In sixth grade, I was walking home from school on a rainy afternoon when an SUV swerved over the sidewalk and hit me, pinning me underneath the car for over a minute and fracturing my back. When I went back to school after a week, I wore a brace that attached from my abdomen to my leg. To get to and from each class I had to use an aluminum walker, so as I plodded along in the hallway, I looked like an 85-year-old man. The car accident had been noteworthy enough to make the local news of my small town, so on my first day back, I was known to the entire school. For a shy middle-schooler who just wanted to be invisible, this marked a dramatic shift in my life.

I mention this story not only to grab your attention but also because it illustrates the first time my life underwent a drastic change that was completely unexpected. Of course, drastic changes have been a common occurrence this decade. The world recently saw itself flipped on its head as the worst pandemic of the century swept affected billions of people. Millions upon millions of employees found themselves either out of a job or working from home. People relied on innovative technology to do work and communicate remotely. Most importantly, many people felt the agonizing pain of losing cherished loved ones. I was no exception, as my grandfather passed in April of 2020. This being one of the first unexpected deaths I had ever had to deal with, it made me prioritize spending time with family members who have the least amount of time left. Transferring to Case Western would allow me to spend more time with the grandparents and family members in Cleveland whom I have had to sacrifice spending time with as we tried to avoid spreading the virus this past year.

One of the reasons I decided to attend the college in my hometown was that I would get the best of both worlds through the study abroad program. While I could build upon the relationships I had formed by growing up in Danville, I would also have the chance to go abroad for a semester to gain new experiences and expand my horizons. However, the coronavirus pandemic altered many students’ study abroad plans, mine included. With study abroad no longer being an appealing option to me, I seek the greater opportunities and experiences that come with a big city like Cleveland.

Case Western is also known for its strong Computer Science program. I mentioned the profound changes the pandemic had on society, one of which has been an increased reliance on technology as people communicate and live in an increasingly virtual environment. As a Computer Science major, this development is incredibly exciting. Being at Case Western would allow me to not only take advantage of the fantastic program and increased job opportunities that come with a big city but also give me the ability to launch products and services that immediately reach more people.

Cleveland is a city that is no stranger to moments of upheaval and change. As the city continues to become a popular destination, I look forward to continuing my education at the premier school of the state of Ohio. I am ready to undergo another change by transferring and completing my degree at Case Western Reserve University.