My first semester in college has shaped me more than all four years of high school combined. As a freshman, new experiences are thrust upon me every day. Some experiences inspire me, some teach me my weakness, and others strengthen truths about myself that I already knew. As I reflect on the past weeks, the experience that has had the most defining influence is joining GlobeMed. This student run organization is part of a national movement to create partnerships between college students and international communities. The focus of the partnership is the eradicate health disparity, both locally and abroad. GlobeMed at the University of Cincinnati is partnered with Social Action for Women (SAW), a grassroots NGO, in Mae Sot, Thailand. SAW provides health care for Burmese immigrants that have been displaced from their homeland and are currently residing in Thailand. At the University of Cincinnati, GlobeMed promotes health campaigns to raise awareness of issues affecting the United States. To start of the GlobeMed experience, I attended the staff retreat. We went hiking in a local forest, and this time facilitated the growth of relationships with many of the GlobeMed members. This year I was also part a campaign to promote global peace. GlobeMed made a booth on one of the main campus greens and we invited students and faculty to make a pinwheel. The pinwheels covered the green and represented the UC community’s commitment to global peace. Another key aspect of GlobeMed is the commitment to financially support SAW. On campus I have participated in three fundraisers. The first two were through partnerships with Potbellies and Chipotle. The restaurants donated half of their sales to GlobeMed provided that the costumer turned in a GlobeMed flyer. Prior to the events I helped pass out these flyers and raise awareness on campus. The final fundraiser I participated in was the Date Auction. All of the proceeds from the fundraiser were given to GlobeMed. My time with GlobeMed has also fostered new friendships with other students who share my passion for global health. Finally, I have been selected to be a part of the 2014, five-week, summer internship to Thailand. I am part of a team of five members that will witness first-hand the assistance that SAW provides to the Mae Sot community.

I believe in GlobeMed’s mission to eradicate health disparities, and I am committed to being a part of this social movement. As a future physician I am dedicated to promoting healthcare; GlobeMed med facilitates a way for to me to act on this passion both locally and abroad. I am committed to promoting healthcare abroad because I believe health is a fundamental human right, and I have both the privilege and the obligation to eradicate global health disparities. GlobeMed is so appealing to me because of its long term commitment to one specific community. The partnership with the community is important to me because I understand that improving the health of an individual involves creating a sustainable change in behavior. Patients require emotional, social, and physical care. In order to effectively treat patients in the future I will need to understand social barriers to health in cultures that are very different from my own. GlobeMed’s focus on these social barriers and offers me the opportunity to learn about the Thai culture. I am dedicated to improving health care because I believe that improving the health of a community strengthens their ability to face future challenges and minimizes their risk of becoming involved in illicit activities. On the summer internship I will be able to create personal relationships with the SAW counterparts. These relationships will facilitate effective communication and a paramount understanding of who SAW is and what their needs are.

I have chosen to represent my experiences with GlobeMed through a slideshow. The pictures first depict the staff retreat and the global peace awareness campaign. Then they filter through the fundraising campaigns including the Potbellies night, the Chipotle Night, and the Date Auction. Following, the pictures show many of the friendships that have developed with the GlobeMed members. Finally the pictures show last year’s internship in Thailand. I chose to include these pictures because they represent what I will be doing this summer, and also clearly show the community that GlobeMed serves. I chose to use pictures as my medium because they show specific events and relationships that have developed through GlobeMed. Pictures create a personal relationship with the viewer, and I hope that when the slideshow is watched the viewer will truly understand the impact that GlobeMed has made on my life.