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Williams College Office of Admissions
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Dear Williams Admissions Officer,

Let me take you to a Nordic ski race in Hanover, NH: *The Silver Fox Trot*, the second to last 2004 Junior Olympic Qualifier. It's warm, the snow is heavy like mashed potatoes. All we can focus on is our muscles burning like hot lead . . . suddenly the steady swish-swish of someone coming up from behind invades our concentration. She glides by muttering a word of encouragement while maintaining her forward rhythm and focus on the top of the hill. We fall into step behind, imitating her every movement, admiring her strength and upward drive as the distance grows between us.

I'm thankful to have a friend like Liz Kantack to ski behind. How many times have I arrived at our appointed meeting spot to see Liz's face smiling in anticipation of our 6 A.M. run through the fields still soaked with morning dew? How many miles have I roller-skied around the gargantuan hills of Jackson, nearly wearing myself into the pavement, only to be convinced by Liz to "stay a bit longer for some technique work." How many times has Liz approached me *after* practice with an invitation to go try out "this new workout" she got from one of the ski coaches? I haven't been counting, but believe me, *many* times! Despite the crazy hours and physical pain, I always feel content and happy to have tagged along. Our XC team would be nowhere near where it is today without Liz; her zeal is contagious; her encouragement breeds success. Liz finishes first for Kennett, but she never wanders off or goes inside; every time one of us comes in, she's there—jumping up and down, cheering us on to a strong finish. She is truly the spark that makes our team glow. She rushes into our team's "waxing shack" practically every day waving some newspaper feature on skiing; she informs us of all the competitors we should be looking out for in the upcoming races; she gives advice on wax; she explains the course route ten times to various team members before each race, yet never loses expression or forgets to drop hints about how to go faster.

No matter what she's doing or who she's with, Liz helps make any experience fun and worthwhile. Whether it's skiing, student council, or SAT's, Liz has a plan and follows through with it to get good results. So many of our peers will make snide remarks about how "lame" it is to work hard. Liz has disproved this claim more remarkably than anyone I know. Upon receiving her first set of SAT scores she was dissatisfied. She is the only person I saw pull out an SAT prep. booklet several times a week while at St. Paul's last summer. However, her unique initiative certainly paid off when the second set of scores came back showing the biggest improvement I've ever heard of. We organize everything for student council together; we have most classes together; we've been climbing life's ladder side by side since first grade, and I'm glad because she is one of the strongest people I know.

The day after *The Silver Fox Trot*, both Liz and I skied in the final Junior Olympic Qualifier and she was named third alternate for the New England Junior Olympic Team. You'd think so much glory would get to her head, but it hasn't. No matter the race, she talks to so many kids and gives so many hugs, you wonder which team she's actually on. People at school are not intimidated by her success; they love her friendly, accepting personality. Where would our school *be* without Liz? such composure and determination is hard to find. Please don't pass up a girl that can always be relied upon to reach the top of the next hill and never get thrown out of the tracks.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Maynard