

Standing at this key juncture in my life as I transition from high school to college, I am well poised to reflect upon where I've been, where I am, and where I'm going. The next four years will bring a lot of changes, but by reflecting I can stay in touch with what is changing and what is constant.

My path to UW was typical in some ways and atypical in others. Like many others, I'm a local kid who's accustomed to striving for academic excellence, who likes big ideas and chai tea, and who chose UW for the vast resources it offers. Unlike many others, I was homeschooled for all eighteen years of my life before UW. I grew up studying math at the kitchen table, performing messy chemistry experiments in the backyard, and reading Dickens with my cat curled up next to me. I had extracurricular classes outside my home – it's hard to make a choir when your school only has two students – but on the whole my community was very small. My school year was marked only by the start and end of my extracurricular classes; my academics continued year-round, and being immersed in an environment of learning made it a habit.

I discovered my affinity for computer programming the summer before my tenth grade. I loved the feeling of processing data in the blink of an eye, juggling an armful of variables and constants without dropping a single one, and puppeteering software objects and their interactions. I continued to expand my programming repertoire through the remainder of high school, learning more about the logical structures of computing solutions. At each step I became increasingly certain that computer science would become a key part of my future.

At the same time, I became increasingly interested in the connections between computing and other disciplines, particularly how the lenses of sociology and history and law and ethics inform discussions about computing and vice versa. I endeavored to build a well-rounded, interdisciplinary understanding of computing and its implications. I also continued to cultivate my habit of lifelong learning beyond the classroom. It was with these interests in mind that I applied to UW and Interdisciplinary Honors.

I must say that I've been extraordinarily lucky. I'm directly admitted to my department of choice, and I'm in the fantastic Interdisciplinary Honors Program. Louis Pasteur once famously said that chance favors the prepared mind, but let's be careful with the Bayesian statistics here. My state of extraordinary good fortune doesn't mean that I'm prepared for every challenge and road bump that I come across. This is not a chance to rest on my laurels, but a chance to step up my performance to a new level as I move forward in my education.

As for what direction I'll be moving forward, I'm excited to pursue my computer engineering studies at UW CSE and deepen my knowledge. I recognize that engineering computer solutions is an art as well as a science, and that gaining a broad interdisciplinary background in the Honors program will make me a better computer engineer and global citizen. UW has a lot to offer and I'm eager to continue exploring the vast array of opportunities available to me. I want to try CSE research, to bring myself up to speed on the state of the art. I want to learn some statistics, to better understand and harness the power of chance. I want to apply my technical skills to projects that help people fulfill their potential. And most of all, I want to keep learning: from my classes, from my peers, from my extracurricular engagement.

As I go forward into my life at UW, some things will change and some things will stay the same. What lies ahead is a nearly infinite collection of opportunities for growth. Charting my path through these opportunities will be challenging, but that makes it all the more exciting.