Declan Pawlak - Georgetown Application (2026-27, Early Action)

Erie, PA · declan.pawlak.test@example.com · Applying to: Georgetown University undergraduate admission, 2026-27

Fictional applicant written for this PrepMyRound sample. Georgetown uses its own application rather than the Common App, so this follows the Georgetown Application's sections.

Profile

- **School and major:** Walsh School of Foreign Service (SFS); intended major International Political Economy.
- **Plan:** Early Action, submitted October 28, 2026.
- **High school:** Lakeview High School, Erie, Pennsylvania (public, about 1,100 students). Class of 2027.
- **Family:** Father, Tom, a welder at Lakeshore Rail Works (locomotive plant); mother, Kathleen, a dispatcher at the school district bus garage; sister Nora, 13. Grandmother Halina ("Babcia") lives with us; she left Gdańsk, Poland, in 1981.
- **Languages:** English (native), Spanish (four years, Honors), kitchen-table Polish.
- **How I heard about Georgetown:** My Model UN adviser, Ms. Teresa Ruiz (SFS 2009), brought our club to a Georgetown-run conference in DC in February 2025.

Grades and tests

- GPA 3.81 unweighted, 4.14 weighted. Rank 22 of 268.
- Senior courses: AP US Government, AP Macroeconomics, AP English Literature, AP Calculus AB, Spanish 5 Honors, Statistics (dual enrollment, Penn State Behrend).
- Earlier APs: AP World History (5), AP US History (4), AP English Language (4), AP Chemistry (2). In AP Chemistry I earned a C the first semester of junior year while out with a knee injury; I finished with a B-.
- SAT 1410 (Evidence-Based Reading and Writing 700, Math 710), August 2026. First sitting March 2026: 1320.

Activities

1. **Line cook, Dockside Pierogi House** (grades 10-12, 16 hrs/wk school year, 32 hrs/wk summers, paid). Family-owned restaurant on the bayfront. Promoted to Saturday prep lead in May 2026; train new hires on the dough station; about 600 pierogi every Lenten Friday.
2. **Model UN, Secretary-General** (grades 9-12, 4 hrs/wk). Club fell to 9 members after COVID; rebuilt to 23 with a novice night and a shared Google Drive of position papers. Went to seven

conferences with no award before an Honorable Mention (Germany, ECOSOC) at Lake Erie Regional MUN, March 2026.

3. **Columnist, The Lakeview Ledger** (grades 11-12, 3 hrs/wk). Monthly column, "Main Street Math," on Erie's economy. 14 columns so far: steel tariffs and the rail plant, why our mall is half empty, what a refugee family pays in rent.
4. **Volunteer English tutor, St. Hedwig Parish Newcomer Table** (grades 10-12, 2 hrs/wk). Conversation practice and help with forms for Ukrainian and Congolese families resettled in Erie. Helped one father pass his commercial driver's license written test.
5. **Varsity soccer, center back; captain senior year** (grades 9-12, 12 hrs/wk in season). Tore my meniscus in August 2025 and missed the junior season; came back for senior year.
6. **Family responsibilities** (grades 9-12, 5 hrs/wk). Drive Babcia to dialysis-clinic appointments twice a week; translate the paperwork when she is tired.
7. **Teen advisory board, Erie County Public Library** (grade 12, 1 hr/wk). Picking next spring's nonfiction display.

Honors

- Honorable Mention, Lake Erie Regional Model UN (2026)
- 2nd place, opinion writing, Northwest Pennsylvania Student Press Awards (2026)
- AP Scholar (2025)
- Academic All-Region, soccer (2026)

Short essay: the activity in which you have been most involved

At Dockside the dough station is the job nobody wants, so it went to the sixteen-year-old. Flour, water, sour cream, egg, a pinch of salt, and Mrs. Kowalczyk standing behind me saying "too wet" in a voice that made it sound like a moral failing. For a month I tore every sheet I rolled.

What fixed it was not talent. It was a notebook. I started writing down the humidity from my phone, the brand of flour that week, and how much water I used. By November I could tell her the dough would be sticky before she touched it. In May she made me Saturday prep lead, which means I now train new hires, including two of my teammates, who did not enjoy being told "too wet."

The kitchen is also where I learned what my column is about. When the price of butter jumped in 2025, I watched the owners argue for an hour over whether to raise a plate of pierogi by seventy-five cents. Economics stopped being graphs. It became two tired people at a table deciding what their regulars could afford.

Personal essay: tell us about yourself, in your own words

In March 2025 my dad came home at two in the afternoon. Lakeshore Rail Works had cut the welding line to four days a week because, the supervisor said, steel had gotten expensive. Dad did not say much. He went to the garage and reorganized drills that were already organized.

I did what I do when I don't understand something: I read about it until I did, or until it was midnight. I learned what a Section 232 tariff is. I learned that the same tariff that was supposed to protect steel jobs in one state could cost welding hours in a plant that buys steel in another. I didn't think either of those facts was the whole story, and I still don't.

Babcia had a different reading of it. She worked in the Gdańsk shipyard office in 1980, when the strikes started. To her, a cut shift is never only about prices; it is about who gets a seat at the table where the decision is made. She told me about typing up the workers' twenty-one demands. The first one was about trade unions. The second was about the freedom to speak.

That became my first column. I interviewed three welders, my dad not among them because he refused, and a purchasing manager who explained, patiently, why she couldn't just buy cheaper steel. A teacher told me the column was "too even-handed to have a point." Maybe. I think the point was that everyone I talked to was being reasonable, and the outcome was still a man reorganizing drills.

Then I tore my meniscus in a preseason scrimmage and spent ten weeks on crutches. I missed my junior season and, for a while, I missed AP Chemistry too, mentally if not physically; my C that semester is the worst grade on my transcript. It taught me something unglamorous: I need structure more than I need motivation. Once I put physical therapy, homework and shifts on one calendar, the grades came back and so did I, slower, on a knee that now predicts rain.

This summer I read Chip War by Chris Miller between shifts and kept thinking that a semiconductor and a locomotive have the same problem: one country makes a part, another needs it, and a town like mine finds out last. I want to understand those decisions well enough to be in the room where they are made, and to remember the garage.

Walsh School of Foreign Service essay: why SFS?

When our Model UN club went to DC in February 2025, I was the delegate from Chile in a committee on copper. I lost the vote badly. Afterwards a student volunteer walked us past the Healy gates and talked about her IPE classes for twenty minutes, and I realized she was studying exactly the thing I had been reading about at midnight.

I want International Political Economy because I want to understand trade from both ends, the negotiating table and the welding line. SFS starts with a core in economics, history and a language, and I like that it won't let me skip the history Babcia keeps telling me about. I'd keep up Spanish and finally learn Polish properly.

DC matters to me because the decisions I write about in Erie are made fifteen minutes from campus. I'd like to write for The Hoya, join the International Relations Association, and find a Mortara Center event where someone disagrees with me about tariffs. After college I want to work on trade policy, maybe at the Commerce Department, maybe for a member of Congress from a district like mine. Cura personalis, care for the whole person, is a phrase I first read on Georgetown's website. I recognized it from the Newcomer Table, where we help with the form and then stay for coffee.