

It was not until I volunteered at a rural and remote elementary school in Chongqing, China last summer that I figured out the real power of technology. Teaching a class named World 101, I introduced famous places and cultures across the world by presenting the students pictures and videos through the school's only projector. Incompatible with the dim classroom and dilapidated walls and desks, the blueish and futuristic light carried the digital signals from the projector and lit up the innocent and curious faces. Through their surprise, eagerness, and confusion, I was shocked by a certain power from the luminous light: the light of knowledge driven by the modern technology. I quickly realized that it is the technology of, by, and for people and our commitments to a better world, that makes tangible differences.

Inspired and motivated by how technology powerfully ensures people's rights to be informed and nurtured, I want to implement the resources to reform and upgrade currently low-tech education infrastructures. With a degree in Informatics, I plan to apply design thinking to examine the drawbacks and challenges in the current education systems, and apply technical skills to build interactive classroom systems that redefine traditional in-class learning experience. With user-awareness, I also hope to develop cross-platform interfaces that motivate students to learn remotely and engagingly. The design thinking, technical, and research skills taught in the iSchool, as crucial components to combating social issues, can prepare me to implement technology-driven solutions to light up more students and their futures.

It is my instinct curiosity to explore different worlds outside of mine that galvanizes me to backpacked to twelve countries across Europe, Asia, and the Americas on my own. Along these journeys, I stayed with the local families, experienced the varied cultures, and talked to people with their unique stories. Despite the disparity among lifestyles and beliefs that constantly shocked me, it is each encounter and conversation that taught me how to accept, respect and cherish differences and helped me develop an unbiased perspective. With my understanding of differences and global mind, I, being a future professional, will continue to go out to communicate and understand my users by respectfully and considerately learning their backgrounds: putting myself in their shoes to accurately address their needs.

Furthermore, as a zealous daily Quora user, I have participated in numerous discussions in which the users fiercely argue with each other due to different opinions. Thus, I have witnessed and figured out how different people approached the questions based on their experiences and purposes. With respect and my eclectic character, I found writing comprehensive posts that bridge and synthesize these different ideas most fascinating when these posts led to understanding and agreement among the users. Within the iSchool, I plan to reach out to my peers and faculty—learning and treasuring their experiences—and, accordingly, seek the strength of each team member's idea and voice, and integrate them into one that embodies everyone's wisdom and uniqueness in teamwork scenarios such as issue analysis and decision making.