

To the Members of the University Club,

I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I am excited to be home in Rockford, spending time with family during the holiday season. I have used my first week at home to catch up on sleep and make the most of my time with my sister. Next week, she will leave for a service trip to the Dominican Republic and I will not see her before I head back to Omaha. Since my last update, I have made progress in my professional, athletic, and academic endeavors.

This summer, I completed the field portion of my disease ecology research with Rockford University. We confirmed several cases of the disease in Northern Illinois, residing in rodent hosts. We will continue to monitor levels of infection and watch for cases locally. This March, we expect to present our findings at a national conference hosted by Michigan State University. Beyond research, I took an important career step by getting hired to work at Rock Valley Compounding Pharmacy. As an entry level technician, I got my first taste of how pharmacy operations work. I had an opportunity to work alongside pharmacists, dispense medications, and create unique prescriptions. Although retail pharmacy is not my primary specialty of interest, this experience has given me skills and knowledge that are directly applicable to my academic studies.

During my sophomore Fall, I served as a team captain and competed in another successful Cross-Country season for the Bluejays. I had the opportunity to compete in 7 different states, including California. Although I struggled with an iron deficiency related to overtraining, I was still able to run personal bests and hold a scoring spot on my team.

In the classroom, I took on a well-rounded schedule that included Organic Chemistry, Ethics, World Literature, Medical Microbiology, and Immunology. For the first time, I felt that my course work was specific toward my interest in pharmacy. Organic Chemistry I and Immunology had the most pharmaceutical applications. I will be continuing these courses during the second semester with Organic Chemistry II and Advanced Immunology. My most challenging course was World Literature, which relied heavily on art history. Since I had a limited background in art history, this course was a great opportunity for me to dive into something new. In particular, I gained an appreciation for the authors of the Enlightenment and artists of the Renaissance this semester. At the end of it all, I returned home with a 4.0 GPA. This was certainly a product of the relentless support I have received from Creighton, the Athletic Department, my family, and you all. I am also excited to announce that I have received an official interview date with the Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions. After the February interview, I will be notified about my admission into professional school. I look forward to letting you all know how it goes.

Sincerely,
Nicholas Monkemeyer