source 1: __________________________________________________________________________
Amount has been: ☐ Awarded ☐ Applied for
Amount in U.S. Dollars: __________________________ Date of Award: ______ / ______

Source 2: __________________________________________________________________________
Amount has been: ☐ Awarded ☐ Applied for
Amount in U.S. Dollars: __________________________ Date of Award: ______ / ______

Recommender Information Name and addresses of two or three persons who are acquainted with your academic work in your proposed field of study. Place check marks beside the names of those whom you have asked to write letters of recommendations:

Rec 1: Last: George First: Albert Email: arg2@cornell.edu
Address: 315 Savage Farm Drive
City: Ithaca State/Province: NY Postal code: 14850 Submitted: ☐ Online ☑ By Mail
Country: USA

Rec 2: Last: Porter First: Nadine Email: ndp5@cornell.edu
Address: Hollister Hall, Room 221
City: Ithaca State/Province: NY Postal code: 14853 Submitted: ☐ Online ☑ By Mail
Country: USA

Rec 3: Last: LoBue First: Joe Email: jlobue@cornell.edu
Address: 6301-8 E. Stassney Lane
City: Austin State/Province: TEXAS Postal code: 78744 Submitted: ☐ Online ☑ By Mail
Country: United States
>> Other graduate schools to which you are applying: (Cont.)

University of California - San Diego
University of California - Santa Barbara
University of California - Los Angeles
University of Washington
Statement of Purpose

By obtaining a Master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering at Cornell University, I hope to explore the many facets of engineering that Cornell’s program offers. I greatly enjoyed my multi-disciplined undergraduate degree, made possible by the flexibility in Cornell’s engineering programs. My goal for obtaining degrees in both Civil and Mechanical engineering is to make me a more well-rounded and capable candidate for future job prospects. My focus in civil engineering was structures and I am interested in the growing application of fiber composites to various industries, including aerospace, automotive, and construction. After completing my graduate degree, I would like to work in fiber composite design or continue working in machine design.

Since graduation, I have been working full-time in Austin, Texas at the HelioVolt Corporation, one of the country’s leading thin-film photovoltaic start-up companies. I was first associated with HelioVolt in the summer of 2010, when I worked there as a mechanical engineering intern. I presently work as a design engineer. Most of my time is spent designing, analyzing, assembling, and installing machine components that are used on the factory floor for the production of the solar panels. I work in a small team of three design engineers, where I am in charge of my own projects from approval to installation. This made my internship with HelioVolt unique as compared to many peers who interned at much larger companies. This uniqueness prevails now that I work at HelioVolt full-time. I feel that my rate of learning is much greater because I have so much individual responsibility. I also spend part of my time working with HelioVolt’s facilities group. Currently, I am working on developing a CAD standard in order to facilitate communication between international contactors, suppliers, and the company. This standard will also increase accessibility of the existing CAD when modifications are to be made on the manufacturing floor, or anywhere in the facility. Additionally, in the summer of 2011, I was able to take some of the first product samples to an off-grid non-profit retreat in New Mexico. The panels supply power to refrigerators for food storage that had previously run on natural gas. Seeing the panels be put towards a greater cause drives my passion for engineering. Recently, HelioVolt also partnered with Austin Energy to put our solar panels on the roof of the Yellow Bike Project offices, an Austin non-profit that promotes the use of bikes in the Austin area. During my graduate studies at Cornell University, I hope to explore classes pertaining to future energy systems and get involved with groups that promote the use of engineering for the good of humanity such as Engineers Without Borders.

My time at HelioVolt revealed just how critical my experiences on Cornell’s Formula SAE team were to my success in the workplace. The scope of projects that I was able to work on and my work ethic can be accredited to classes like mechanical synthesis and the Formula SAE team.
Amanda Catherine Costello – Mechanical Engineering Master’s Degree

Each year, the Formula SAE team designs, builds, and tests an open axle vehicle to compete against teams from all over the world at the Michigan International Speedway. During my time on the team, I have done extensive work with a variety of the composite components of the Formula SAE car. I have also gained valuable organizational and managerial skills from my various leadership positions. I learned about engineering design and teamwork that proved invaluable in the workplace. I also learned how important it is to balance project team responsibilities with academics. The experience is tarnished if classes slip because no one will see past the poor grades. From my junior year on, I successfully reevaluated my time management skills and improved the quality of work I put into both school and extracurricular activities. I hope to have further practical application experiences through my Master’s degree at Cornell by working with faculty like Professor Phoenix and Petrina. I would also be interested in working with Professor George, the faculty advisor of the FSAE team on available research opportunities.

In the pursuit of my Master’s degree in Mechanical engineering, I plan to take my knowledge of structural engineering, my extensive exposure to composites both in and out of the classroom, as well as my design experience from Formula SAE and my work experience at HelioVolt and apply it in future energy systems, aerospace, and automotive fields. I also plan to take classes in finite element analysis to give further depth to my engineering education at Cornell University. I am excited to pursue more challenging courses and am now prepared to meet those challenges.
Amanda C. Costello  
acc256@cornell.edu

9501 Bell Mountain Dr.  
Austin, TX 78730  
(512) 461-2897

EDUCATION  
**Cornell University, College of Engineering**, Ithaca, NY  
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, May 2012

**Cedar Park High School**, Austin, TX, Diploma, May 2008

RELEVANT COURSES  
Advanced Composites • Advanced Automotive Design • Structural Modeling and Behavior  
Structural Mechanics • Mechanical Synthesis • Metal Structures • Construction Planning and Operations  
Transportation Systems Design • Geotechnology • Thermodynamics • Fluids • Dynamics • Mechanics of Solids

WORK EXPERIENCE

**Design Engineer**  
**HelloVolt**, Austin, TX  
Summer 2010 and June 2012 – Present

- Utilize SolidWorks to design and ANSYS Workbench (Mechanical, Thermal and FLUENT) to analyze design modifications and additions to machinery on the production floor.
- Work with fellow engineers and floor technician in order to assemble and install new designs.
- Composed the HelloVolt CAD Standard for the Facilities Department which resulted in streamlined communication with international suppliers. (2012 – Present)
- Succeed in a multi-cultural department that both employs and consults with people from many foreign countries across both Europe and Asia.
- Help conserve resources by reworking faulty designs and cooperating with original vendors in order to improve functionality.

**New Initiatives Assistant**  
**Builder Homestite Inc.**, Austin, TX  
Summers 2007-2009

- Collected information about new home communities from over 200 customers and compiled the data to create a robust company-wide product database.
- Utilized various computer tools such as Compete to collect and analyze data that optimized profit returns from marketing expenditures.
- Developed communication and organization skills by working directly with customers, managers, and supervisors.
- Presented findings of the research to the managerial team using Power Point to clearly convey complicated information in an easy to understand format.

ACTIVITIES  
**Cornell Formula SAE**  
**Engine Rebuilds Leader 2010-2012**  
**Teaching Assistant 2011-2012**  
August 2008 – May 2012

- Was chosen to be the Engine Rebuild Leader for a team of 15 people that performed nightly engine work including assembly, disassembly, inspection, and troubleshooting.
- Liaised between team members, faculty, staff and outside suppliers and streamlined communication which increased overall team efficiency and productivity.
- Composed and presented the team’s marketing presentation to a group of industry executives at the international competition, Formula SAE Michigan (2009-2012).
- Manufactured a multitude of composite parts by employing fiber-glass, dry carbon fiber, and pre-impregnated carbon fiber.
- Designed, manufactured, and tested the car’s oil reservoir (2008-09), seat (2008-09), and undertray (2009-2010).

SPECIALIZED SKILLS  
**Languages:** Spanish (Proficient)  
**Computer:** Pro-Engineer, SolidWorks, AutoCAD, ANSYS Workbench, ANSYS (Structural, Thermal, FLUENT), MATLAB, Java, Microsoft Office (Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Word).  
**Other:** composite layup, mill, lathe, and sheet-metal forming.
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**TOTALS:**
- Fall 2008: 17.0
- Spring 2009: 18.0
- Fall 2010: 13.0

**TOTAL:** 48.0

**SEND TO:**
AMANDA COSTELLO
AMANDA.COSTELLO@GMAIL.COM
CASSANDRA DEMBOSKY
UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR
DIOID: 1998156

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EXPLANATION OF GRADE SYSTEM

Transcript Sections:

Section 1: List of Courses Taken and Their Grades

- **Course Name**: VAX
- **Grade**: A

Section 2: List of Honors and Awards

- **Honors**: Dean's List
- **Awards**: Presidential Scholarship

Section 3: List of Extracurricular Activities

- **Activities**: Athletic Team, Student Council

Section 4: Cumulative GPA

- **GPA**: 3.9

Section 5: Semester GPA

- **GPA**: 4.0
Recommendation Form

Applicant name: Costello Amanda

Proposed field and degree program:

Applicant DOB (for identification purposes) 06-23-1990 Proposed Admit Term

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the applicant can waive his/her right to inspect this recommendation. Should the applicant decide not to waive the right, he/she will have access to the recommendation only if he/she enrolls in the Graduate School at Cornell University.

[X] I hereby waive my right of access to the information* Amanda Costello 12-15-2012

[ ] I hereby DO NOT waive my right of access to the recommendation

Recommender: Please compare the applicant with one of the following

- Undergraduates from your institution who have gone on to graduate study
- Current senior undergraduates at your institution
- Other

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Write candidly about the applicant. Indicate how long and in what capacity you have known the applicant. Discuss the applicant’s qualifications and potential to carry on advanced study in the field specified, as well as his or her promise of professional success. In describing such attributes as motivation, intellect, and maturity, discuss both strong and weak points. Specific examples are more useful than generalizations. Indicate rank in class, if known. If possible, compare the applicant with others you have recommended who have attended or are attending the Graduate School at Cornell University. If the applicant’s first language is not English, comment on his or her ability to read, write, speak and teach in English.

Recommender Signature Albert George Date 12-15-2012

Name Albert George Title Dr.

Email Address arg2@cornell.edu Telephone 607-255-6254

Institution Name Cornell
Institution Address 100 Rhodes Hall
                   Ithaca, NY 14853
                   USA

*This recommendation will remain confidential during the admission process and will be used by The Graduate School in its procedures relative to admissions and fellowships. If the student waived the right of access to the recommendation, it will become accessible to the student only if he or she enrolls in The Graduate School.
Date: December 15, 2012

From: Albert R. George

Subject: Recommendation for Amanda C. Costello

I have known Amanda Costello for the past four and half years, as she was a member of my design and build FSAE automotive project class since August 2008. I have come to know Amanda well as she was a key member of the team for three years. Amanda worked on several aspects of the team project class but contributed most in composites, in leading the engine rebuilds team, and in being the undergraduate TA for the class in her final year at Cornell.

Amanda is a natural leader, gets along well with the team members, and is helpful and easy to work with. In her peer reviews she received excellent ratings and particularly was seen as being a great leader and in organizing work well and helping and encouraging people.

Amanda graduated with a civil engineering BS from Cornell. However, she is also very oriented toward mechanical engineering. She is now interested in getting a master’s degree in mechanical engineering. I think this will work out very well as her background in mechanical engineering is very strong both in structures and in general mechanical knowledge due to her experiences at Cornell and as an intern and in her present job at HelioVolt.

Amanda’s grades were not high especially in her early years at Cornell but they improved steadily as she matured. I am sure she will be able to do a good job academically in a master’s degree anywhere. She has learned a lot about time management over her undergraduate years and I believe she will not have a problem to handling master’s level courses. In my FSAE project classes she has had A and A- grades when ever registered for credit and I would have given her the same grade even in the terms when she was not registered for credit as she was always a strong contributor. I am sure she will be a credit to any university after graduation, both for engineering ability and knowledge but also as a leader who will be successful in engineering organizations.

In summary, I strongly recommend Amanda for admission to a master’s degree program. I would be happy to have her work for me in any situation, including on a master’s degree at Cornell.
Recommendation Form

Applicant name: Amanda Costello

Proposed field and degree program: ________________________________

Applicant DOB (for identification purposes): 06-23-1990

Proposed Admit Term: ________________________________

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[ ] I hereby waive my right of access to the information*

[ ] I hereby DO NOT waive my right of access to the recommendation

Recommender: Please compare the applicant with one of the following

[ ] Undergraduates from your institution who have gone on to graduate study

[ ] Current senior undergraduates at your institution

[ ] Other: ________________________________

Academic performance

Top 2%: [ ]

Top 5%: [ ]

Top 10%: [X]

Top 25%: [ ]

Top 50%: [X]

Bottom 50%: [ ]

Intellectual potential

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Creativity and originality

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Motivation for graduate study

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Write candidly about the applicant. Indicate how long and in what capacity you have known the applicant. Discuss the applicant’s qualifications and potential to carry on advanced study in the field specified, as well as his or her promise of professional success. In describing such attributes as motivation, intellect, and maturity, discuss both strong and weak points. Specific examples are more useful than generalizations. Indicate rank in class, if known. If possible, compare the applicant with others you have recommended who have attended or are attending the Graduate School at Cornell University. If the applicant’s first language is not English, comment on his or her ability to read, write, speak and teach in English.

Recommender Signature: Nadine Porter

Date: 01-03-2013

Name: Nadine Porter

Title: Mrs.

Email Address: ndp5@cornell.edu

Telephone: 607-2553412

Institution Name: Cornell University

Institution Address: Hollister Hall, Room 221

Ithaca, NY 14853

USA

*This recommendation will remain confidential during the admission process and will be used by The Graduate School in its procedures relative to admissions and fellowships. If the student waived the right of access to the recommendation, it will become accessible to the student only if he or she enrolls in The Graduate School.
December 13, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Undergraduate Coordinator for Civil & Environmental Engineering, I have had the pleasure of knowing Amanda Costello for approximately 3 years. I’m delighted to have the opportunity to recommend her for your graduate degree program in Mechanical Engineering.

There is no denying that Amanda struggled during her first few semesters at Cornell, but what struck me about her was that she did not try to make excuses or justify why her grades were not where they should be, but that she stepped up to the plate and was eager and receptive to seeking advice and making the necessary changes to turn things around. Amanda did some deep soul searching and self-evaluating before undertaking this challenge. She strategically sought every resource available and was creative in balancing her time as one of the leaders of the elite Cornell Formula SAE team, her meetings with Professors and TAs, and an advisor in the Learning Strategies Center, all so she could be successful. Amanda also met with me faithfully every two weeks for approximately 3 semesters. She would report on her progress in her courses and shared any concerns and challenges she faced. She was always open and honest and knew it was important to her remaining successful academically.

What do I admire most about Amanda Costello; it’s her tenacity; her ability to stay positive and never give up or gives in to self-pity or doubt about her ability to succeed. She developed a plan and knew what she needed to do and did it. She did not dwell on her past performance and on things she could not change, but learned valuable lessons about herself and executed her plan skillfully while making adjustments along the way to help her improve her performance. She definitely took command of her situation and proved that she was worthy to be called a Cornellian.

I know Amanda will use the same steadfastness to do well in graduate school and for making her dreams a reality. She learned much about herself and her academic abilities while at Cornell and I have witnessed first-hand her success at conquering challenges that so many other undergraduates at an institution like Cornell face.

Amanda has a very outgoing personality and the determination needed to succeed and therefore is an excellent candidate for your graduate degree program. I appreciate the opportunity to recommend such a dynamic individual as Amanda. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact me at 607-255-3412.

Sincerely,

Nadine D. Porter
Undergraduate Coordinator
Recommendation Form

Applicant name: Costello Amanda

Proposed field and degree program: ____________________________________________

Applicant DOB (for identification purposes) 06-23-1990 Proposed Admit Term ____________________________

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☒ I hereby waive my right of access to the information* Amanda Costello 12-13-2012
☐ I hereby DO NOT waive my right of access to the recommendation

Recommender: Please compare the applicant with one of the following
☐ Undergraduates from your institution who have gone on to graduate study
☐ Current senior undergraduates at your institution
☒ Other Design Engineers

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Recommender Signature Joe LoBue Date 12-13-2012

Name Joe LoBue Title Mr.

Email Address jlobue@heliovolt.com Telephone ____________________________

Institution Name ____________________________
Institution Address 6301-8 E. Stassney Lane
Austin, TEXAS 78744
United States

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December 13, 2012

To the Review Committee:

This letter serves as my formal recommendation for Amanda Costello for admittance to Cornell’s Mechanical Masters of Engineering program. Amanda has worked for me as a design engineer since she graduated from Cornell University in May, and before during the summer of 2010 as an intern. She has been interested in obtaining a Master’s degree in mechanical engineering for some time now and I feel that she would be an excellent candidate for your esteemed program.

HelioVolt is one of the country’s leading thin-film photovoltaic start-ups. I work with Amanda and one other designer as the main mechanical design force for the entire factory. The design team handles modifications and additions to the tools on the floor. It also handles new initiatives designed in house. The team members are responsible for everything from the conceptual design to the installation on the factory floor.

During her time at HelioVolt, Amanda has consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic and a dedication to success. Amanda strives to produce the highest quality designs by applying design knowledge from both Cornell and her previous work at HelioVolt. Amanda works well both in a team and on her own. She is a confident designer but not afraid to ask questions and have others review and make suggestions about on her projects.

After working with Amanda for almost a year now, I believe that she will thrive in the mechanical engineering field. Her structures background combined with her mechanical design knowledge makes her an excellent candidate for Cornell’s program. Her ability to work for both the design team and the facilities department using her civil engineering background makes her invaluable at a small and fast-paced start-up such as HelioVolt.

For these reasons, I highly recommend Amanda Costello as a candidate for your Masters of Engineering program. If you have any questions regarding Amanda or this recommendation, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe LoBue
Senior Design Engineer
HelioVolt Corporation
jlbue@heliovolt.com
(512) 213-5063