

### *Alexandria Edge, Senior ACS Chemistry major*

**MY TIME AT ANDREWS IS CHARACTERIZED** by thoughtfulness: A mixture of mindfulness, eagerness to learn and an integration of ideas.

It started with a simple question during freshman orientation week: What is present truth? As I plunged into the world of Western Heritage, an introductory Honors class, I was exposed to a combination of philosophy, history and literature that highlighted the growth of Western thought. It introduced me to a wide range of influential figures whose ideas stimulated questions in my life: What do I think? Why do I think that? What role is God playing in my life? I was fascinated as we traced the basis of our beliefs back hundreds of years, and as I saw how Western world views have both changed and stayed the same over all that time. I could even see in our study of Adventist history how decades had proven the idea that our access to truth grows when we as humans grow, both individually and as a collective.

This teaching of thoughtfulness spread across disciplines; my science classes placed a special emphasis on how we've gotten to the theories we use today, and how even now we are expanding our knowledge of the universe. For example, our basic understanding of the universe has profoundly grown from earth, fire, air and water to quarks and leptons. Even with all of that, we still have room to grow.

Thoughtfulness as a way of life also spread into my spiritual journey. One speaker in particular, David Asscherick, broke down and rebuilt the way I viewed Adventism. He connected me back to its foundation: God is love. This dovetailed smoothly into the topics of God's nature and perichoresis recently discussed in Western Heritage. With all of these exploratory opportunities, I grew in faith.

The rest of my college experience was imbued with this same thoughtfulness. I've looked at changes in colonial thought and cultural identity in classes



**“I’ve walked through the valley of the shadow of uncertainty; God’s goodness and mercy followed me through it.”**

such as Literature and the Arts and What is the Other. I've been exposed to the movement from Newtonian to Einsteinian to quantum physics in my science classes. Two of my favorite classes, Cosmos and Physics & Faith, analyzed how science and philosophy of religion evolved to separate and conflicting interpretations. Every semester, I see more of the world and the ebb and flow of ideologies. So many of the questions I didn't even know I had were answered by the thoughtfulness woven into everyday life at Andrews.

Before coming to Andrews, I was on the verge of leaving the church. I grew up Adventist, and while I had the knowledge of our beliefs, I didn't have the 'whys.' I saw a broken system that tried

to shelter me from wanting to question its fundamentals. I didn't see how far we'd come—the rich history of conflict and growth that got us to where we are. I didn't see that even now, we can and are still changing. Just as my experience at Andrews has taught me the process of learning, praying and growing, I want to be a part of the Adventist church as it continues to do the same. I can contribute to our spiritual progress. That, as I come to the end of my time in college, is the answer to that initial question of what is present truth.

Psalms 23 articulates one of those truths we cling to, which I have witnessed in God's guidance to the green pastures and still waters of Andrews University. I've walked through the valley of the shadow of uncertainty; God's goodness and mercy followed me through it. I chose to be baptized at the beginning of this school year, and I hope to continue in the tradition that Andrews has taught me: Careful thoughtfulness about my faith and how it affects every aspect of my life.