When first I came to Longwood University, I was pursuing a degree in nursing because I wanted to work in a medical setting. After my first year as a student, I found out my grandfather was dying from an aggressive form of brain cancer. That was really hard on me losing him so suddenly. From that moment, I really became interested in cancer research and I lost interest in nursing. I decided to switch my major to biology in the middle of my sophomore year and was placed into some introductory classes into genetics and cell biology, and ecology.

I really excelled in the introductory to genetics and cell biology class and my love for being in the laboratory all started with that class. It is where I first learned how to perform RT-PCR and gel electrophoresis. The following year, as a junior, I began looking for undergraduate research opportunities with professors. I really wanted to stick with researching cancer so I began working in Dr. Amorette Barber’s tumor immunology lab. Right away, I got started on a project involving on how a naturally occurring plant stilbene, Resveratrol, could enhance the anti-tumor efficacy of chimeric PD1-expressing T cells. By doing undergraduate research here at Longwood University, I have been fortunate to attend and present posters at two big conferences and been a co-author on an article that was recently just accepted in the Journal of Visualized Experiments. Many undergraduates are not able to be published until after graduating and I am very grateful for everything I have accomplished at Longwood University.

Instead of going back to school after graduation, I have decided that I would like to work in a laboratory for a couple of years. I want to be a part of a collaborative team where I can be a valuable employee. I want to utilize the techniques I have learned at Longwood University to successfully perform the daily activities that this job expects. I also want to build relationships with people who are passionate about science like I am.