

Nia Statement

Haiku:

Young women's freedom
Is contained in her self-worth,
Still looking for mine

Poem:

I am a student. I have always been a student and I will always be one. Why have I never felt good enough? I get pretty good grades. Is school really about grades? School is about knowledge, about experience, about people. So why have I never felt good enough? Good enough for my parents, my teachers, my friends, or worst of all, myself. Is it because I dreamed of getting so far out of Florida, immersing myself in the ivy league culture of the North? But have I failed? Is it too late? It can't be.

This is the beginning of my journey. I will never stop reading, stop asking why. But the real question is still- why don't I feel like I am good enough? Why have standardized tests told me I am only a little above average? When I was younger I saw myself as the next president of the United States, a doctor, an actor- someone no where even near average. It must be that we teach children to be too ambitious, only to get their dreams crushed. Maybe we should give children standardized tests and crush their dreams a lot earlier. This fantasy world we grow up in isn't fair.

But maybe that's all we have as children. Maybe if we believe we can be anything then we at least have a shot at something. And maybe it allows us to aim higher and farther and we might actually try harder, even if it means losing some of our dreams on the way. So I guess this is life's way of telling me everything will work out.

Well maybe I am good enough after all.

Essay:

Throughout my life, I have sought to find my purpose in this world. It is no surprise that making a name for yourself in a campus of 50,000 talented students at the University of Florida is difficult, however it is possible. As a motivated student having finished my freshman year I am now able to take the leap into finding where exactly I belong on this campus and realizing my professional and personal goals. I have always loved science and medicine and have recently found my interest in audiology. Hearing and the science behind it is so often overlooked and rarely thought about in daily life, however without it life would be so drastically different. This factor, along with others, has driven me to help people who have hearing problems. My life goal encompasses both the professional and personal- to become an audiologist, to keep my family and friends close, and inspire others.

As a child, I suffered from hearing problems, which affected me greatly. I felt tremendous pain in my ears and had difficulty hearing. Upon visiting an audiologist, it was discovered that I had lost about 25% of my hearing. Although I have since had surgery and have regained all of my hearing, I understand the difficulties of hearing problems, and want to help other people who are in the same situation that I experienced. Children especially have a difficult time communicating their health problems, and most hearing problems are not genetic so parents may not be able to help. Nine out of every 10 deaf children are born to hearing parents, who would not understand their child's disability without visiting a specialist (Deafness Research Foundation). While most

people might not believe hearing problems affect a large amount of people, in reality 38 million Americans have significant hearing loss (Center for Hearing and Communication). It is my goal to help as many of these people I can cope with everyday life, while dealing with a situation that I have personally experienced.

While I have a passion for audiology, my true passion extends beyond to creating a non-racist environment and one where women can feel comfortable. My hope is to recognize racism that is present in health care and educate others and myself to end it. Not only blatant racism may be the cause, but “colorblindness” also contributes greatly. Race consciousness is extremely important in health care to recognize and respect differences between people (Ford). Another main goal I have is to help women who may not have the funds to access an audiologist. Social location may define and constrain women (Zinn and Dill) and I would like to work with these women and their families who may believe that they could never visit a specialist to deal with their health problems. Many immigrants lack health insurance, and those without health insurance are 11 times more likely to be without a regular doctor (Yu, Huang, Singh). I plan to reach out to these women and their families and provide an affordable option to help them deal with their hearing problems.

Recognizing cultural differences is especially important to me, growing up in the extremely diverse South Florida, and seeing myself moving back to work there. Therefore, it is particularly important for me to be culturally sensitive in order to allow people from various backgrounds to come to me with hearing problems (Calhoun). In addition, it is important not to completely dismiss home remedies, which some families may value as valid treatments (Chan).

Women have become the majority of audiologists in the past decade (The Hearing Journal), and women have been breaking the mold in science and medicine for hundreds of years. Two women that have inspired me to pursue a career in science are Marie Curie and Dr. Eliza Chin. Marie Curie, born in 1867 went against all odds to become the first woman to win the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1903. Marie Curie has become a science icon, and even putting gender aside, she is one of the most remembered people in her field for her work. Dr. Eliza Chin is a current physician who continues to work on women's issues in medicine. She balances her personal life, her career and her goal of teaching others by mentoring, which she feels is essential in the medical field for women. Dr. Chin's work is so important and prevalent to numerous women because with it women can relate to others with the same struggles of balancing family and work (Changing the Face of Medicine).

Even though I know where I want to be in 10 years, I know that the present is also as significant as my goals for the future. I study long hours, but also keep in mind that school isn't everything. I know the importance of making friends, keeping friends, and forming networks with other women with similar goals. I know the importance of living day by day and appreciating what I have right now. I know the importance of loving my family and the other people I have chosen to surround myself with.

Although my professional goals guide my life and my choices, where I am right now is equally important. I know I can become a successful audiologist and I hope to balance family and friends in that equation.

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