Career Exploration and Reflection

In my life, I value and prioritize self-improvement and social contribution. Coming to the United States as an immigrant, I did not have much. My parents struggled with money and were incapable of helping me academically. Additionally, I was the first child in my family, so I grew up having to take on responsibilities that children my age did not have to take on. So, when you grow up knowing that the foundation beneath your feet could easily fall under you, it motivates you to strive beyond your means. It is important to me that in whatever career I land myself in the future, I will succeed in my field and that additionally, I am able to contribute to the needy. I am fortunate to not succumb to the social forces that could have held me back and I know that not many are fortunate as I am. Therefore, I live my life incorporating generosity in my daily habits. I tutor on a weekly basis, I volunteer as often as possible, and I keep homeless care packages in car to give out. I believe that both medicine and computer programing aligns with my core values. Medicine and computer programming both provide me opportunities to help others and to make an influence on society. Medicine is appealing in the aspect that I can treat physical ailments and make a visible difference in someone’s life. Computer programming appeals to me as well because I know that technology is the future and there are so many opportunities to advance in the field. And with computer programming, I can create software that helps people and improves their lives.
When evaluating my career options, the most important factors for me are fulfillment, high financial compensation, job security, and social contribution. Fulfillment is the most important factor because I would want to do a job I will enjoy for the rest of my life. For me, fulfillment in my career means that I will continually be intellectually challenged, it will never be boring, and that the work I am doing is interesting to me. Secondly, high financial compensation is the next important factor. As someone who has experienced what life is like below the poverty line, I fear it and am trying my best to never to put back in that situation again. Moreover, I would like to reach a level of financial freedom that would allow me take care of the people I love and would give me opportunities to fund projects that help others. Plus, a vacation or two does not hurt. Thirdly, job security is another important factor for the same reasons that high financial compensation is. Life is fickle and capitalism is cruel. Therefore, it is always good to have a strong financial foundation to get you through the hard times. And lastly, social contribution is an important factor when evaluating career options. It is important to me that I make a difference in society during my time on earth.

Two key ideas I took away from my career exploration was that the assessment showed that I would be the most adept in the medical field and despite my introversion, my primary interest was social. This was new insight to me because I always believed that I would be bad at social careers due to my introversion. I was also pleased to find that my personality assessment determined that I was high in agreeableness and openness to experience. This might be a reason why I am well-suited to social careers. This makes me believe that perhaps the medical field may suit me best and may utilize the best parts of me.

I am going to explore study-abroad programs and clubs at UW. Some specific study-abroad programs I’m think of applying to in the future is “SIT Study Abroad India: Traditional
Medicine and Healthcare Practices” and “CIEE Arts and Sciences Program in Seoul Korea.” I’m also planning on joining clubs such as MAPs, Medical Student Association, Girls Who Code College Loops and Vietnamese Student Association. Also, I plan on participating in research in the summer.