

Pushing the cart down the aisle takes an eternity. The cavernous hall is quiet except for the thump of rubber wheels as they pass over grout lines. I find my seat next to my parents once I finish pushing the cart to the front of the room. My heart is so heavy that I can feel it sink until it is next to my stomach. I barely make it through the next hour, but I only feel worse when I am forced to wish a final farewell.

The death of my Great Uncle Joe—everyone who knew him always called him Uncle Joe—concluded multiple years of battling a highly aggressive form of skin cancer that attacked his head and neck. I remember being sad and frustrated because, from the beginning, it was a battle that could not be won even though medical technology has produced many advancements.

Uncle Joe's death was the saddest moment of my life. Uncle Joe was a model for how to live life because of his willingness to give to others, good-natured character and satirical sense of humor. Despite all that was lost, I quickly overcame the loss of my Uncle Joe because his legacy is just as inspirational as his character. He was also lost to one of the most vicious diseases: cancer. Skin cancer. I got over my earlier frustration and found some comfort in this because there is no cure for such aggressive cancer I see it as nature simply taking its course.

“Is there any way to cure incurable diseases?” “How tragic would it be if someone lost someone they cared about to a preventable disease?” “What if they just could not get their medicine?” My inquisitive mind ponders these questions and tries to determine if I can be part of the solution. These problems are so important because I sincerely hope

that nobody has to suffer the loss of a guiding light in life to a disease, especially if the cure for the disease already exists.

Thousands of people die every year because the medicine they need cannot be produced in time or because they are unable to afford medicine. Pharmaceutical companies must take the lead in solving this problem because they determine all aspects of the production and sale of life-saving medicines. I would like to contribute to the solution to this problem by attending college and studying chemical engineering. In college and later in life I would use knowledge of chemical processes to work with pharmaceutical companies to refine manufacturing techniques which would allow medicine to be produced in a quicker and more cost effective way. This would give those threatened by curable disease the opportunity to receive their treatment early enough to ensure survival.

Additionally, many in my family—including my departed Uncle Joe—have Type 1 Diabetes. I would like to focus on a more efficient way to produce insulin so that Diabetes never goes untreated. In college and beyond I plan to do research and conduct experiments to try to unearth a more useful way to produce insulin to guarantee that treatment is accessible to all who need it.

I would like to find a better way to produce medicine with free access for everyone. I am inspired by the death of Uncle Joe because, even though he succumbed to a incurable disease, I would like for nobody to lose a loved one to a disease if a cure exists.