Tell us why you decided to apply to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition, share with us the academic, extracurricular, or research opportunities you would take advantage of as a student. If applicable, provide details of any circumstance that could have had an impact on your academic performance and/or extracurricular involvement (you may enter up to 650 words).

“Decisions”

I first attended pharmacy school and was enrolled in “0-6 year” program. The pharmacy curriculum was challenging because it was professional doctorate degree program, Pharm.D. Also, my interest in health care and pharmacy was gradually diminishing. After a rough 4 semesters, I transferred from pharmacy school to my current university. The experiences in pharmacy school taught me the lesson that my own voice should be the most important factor when making decisions in significant matters such as major selection and career path.

I had not decided on my major when I first came to my current university, so I took the courses from various fields such as biology and an introductory computer programming course. I did well in the computer programming class, and most importantly, I enjoyed learning new concepts such as using Java programming language to solve problems. Shortly after this transfer, I took a leave of absence in order to complete mandatory military duty in South Korea. My major was still undecided at this time.

“Patience”

During my two years of military service, I was very concerned about my future career path and major selection. While I patiently waited until the end of service, I had much time to carefully think this over. Actually, the military service was my life-turning point because it not only inspired me to work hard and live patiently, but also encouraged me to select computer science as my major. After completing the service, I changed my major from pharmacy to computer science. It was a perfect choice because I loved computers, wanted to use them to find interesting ways to solve real world problems, and I was listening to my inner voice.

“Passion”

Working with computers, I know I could contribute to creating practical applications to help people and society. While at Pitt, I used my time and efforts wisely to learn and develop a solid foundation of basic programming concepts under an object-oriented programming early-focused curriculum. The curriculum gave me invaluable experiences such as learning the basis of data structures, assembly languages and using Java to manage prospective real world problems. My grasp of the fundamental knowledge and good academic standing prove that I can successfully move on to upper-level courses.

“Objectives”

As a prospective student, I seek specific challenges and rich resources in my transfer school. I am going to fully utilize the opportunities and resources offered at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I am eager to gain a sophisticated understanding of computer science conventions such as web database systems and human-computer interaction courses. I want to explore other unique opportunities such as cross-campus collaboration and various research groups.

Not only academic interests are important, but student life is also significant. I have competed in Algorithm competitions, and I take part in the student Robotics club at my current university. I want to actively join in self improvement student clubs or activities like Project Labs student organization and Robotics student group. By doing so, I will adapt to my new environment, understand the culture of the university and eventually become an active part of the student community. It is a very valuable experience to become a member of a community of competent students and alumni at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Consider something in your life you think goes unnoticed and write about why it's important to you. 650 words

I look young. I appear innocent-looking. I am soft spoken. I am not macho. I am not rough and tough. I am not stubborn. I am an international student from South Korea studying computer science in the United States. I like to talk about my military experiences with my American friends because they show much interest, are impressed and surprised as they never expect someone like me was once an active soldier. The fact that I served two years in the military of South Korea goes unnoticed by numerous people. However, experiences I had in the South Korean army are very significant to me as the successful completion of military duty has shaped me into a better person and student.

First of all, the military experience made me a more independent person. Tough training, strict discipline and etiquette lesson improved my independence and mental endurance. This independent mind has helped me in great ways after I came back to study in the United States. I could adapt to the new environment more effectively as I shopped cost-effectively, managed household accounts, and searched for good housing by myself. Going through tough challenges and hardships in the army, I am very confident that I can easily adapt to any new environment and accommodate myself to sudden circumstances. The military experiences taught me how to “survive the war” in the real society. That is a significant skill and asset I can obtain only from the military.

Moreover, the military “woke me up”. Before joining the army, my mind roamed about indeterminate future plans and I wandered down an unclear path as I transferred from pharmacy school to my current university. I was completely lost in choosing a major, finding academic interest and setting up my actual future plan. During my long time in the military service, I thought about upcoming challenges in the society and realized I should live more “seriously” and passionately as a returning university student. Because I had so much time to think and consider carefully in the military, I was able to find a perfect-fit major which is computer science since I love computers and programming. Consequently, the military experience encouraged me to ardently seek and learn my academic interest, and revived my dedication and devotion to the university education.

Some argue that serving in the military is difficult, a waste of time and unprofitable. Their opinions may be true; however, it is very different in my case. Two years of military service has truly shaped who I am right now. I cannot ask anything more than that because the characteristics and skills built by the military experience will make me successful and competent prospective student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.