* Essay #2 (Required) – At Marshall, we take pride in the fact that our students work collaboratively, both inside and outside the classroom, to create a culture, a community, and an environment that truly defines what we call the Trojan Family. Please describe the contributions you expect to make to your classmates during your time at USC. How will they benefit from your presence in the program? (word limit: 500)
* I have over a 25-year career in the information technology sector. I have worked for industry, started my own businesses, and now work in academia. I started my IT career at USC working as a work-study student for the Financial aid department and eventually at a technology incubator. In my professional career, I worked for a variety of industries in IT. I eventually started my own consulting business and an IT marketing business. I believe that my varied experience will be a solid contribution to my classmates at USC.  
    
  The information technology field is very varied but every company and business relies on the infrastructure provided by modern IT departments. I have learned many things both technical and in business. My experiences in consulting and startups taught me many lessons. In my consulting business, I helped companies develop IT strategies to help their businesses grow. We developed strategies to protect business assets and provide cybersecurity solutions.   
    
  I started an internet marketing business with a couple of partners. The experience was one of the most challenging and fulfilling endeavors. We build the business from the ground up. From fundraising to setting up a call center overseas to programming, to cold calling. My partners and I did everything. Eventually, it was not a successful endeavor but I learned a great deal. I feel that these experiences will help my classmates learn from our decisions but also from the experience of a start-up. Some of the most important lessons were not the successes but the moments of bad decisions.    
    
  In my current position at USC, I continue to learn and push the limits of IT in the exciting world of research. Academia is different than most corporate cultures an this is another unique perspective I can share with classmates. In my position at USC I have continued to learn and practice cybersecurity to ensure our research data is protected from hackers. I recently took a cybersecurity course here at USC and the instructor was a fellow Marshall MBA alumni. He shared his career path and experiences. He also advised me on many things. He inspired me to follow in his footsteps to get an MBA. I aspire to be once again part of the USC Trojan family and maybe also teach future cybersecurity students.