Before attending the University of Pittsburgh I decided to choose Pharmacy as a major. Pharmacy is a profession where you have the opportunity to not only develop skills in the sciences, but also to make a difference in health care and the lives of patients. I have been interested in the profession of Pharmacy since I was a senior in high school and obtained my first job in a pharmacy. I have since completed two undergraduate years of study and one professional year of study. During this time period I have developed an even greater appreciation for what pharmacy is. I have also developed a greater interest in some specific aspects of pharmacy.

The pharmacy curriculum is one that is focused and centered on the care of patients. In the program I am being taught how to care for patients by using pharmaceutical care. In addition, I am also being taught the scientific and pharmacotherapeutic knowledge necessary to practice pharmacy. The curriculum is also rigorous in the fact that it is a professional program in which I am taking multiple demanding courses simultaneously such as anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, drug development, profession of pharmacy, and experimental learning. Next year I will begin taking courses that are specific to treatment regimens for various diseases or problems. For instance, some of these classes include cardiovascular problems, infectious diseases, gastroenterology/nutrition, oncology/hematology, neurology/psychiatry, advanced pharmaceutical care, and more classes in drug development. All of these courses are both interesting to me and of relevance to my future as a pharmacist.

In addition to the pharmacy curriculum coursework I have also developed an interest in anthropology. I have taken four courses in anthropology, all of which had a focus in cultural anthropology. One of these courses was taken in preparation for my research this summer. I took my most recent anthropology course this past semester in addition to my pharmacy school work. I enjoy studying anthropology and believe that it is a great field to study so that I may better prepare myself for a career in the public health sector. My reasoning for this is that anthropology is essentially the study of humans. I have focused my studies in anthropology on cultural anthropology in order to gain a better appreciation for various cultures. This is relevant to pharmacy in the fact that one of the expected learning outcomes form the pharmacy curriculum is to gain cultural competency. Cultural competency is important because an individual's cultural beliefs and practices could have huge implications on the way in which they take their medications.

A specific area of pharmacy that has intrigued me is the area of the U.S. Public Health Service Pharmacy Program. There are many options within this program, however, one specific option that interested me the most was the possibility of a career with the FDA. I first learned about this area of concentration during this past school year when alumni came to discuss their personal pharmacy interests with us. I am interested in this option because it would allow me to apply this pharmacotherapeutic knowledge I gain in pharmacy school to the public health sector and improve U.S. healthcare.

In summary, the pharmacy curriculum is a professional program that is very demanding because of the various course requirements. It is also a focused program in the fact that the courses that I am required to take are planned far in advance. I have also made the program slightly more rigorous for myself by taking extra courses in anthropology. Finally, my future goal in pharmacy and my focus of study is to try and gain more knowledge that will be necessary to practice pharmacy in the public health sector with the FDA.