

### **Short biography:**

Hey! My name is Corina Vinarov, and I'm a junior at The University of Texas at Austin, double-majoring in Biomedical Engineering and the Plan II Honors Program. I grew up playing competitive tennis and currently compete on UT Austin's club tennis team. I've been snowboarding for six years and am a member of the International Freeskiers and Snowboarders Association (IFSA), competing in my first season of qualifier events for the Freeride World Tour. I'm originally from downtown Chicago, Illinois, and I spent my weekends snowboarding throughout Wisconsin, where I eventually fell in love with Granite Peak Ski Area. I'm excited to keep training and practicing to see where competitive freeride snowboarding will take me!

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### **Personal essay:**

My name is Corina Vinarov, and I'm a junior at The University of Texas at Austin, double-majoring in biomedical engineering and the Plan II Honors Program. I grew up in downtown Chicago, where competitive tennis shaped my identity for much of my early life. I trained year-round and traveled across the Midwest for tournaments. However, a serious elbow injury that required surgery forced me to stop playing for four years. At the time, I felt like I'd lost a huge part of myself. However, bouncing back from that injury and learning who I was outside of tennis has been my greatest accomplishment.

This injury ended up being a blessing in disguise because during that time, I started snowboarding. I began driving up on the weekends with my dad to Wisconsin, and fell in love with the mom-and-pop feel that the ski resorts in the Midwest had, especially Granite Peak Ski Area (my home resort). Snowboarding gave me an outlet to explore what I was interested in without the pressure that tennis had. Unlike tennis, where a bad day could make me want to walk off the court, I've never had a bad day on the mountain, even when conditions are icy or I fall repeatedly. Even if I'm frustrated when learning something new, I always have the biggest smile on my face. Snowboarding gave me a community and a sense of purpose I didn't know I was missing.

One of my favorite adventures was competing in my first freeride competition in El Colorado, Chile, in July 2025. I arrived knowing no one, but by the end of the week I had met riders from around the world and learned a lot about competing. Dropping into my run was very exciting and felt incredible after training intensely on the mountain and in the gym. It reminded me why I love pushing myself and connecting with others who share a passion for exploring the outdoors.

I'm currently competing in my first season of IFSA qualifier events for the Freeride World Tour. My short-term goals are to podium at a 2\* or 3\* event and eventually win a qualifier. I hope to earn a spot on the pro tour one day. I completed the Core Values Challenge, and some of my core values include:

- Always be enthusiastic and smiling

- Learn as much as you can about anything and everything
- Stay curious about the unknown

I carry these core values with me, whether I'm in the lab working on a research project or about to drop into a difficult line.

As a full-time engineering student living in Austin, Texas, and originally from the Midwest, training and competing in the mountains come with logistical and financial challenges. If I'm awarded this scholarship, I'll use it to help fund trips to Colorado resorts like Arapahoe Basin and Copper Mountain so I can train ahead of competitions. It would also help cover the cost of entry fees and new protective gear. Having this support would give me a real shot at chasing my snowboarding goals.

I hope to take everything I've learned through snowboarding, perseverance, curiosity, and appreciation, and apply it to my future career. I'm passionate about engineering solutions that help people perform their best, whether it's through improved helmets, prosthetics, or protective gear. This scholarship would allow me to continue competitive snowboarding and be able to take what I've learned throughout these years into my future.