Use this space to share something you’d like the admissions committee to know about you (your interests, your background, your identity, or your community), and how it has shaped what you want to get out of your college experience at Hopkins. (300-400 words)

"Dek?" (short for *adek* in Indonesian, meaning little sibling.) My mother taps me on the shoulder.

She wondered what I had been doing at 6 am on a Saturday morning. Me, a sleepless 8-year-old, drawing a personalized skeletal system with a touch of color. I made small lines across its sections: from the metacarpals, the radius, the ulna, and the metatarsals. I repeated those names as I gave labels on my diagram, attempting to memorize even the tiniest of bones. This marked the beginning of my pursuit in the biological sciences.

As time passed, my fascination grew and so did the desire to extend the application of my knowledge apart from concept memorization. Thus, I volunteered at a medical research facility in the remote island of Kei Besar, Maluku, Indonesia where I had the opportunity to apprentice with resident doctors, nutritionists, and nurses. From ultrasounds to drawing blood, I was trained to conduct basic check-up procedures. Nonetheless, it was most exciting to meet the patients themselves, traveling from villages far away to visit the clinic.

I met one mother in particular, whose stunted 9-month-old son weighed as much as he did when he was just 3 months old. The mother could not breastfeed, and the child consumed primarily rice with vegetables alone. Following my studies in molecular biology, I advised her to balance the child's reliance on carbohydrates by increasing the intake of protein: a macronutrient that provides cell structure and support, hence crucial in one's growth. Socioeconomic factors meant meat and poultry were unattainable on an everyday basis, so she would begin feeding him eggs and *tempe* (fermented soybeans). Both were accessible, yet protein-rich products.

The experience has deepened my social conscience, to say the least. It introduced me to the challenge of tackling medicine in conditions which hinder the maintenance of nutrition and health, namely geographic isolation and lack of information.

I believe pursuing molecular and cellular biology at the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences is a step closer to enhancing the accessibility of healthcare and nutrition literacy for local underdeveloped areas in Indonesia. Furthermore, as opposed to illustrating skeletal systems, I shall soon be capable of detecting its abnormalities from a mere glare at an x-ray.

Hi Calysta:

I think this is good to go! All the best.