

I spent the majority of my early life immersed in a real-time strategy video game played by millions around the world - StarCraft II. I stayed up late into the night to watch the best players in the world compete in online tournaments. I played every chance I got and was consumed with the desire to compete against those top players someday. By the time I was 12, I was close to realizing that dream. I was playing competitively against the top North American players. At 13, I became the youngest player to ever be ranked number one in StarCraft II in North America.

Success came at a cost. My grades and health suffered, and I was picked on for being overweight. I recognized that I was being selfish with my time and sacrificing familial relationships, friendships, and the education my parents worked so hard to provide. I decided that I had to make a change.

Quitting StarCraft II was a terrifying decision for me. I had been so consumed by the game that I felt lost without it. During this period of uncertainty, I realized that I could refocus my competitive drive into something else. I decided to embrace athletics, joining both the water polo and swim teams in high school. I still, however, felt like I needed a long-term objective to work towards.

I started reflecting on what was truly important to me and thought about how my mom immigrated to the United States from Malaysia. Despite her humble family background, she was able to graduate from M.I.T., attend law school, and, based on her own merits, establish a successful life here. I also began to notice that many other families around me had similar stories to my mom's. Whether they were from other states around the country, or from other countries around the world, there was a common theme of opportunity, hard work, and in many cases, success. I began to truly appreciate the unique opportunities and freedoms the United States provides. This sparked a desire in me to serve my country and those around me.

It was then that I began to seriously consider joining the military. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that the drive I felt to be the best in StarCraft paled in comparison to my desire to serve as a soldier in the Army. I was able to refocus my drive into a life goal of service in the military as a member of the 75th Ranger Regiment. I believe this branch of service would be a good fit for me and allow me to grow as a leader, hold me to my highest standards, and push me far past my current physical and mental limits.

Attending West Point would provide me with constant challenges and a strong foundation to enter the Ranger Assessment and Selection Program. I would be able to work alongside peers with similar interests, learn how to be a successful leader, and simultaneously pursue my interest in engineering at a world-class institution. I would be honored to be appointed to West Point and to continue the legacy of the long gray line. I believe this would be my first step in beginning a long and successful career as an Army infantry officer in the 75th Ranger Regiment.