As Georgetown is a diverse community, the Admissions Committee would like to know more about you in your own words. Please submit a brief essay, either personal or creative, which you feel best describes you.

“GET UP CARIN! FOCUS! Land that axel jump or you’re not going home tonight! How are you going to win at Qingdao?!” My coach, Alberto, screamed at me.

It had been over ten months since I first started practicing for the one-and-a-half, in-the-air rotation called the ‘axel jump’ – figure skating’s oldest and most difficult jump. One time, I had to be lifted off the ice on a stretcher after a missed landing. I couldn’t even sit as I injured my tail bone. Fractures, torn ligaments and hamstring injuries had become the norm for me. Nevertheless, my coach’s constructive feedbacks always made me get back up on my feet.

A stream of consciousness ran through the back of my head. Firstly, my competition were athletes who basically dedicated their lives to skating full-time. I, however, had to strike a balance between the rigor of arguably the best all-girl Catholic school in Indonesia and this. Thirdly, my parents started signaling their reservations towards my decision to compete in tournaments.

“You might end up handicapped,”they argued.

I couldn’t sleep, hesitation flooding my mind. Should I stop skating? Was it my real passion? And ultimately, would I be able to nail the jump – even if it was going to be my last?

It had always been a dream of mine to pass Freestyle Level 10 and win in the Winter Olympics one day. Above all the uncertainties, one thing was certain – my dream. With all the hard work and grit I’d put into my craft – breathing the cold air and feeling the sweat dripping as I glided through the rink – I knew that deep down I could do the axel jump if I believed in myself. For over six years now, I had managed to keep up with the other skaters who would practice daily when I only had the luxury of three slots a week.

It was the season to be focused and to commit to my schedule. During every practice, I would stay in the rink longer than other skaters did. At home,I would online-At times, I would feel like the pressure was too great to bear; having to maintain my academic excellence as well. As I lay down on my bed, all I could do was close my eyes and direct laser-focused attention on the goal: landing that axel jump not only with precision but also with grace.

Fast forward a few months and I arrived at Qingdao. Costume ready, ponytail tied, skates tightened. The euphoria inside the arena was crazy, filled with thousands of people cheering and whistling. All I could hear, though, was the sound of my heartbeat racing fast. Lub dub. Lub dub. Time to shine at the biggest figure skating competition in all of Asia. I was here. And I was ready.

“Carina Angel Natanael from Indonesia,” the spokesperson sounded off.

I started gliding onto the humongous rink and took in the intensity of the limelight, only to slip into my toe pick as I fell on my knees. Lub dub, lub dub, lub dub, my heart beating faster as I see a blurred vision of Alberto signaling me to quickly get up before the music started and the judges started scoring. I smiled and nodded, gliding through four of five elements smoothly. The time then came for the final installment: the axel jump. I curved my back, stretched my arms to my sides, jumped into the air, turned one-and-a-half rotations, and landed with what I felt was finesse. I halted, faced the judges with the smile of an ice queen and curtsied with my last pose.

That night, I stood on top of the podium and received the gold medal for taking home both the technical and artistic aspects of Skate Asia Qingdao 2015. Yet what I cherished the most to date was not the recognition nor the trophies that I won ever since. It was the community I got to be a part of throughout the process. It was to my family, my coach, my practice mates and even my school and teachers that I owed this victory to.