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Gateway to Honors

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Personal Passions Paper

*Wanderlust* has been defined as “a strong, innate desire to rove or travel about”. I believe I have always had a pretty severe case of wanderlust. I am passionate about exploring the world. I want to visit every continent, and immerse myself in different cultures around the globe. I want to learn different languages, to communicate with the people I meet. I aim for my passport to be completely worn out so crammed full of stamps I have to search for an empty space.

Growing up in a relatively small town in Ohio, I have always wanted to travel. My parents always encouraged this desire, taking us on family trips across the country. Looking back, I appreciate how much effort they must have put into planning these trips to make sure we always immersed ourselves in the culture and learn something about the people, wherever we were. It would have been really easy to sit by the pool all day and soak up the sun, but that was never all we did. Whether we were visiting a museum telling the story of the indigenous people of Scottsdale, Arizona, snorkeling of the coast of Puerto Rico, attending a Catholic Mass said in French in Montreal, or eating at the seafood restaurant all the locals recommended in Southern California, I have been incredibly blessed to experience the worlds of so many different people across the country and beyond. I was also fortunate enough to be able to travel abroad with my high school my senior year. As a senior member and president of my school’s Model United Nations team, I travelled to Paris, in France, and Leiden and Amsterdam in the Netherlands. We only stayed in Paris for two days, and while it was a wonderful time, I felt like a tourist, like I wasn’t learning about the city on a deeper level. I was a foreigner and truly felt like it. On the other hand, we stayed in the Leiden for a week, and because the conference was held there, had the opportunity to meet local people and talk with student from the Netherlands and all around the world. I was able to have meaningful conversations with people whose first language was not English, and learn about their lives. These experiences were unforgettable, and I am still in contact with many of those people. These travels are how I came to be passionate about travelling and immersing myself in cultures other than my own.

My travels have instilled in me a deep desire to see the world. I want to travel, starting during my time at the University of Cincinnati. My goal is to study abroad several times, at least once for an extended stay. However, like I mentioned before, I don’t want to just be an idle bystander. I want to truly be a part of the culture wherever I choose to go. While I am somewhat conversational in French, I want to develop my skills to the point of fluency. I also aim to become conversation in the language of the people in every place I visit. I want to broaden my horizons, both figuratively and literally.