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Dear STARBASE Houston,

I want to thank you for introducing me to STEM education and for an experience of a lifetime! Due to my participation in the program, I gained a profound knowledge of STEM, and I am still utilizing it today in my studies.

Being a leader is something I was raised to be, and because of programs such as DoD STARBASE, I was able to prove it. During my participation in DoD STARBASE in 2005-2006 while attending Dunbar Middle School in Dickinson, Texas, we designed our own Space Stations, gained piloting experience using a flight simulator, and constructed our own rockets and blasted them off into the sky. These are most memorable to me because it was the first time I applied some of the knowledge from class into an actual project. I remember shooting off my rocket and was excited to see something that I had built actually function. DoD STARBASE made us use our critical thinking skills to find solutions--little did I know that they were preparing me for the future. As a young child, I did not understand the importance of STEM education, but now as a young adult, I realize how much it impacts the future of this nation.

I am a first generation college student and currently attending the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) as a sophomore pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering with an expected graduation date of May 2016. I'm also the Vice President of The Society of Mexican-American Engineers and Scientists (MAES), Event Coordinator for UTSA's College of Engineering Monster Mash Pumpkin Smash, Vice President of Outreach for our Global Brigades chapter at UTSA, and a mentor for FIRST Robotics. DoD STARBASE guided me to my path in pursuing an engineering degree by giving me the confidence and knowledge of STEM I needed to move forward. The classes and instructors challenged and pushed me to the best of my abilities. DoD STARBASE provided me with a foundation of knowledge that I continued to build upon after my participation.

DoD STARBASE taught me that I could make any dream become a reality if I pursue them. I would not be where I am today without DoD STARBASE and the support of my family. Once again, thank you STARBASE Houston for the opportunity and I hope you keep inspiring children to become leaders.

Best Regards,

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