Projecting Forward: Career Exploration & Reflection

I am someone that personally values achievement and independence. This can be seen in my desire to use my abilities to their fullest potential, while also cultivating my creative strengths. While I believe that these values are reflected in my everyday life and in my academics, I also believe that they align with my professional goals. I hope to pursue a career that gives me a sense of accomplishment every day, but also allows me to have the freedom to use my own innovation and artistry.

In addition to supporting my personal values and goals, obtaining professional excellence and strong guiding principles are two of the most important factors in choosing my career. I believe that I am high-achieving and always look to improve, while pursuing a meaningful purpose in my life. As I choose a major path in college and start to look for different career opportunities, I know that I’d thrive in a workplace that emphasizes quality and values social responsibility. I would be excited to go to work every day knowing that I can feed my naturally competitive nature, while working towards a clear goal to better myself and the world around me.

One key idea from my Career Exploration through PathwayU was my high score in the Openness to Experience category and how to apply it to my career path. PathwayU helped me associate words with such a significant part of my personality! I may not have consciously noticed it before, but it was nice to have an organized description of my nature! For example,
when PathwayU described me as “someone who thrives when creating new plans, tackling complexity, and innovating,” I thought it was such an accurate description!

Another main message I got from my PathwayU assessment was my high score in the Conscientiousness category. PathwayU gave an in depth description of this side of myself, describing me as “responsible, persevering, organized, disciplined, and determined.” The key takeaway also offered some very useful insight! It recommended that I be proud of my highly focused and well-organized inclinations, but to also be careful of my high-achieving demeanor, as it can rub some people the wrong way if not communicated properly. I will definitely apply this to my journey to achieving my career goals! This key takeaway has changed the way I think about my desire to constantly improve myself and how that can be reflected in my career.

Although I have always seen myself as an open-minded person that values intellectual curiosity and achievement, it was really helpful to read more about this part of myself and what types of jobs I should apply for. Now I know some buzzer words to use when applying for internships and jobs! Reading about my high score in the Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness categories helped me gain insight into how to focus my career goals and what type of work environment I would thrive in! I know that when it comes to my career, I want to be in a workplace that gives me the opportunity to engage in open-ended problem solving that allows me to solve complex problems using my creativity! Obtaining a career with these characteristics has always been a career goal of mine, but now I feel like I have a more focused pathway!

Because of what I discovered during the Mapping your UW Experience assignment and this career exploration assignment, I plan to take advantage of the opportunities at the UW that align with my career goals. For example, I am very interested in software development or user
experience design, so I plan on talking to some upperclassmen also pursuing that type of career about how to get relevant internships! I also want to get involved in the Human Centered Design Engineering research groups on campus, possible the research group focused on Participatory Design for Family-Centered Innovation! The research groups studies the effect of the pandemic on families and child education, something that I find very interesting! I hope to get involved in all types of organizations will support my career goals, and I know that the UW has many opportunities for that!