"Can it be done, father? Can a man change the stars?" asked young William Thatcher, a boy from medieval London who always dreamed of becoming a knight. Regardless of the perceived impossibility of social mobility or the cynicism of those who surrounded him, he never gave up. He always remembered that his father had told him, "If he believes enough, a man can do anything." Since I watched the 2001 movie A Knight's Tale, I have always believed that anyone could change the stars. I imagined myself growing up as William, fulfilling my dreams against what seemed like inevitable odds.

My pursuit of a career in biomedical engineering is fueled by the constant reminders of my mother's family's struggles accessing medical treatment in Slovakia. Since I had watched William become a knight, I was ingrained with the mentality to work against all odds to help them. With the utmost pride and motivation, I dove headfirst into my community college education. Regardless of my financial limitations, I continually challenged myself, looking for every opportunity to learn. Thus, I started volunteering for the Main Engine Start nonprofit with two friends. When initially faced with the Matheny Children's School and Hospital's problem of helping children suffering from neuromuscular degeneration resulting in a limited ability to rotate their heads, I felt inadequate. Who was I to invent a solution? However, after thinking back to the ideals of self-belief and dedication established in me by A Knight's Tale, in seven months, I designed a novel electronic mechanical system with a servo and gear system that allowed users to control the rotation of their heads with minimal physical effort. Not only did I start to change the stars for myself, but I saw that I could for others as well.

I continued volunteering as a mentor and supervisor for two new project teams, investing in the mutual success of my peers and community partners. Through the great initiative and inventive problem-solving of my teams, I recognized that it was not a lack of willing and able engineers causing problems in healthcare, but a lack of guidance and initiative in distributing resources effectively. I further affirmed this when I witnessed firsthand how innovation could positively impact the lives of millions of patients globally if suitably utilized. Since then, I have sought to inspire change through leadership and policy, which incentivizes the development of individualized medical solutions for patients with rare medical conditions.

As I continue my journey as a transfer student at Princeton University now, a position that used to exist only in my wildest imaginations, I wish I could tell my childhood self that I changed my stars. Though, even if partially true, I know what he would tell me: You are not finished. I must continue to work hard and find new ways to help others. As I finish my degree in mechanical engineering, I intend to explore coursework and experience in policy, which will allow me to combine my in-depth

understanding of engineering principles and keen sensitivity to the afflictions of rare medical conditions to change the stars and shape a future where medical treatment is not just for the majority but also for those like William Thatcher, where the chances of receiving proper care seem impossible.