My entire life I have wondered about my future. Where will I be in 10 years? What will my career be? The School of Social Work at Wayne State University has provided me with an education that has allowed me to explore my career options and find the answers to those lifelong questions. In my journey prior to this program, I have pursued what I had thought to be my calling only to be left unfulfilled. All of my life decisions have brought me to where I am today and I look forward to my continuous endeavors.

 There are many reasons why I was seeking a professional social work education, the most important being my passion for listening and providing guidance for people in need. In order to be successful I was critical that I learn all the components of what it means to be a social worker and this program has given me the skills necessary to be a culturally competent, ethical social worker. Throughout this program I have gained a better understanding of all aspects of social work, from one on one environment to group dynamics to social policy and the social welfare system as a whole. Social work is such a complex field and social workers are necessary in such an array of environments. The opportunity to help and provide in many different environments and the flexibility of the field is truly what I value in a career in social work.

 Throughout my adult life I have been faced with challenging situations and have experienced the social welfare system in various ways. I have seen friends and family in need and have been actively involved in their lives. I have seen the system work and I have seen the system fail and I have made it my mission to find out why this occurs. I have seen that the quality of care can vary drastically from one environment to the next and one situation to the other. I have experienced social workers who were not willing to dig deep enough to find the root cause of problems but also experienced social workers who were willing to do anything to get to the source of the problem and find resolution. This has made me understand that character, compassion and genuine care in this field is nearly as important as a solid education.

It is my character, compassion and care for others that I pride myself on, it was the education that I needed in order to come full circle and provide excellent care to my clients. My social work education has allowed me to build on my interpersonal skills and learn how to approach each individual and environment uniquely. I can say now that I am culturally competent and enjoy learning about cultures other than my own. I have gained a better understanding of other races, religions and cultures which allows me to better understand situations and provide the help needed.

 I firmly believe that I possess many of the qualities needed to be highly effective and helpful to others as a successful social worker. I share genuine concern for people and groups in need and I want to do what I can to resolve these social problems. To help in these situations one needs to build strong relationships which come very easily for me due to my sincerity and listening skills. Although I do feel that a weakness I may possess is that I tend to get too involved or too invested in a situation. Learning to draw the line between being a concerned care provider and being a concerned friend has been a struggle for me. In building relationships I do have the capacity to be self critical as well, I understand that not everyone thinks the way that I do and dependent upon many things I may need to change my way of thinking in order to better understand a situation. I am open to people from all walks of life and all ideas that vary from my own. I am eager to learn from my experiences in the field and better understand different cultures and ideas that others possess.

 Overall my education and experiences throughout these past eighteen months have shaped me into the social worker that I had once only dreamed about being. Although it was difficult at times and I doubted myself and abilities often, I pulled through and can honestly say that I am proud of the social worker I have become and look forward to continuing my education and making this learning process a lifelong one.