I learned the importance of reliable connections and information at a young age. Born into a family of healthcare workers, I have come to realize the privilege of having people to turn to when it comes to navigating healthcare. If there was ever something my doctor told me about my health that I could not comprehend, all I would have to do was ask one of the many nurses in my family for help. When the COVID-19 pandemic started, I would ask my relatives endless questions about their experiences in the field. Aside from my family, I was fortunate to have access to my undergraduate university's resources and frequent COVID-19 testing. Because of the knowledge my family and education gave me, I found myself more at ease amidst the misinformation on mainstream social media.

Even if health information is available to the public, not everyone has the health literacy to comprehend the information in front of them. Wanting to learn about their health, a person may face hardships because of their cultural background, socioeconomic status, and other parts of their identity due to someone else's prejudice. Just as these hardships are experienced in healthcare, libraries and other parts of society experience these challenges. After starting my MSLIS degree and working at a health sciences university library, this knowledge was something I became more aware of as I realized how many barriers people face to learning about their health and accessing information. For this reason, the lessons I have learned so far have led me to pursue a career that promotes intellectual freedom in both libraries and health organizations.

On my librarianship journey, I have learned two valuable lessons. The first lesson I have learned is that it is important to be mindful that all patrons have different levels of understanding of library services. Working in a university library, there is a common assumption that all schools prepare their students with the technology they will need in college. While many students may

have been taught how to utilize the tools to help them advance in their education, not everyone may have been able to have digital literacy courses integrated into their former curriculum. Working in reference services, I have learned the importance of being welcoming when patrons ask questions and not assuming what a person already knows. Asking for help is a vulnerable action. Some patrons may not ask for help at all due to past negative experiences or the fear of being ridiculed. Therefore, being patient and making an effort to listen to patrons allows a library to connect with its community.

The second lesson I have learned is that although librarians should be resilient in adapting to different roles and situations, we should also be aware of actions that can be harmful to library workers of differing backgrounds. A sense of community is important to have with both patrons and colleagues. Although patrons come from all cultural backgrounds, librarianship is still a white-dominant field with institutionalized beliefs still existing in the workplace today. Despite the continuous fight for inclusivity, we should still be able to address and educate ourselves about actions that can be harmful, no matter the intent, such as microaggressions. Along with difficulties due to backgrounds, a library should also reflect on the types of demands they ask of their library staff and faculty. Difficult work conditions can lead to librarians feeling burnout, stress, and other factors that can be detrimental to a person's mental health. For libraries to be able to serve their patrons, they have to make sure they see and respect their workers as individuals. As a result, libraries should make room for tough conversations and challenge expectations that hinder their librarians' well-being.

The lessons I have learned so far have shaped the goals I have as a future librarian. Hoping to continue my work in academic or research libraries, I want to advocate for the equity of all students regardless of their background. Especially with first-generation college students, I

want to help bring guidance and make resources more visible and accessible. As a current student, I also understand that there are multiple aptitudes for learning. Because of this, I strive to highlight academic databases that are not only text-dependent but also resources that are great for audio and visual learners. Students should be able to study in ways that are the most suitable for themselves. Along with research and study assistance, I want to advocate for my future workplace to have resources that aid students in their everyday lives. A person's education is only one factor in their life. Students may not have the support system or the financial means to only participate in schoolwork. They may have to work full-time jobs, have children of their own, or have other priorities that they have to focus on. Academic work can take a huge toll on a person's health. Therefore, I hope to advocate for services that can enhance students' lives. Food pantries, mental health guides, and community events are just a few ways libraries can alleviate students' stress.

Other than working in university environments, I will strive to explore different work fields such as hospitals and other health-related organizations. Wanting to advance my knowledge of health sciences databases, I desire to learn more complex data tools that can aid health professionals in their research. By doing so, I hope to learn about common health standards. Another topic I am interested in is the role artificial intelligence has in data analysis. How does AI help us look at data and recognize the needs of patients? Besides working with health professionals, I want to promote health literacy resources to patients and encourage hospitals to have translators so that we can break the language barriers that many people go through today. Everyone should be able to understand their health, be respected for their concerns, and have access to credible resources. From learning about different library science

fields to educating myself about cultures different from my own, I will continuously work to

become a librarian who fosters a community built on respect and understanding.