Sophomore year has come to an end. It seems surreal to look back at the beginning of the year and to fast forward through the entirety of the experiences that have come to be.

*What is the most significant event, experience, or challenge you overcame this year and what did you learn from that experience? How is experience influential in terms of how you see yourself today?*

During winter break I spent sixteen days in Guatemala. The first week was spent with my friend, Emily Heine, and a Sister of Charity, Sarah Mulligan. Sister Sarah moved to Guatemala twenty years ago to help start a community clinic in Mixco, Guatemala. During the course of the week I was able to live with Sister Sarah and the shadow at the clinic. During my time at home with Sister Sarah I learned what a life of service looks like on a practical day to day basis. I began to understand that when you choose to serve the underprivileged life is not glamourous or even comfortable, but I also began to understand the pure joy that is found in unlikely communities. At the clinic I learned about the social determinants of health in Guatemala. I saw how the indigenous people interact with other Guatemalans and I saw how distant the two cultures were. I saw how deficits within the community have created the health and poverty cycle, but I also saw assets within the community that have the strength to end the cycle. I plan to use these experiences to guide my own practice as a physician working in global health one day.

*How have you used your gifts and talents to give back to the community and society?*

During sophomore year I stepped up into many positions of leadership to contribute more to organizations that I had been a part of my freshman year. One way I did this was by becoming the Director of Partnerships for GlobeMed at the University of Cincinnati. In this role I worked with my committee to share the Partnership Action Framework developed with our partner organization Social Action for Women. I became a Young Life Leader and started the chapter at the University of Cincinnati. In this role I began to lead weekly bible studies, smaller discipleship groups, and the help plan weekly large group meetings. Another leadership role I took was as a mentor for the Connections Dual Admissions Program. Last year I was deeply influenced by the relationship I built with my mentor and I was very pleased to be able to build a new relationship this year expect as the mentor this time.

*What piece of advice would you like to give yourself as you prepare for the upcoming year, be that academically, personally, or both?*

If I could tell myself one thing for the following year it would be this: remember what has been done for me and not what I can do for myself. I often forget the saving grace of Jesus Christ and I live my life in a constant state of earning grace. If I could do just one thing well next year, I would lean whole heartedly on the grace and the freedom and joy and that is found within.

*How have your thoughts about who you are and what you want to do changed or evolved this year? How will that inform your next steps?*

This year was a true challenge to the question of whether I am doing something because I am capable of it, or because it aligns with what I claim to be my core values. This year I found myself losing endurance to finish goals I had set for myself simply because I could and not because I actually wanted to. One example is the decision to not earn a PHD. For a long time I considered applying to MD/PHD programs simply because as a hard working student I knew that I was capable of working toward that goal. But in order to achieve that goal I would have to sacrifice time that I would like spend otherwise doing research and other activities that I do not enjoy as much. In other instances I turned down the opportunity to study art history because there would be no recognition for it in the long run on my medical year. In the next year I want to do things simply because I enjoy them and not because they will benefit my professional goals.

*What is at least one goal that you have set for yourself for the upcoming year?*

In the upcoming year I want to really concentrate on a few things and to do them really well instead of doing lots of things okay. One thing I want to concentrate on is shadowing a wide breadth of medical professions. Up until this point I have concentrated on specialties that I thought were most practical, but I want to shadow much more comprehensively. This summer I am going to research physicians who I am interested in at least ten different fields. Then I am going to work with my advisers to set up days where I can do and shadow the physician.