**Educational Highlights:** The College of Charleston and the faculty in the sociology department helped me find a field of study that I am passionate about. I have completed two gerontology internships. These internships allowed me to get directly involved with the community I hope to serve. My first internship was at a not-for profit organization that assists people, families and the community as they navigate end-of-life realities. While there, I co-facilitated Rainbows for all Children grief groups and attended Shannon's Hope Camp, a therapeutic weekend camp for children ages 6-15. I also helped plan and participated in their Annual Candelight Ceremony for the Charleston community. This semester I am completing a second internship at a funeral home. I wanted to learn how rituals and ceremonies help families grieve after a death and am assisting with a grief group facilitated by the funeral home. I completed service learning with Respite Care Charleston at their day program and fundraising events. I also had the opportunity to volunteer at The National Aging in Place Council's annual meeting. I have been on the honors list every semester while at the college and have been inducted into Alpha Kappa Delta Sociology Honors Society and was this year’s recipient of the Center for Creative Retirement Gerontology Award.

**Research Focus or Project:** During my time interning I have seen how elders and families cope with end-of-life issues and what roles the government and organizations play in assisting them. I am especially interested in how caregivers and families grieve. Observing grief groups has helped give me insight into this process. I also am interested in how disabled elders are cared for in old age. My final research paper focuses on the funeral industry and how its role has evolved in contemporary society.

**Future Plans:** I plan on pursuing a master’s degree in social work with a specialized practice area in gerontology. My goal is to advocate for community resources and provide direct support to elders and their families. I want to use what I have learned to support elders and caregivers by assessing their needs and providing them with proper resources. The College of Charleston has been invaluable in helping me discover my passion. As a sociology major I have learned to look at the world from a new perspective and plan to use this knowledge in my future career. I am grateful to the College of Charleston and the dedicated faculty that have helped my dream become a reality.