

In elementary school, when asked what I wanted to be, I would confidently answer “an engineer.” This year as a senior, when asked what I am majoring in, the answer is still the same; I respond, “chemical engineering.” I have wanted to be an engineer for as long as I can remember. I am passionate about solving problems and I know that as a chemical engineer I can work to find solutions to issues I care about, such as climate change, and serve as a role model for girls younger than myself. I know that chemical engineering is one of the most difficult majors, but I am up for the challenge.

One of the factors motivating me to go into chemical engineering is my desire to find better solutions to manufacturing products. I love being outdoors and I want future generations to be able to enjoy the beauty of nature as much as I can right now. However, at the rate of industry, the impact on our planet is increasing every year. Factories account for a staggering portion of the pollutants in the air, and plastic waste products are destroying our oceans. As an engineer I would work to devise green alternatives to the current practices and hopefully help slow the effects on the environment.

Another critical influence that drives me to pursue an engineering degree is the fact that only 13 percent of engineers are women. I believe that part of the reason this number is so low is that women are subconsciously guided away from STEM careers starting at a young age. While the majority of people in my life have been supportive of my decision to go into engineering, some have questioned the decision. I have been asked subtle questions such as “why would you choose engineering when there are so

many easier majors?” or even once told bluntly “you might want to set the bar a little lower.” It is comments like these that motivate me to hang onto my goal, and become the best engineer I can be. I want to serve as a role model for women younger than myself, so that with time, the statistic of 13 percent can change.

I am looking forward to college next year and am eager to start my journey toward being an engineer. I can't wait to challenge myself and to reach the goals I have had since elementary school. However, even more important than my personal achievement is the impact I hope to make on our environment and the example I will set for future generations of women.