As my final year at the University of Cincinnati comes to an end, I take some time to reflect not only on this final year but also on my entire time at UC. This fall semester I was able to take a course in immunology through the biology department. Through the course I have gained an in depth understanding of the immune system and common diseases and treatments associated with it. I enjoy the material so much because I have been able to apply it to the research I participate in at the College of Medicine. I have a deeper understanding of what I do in the lab and I feel like I can more actively contribute and participate in the research. I also enjoy this course because it has brought together aspects of other courses I have enjoyed during my time at UC. It has the depth and detail that I loved about biochemistry and the translation applications that I loved about biology.

This year I also navigated through a very significant and challenging event, applying to medical school. From this experience I learned to reflect on what my strengths and weaknesses are and why I believe that I have the aptitude to excel as a physician. Once the application process was over I was challenged to decide which school was the best fit for me. This experience helped me to define what I value most and what I am willing to sacrifice. I understand now that I value being close to my family as a top priority.

As I look forward to medical school in the upcoming year, I would give myself the advice to seek a support network early on. I understand that there will be times in medical school that will be challenging and stressful and I know that I am going to rely on those who support me in order to succeed. In another facet, I have a goal for the upcoming year as well. I want to continue to pursue my love for art history. Over the course of my academic career at UC I have develop a love for the fine arts and I want to further develop that passion in the year to come. My time at UC has also helped to develop a heart for service alongside marginalized communities with poor access to adequate health care. In the upcoming year I hope to volunteer at pregnancy clinics around the city to work alongside soon to be mothers to ensure that their babies have a bright future. I know how deeply mothers care for their children and I am excited to be a part of their pregnancy journey.

Looking back on my total undergraduate career three events in particular stand out as being the most significant. The first was my freshman summer trip to Thailand to learn about the social determinants of health for Burmese migrants. This experience taught me how strong marginalized communities are while also making me aware of my own power and privilege. The second experience was volunteering at Crossroad Health Center. As a volunteer I learned how to view the patient as a partner and not as a recipient. I am now better equipped to work alongside my future patients in an effective and influential manner. Finally, my research experience at the UC College of Medicine completely changed my view of research in a positive way. I now see research as an important part of my future and I look forward to more chances to study the immune system in a research setting.