...on selecting the number-known only to me, I, also on his orders did some arithmetic operations on the number, the answer to which I revealed to him. Then at the highest point of trickery, my cousin told me my “secret number” correctly. Prickles of awe danced all over me! My desperation to stop his costly joke pushed me towards my first true research through which I discovered the role of algebra in the mystery. Thus at barely age five, I began to see the awesome power of equations.

With a childhood filled with such experiences, I went through Elementary and High School scoring A’s in Science Subjects and ultimately, emerging as Best Overall Student at the National Science Competition, winning Special Prizes in Chemistry, Mathematics and Technology. I went on to represent Nigeria in the International Student Contest of the Polish Institute of Physics and later at the African Mathematics Olympiad in Senegal.

As an undergraduate, I spent 3 semesters doing Organic, Inorganic and Physical Chemistry experiments while 3 semesters were equally used in the Chemical Engineering laboratory, determining rates of reactions, distribution coefficients, sedimentation and fluid flow parameters etc. For my Bachelors’ thesis, my personal project was to study the “Integrated Approach to Petroleum Reservoir Management”. In it, I recommended for the several groups involved, the need for a basketball team-like approach with professionals from different fields, cross-relating at all levels of work; each retaining its identity as the final authority in its area of expertise. I also worked with 6 others on a group project design of an Isopropyl Alcohol plant. My share of the work, carrying out the Energy Balance of the process, stretched my Thermodynamics aptitude to a considerable extent.

However, these undergraduate research experiences though gainful, were pitiably bland. No predictions? No discoveries? This contrast with the earth-shaking characters I had built around research, influenced my renouncing Engineering for a career in the Basic Sciences, precisely Chemistry where I can get to decipher a few paragraphs of the confounding world of the minute.

A great desire of mine is to work on bond forming and bond breaking. My research intents in Theoretical Chemistry include investigating the energetics of these processes, the dynamics of reactions, particularly the Harpoon Mechanisms, Electronic Structure Theory including many-body problems and the Weak Intermolecular forces between molecules. At this remove-the heart of Chemistry, my goal is to formulate

methods and theories that would inform understanding in these fields. Immense therefore, would be the benefits of working in an upbeat group as Dr Piecuch's, learning the competence and attitudes needed to make a first-rate researcher and teacher- my choice of lifestyle and of livelihood.

On my current beat as a High School Chemistry tutor, fascination has been my greatest weapon at stimulating the minds of my students. They were astonished seeing me bleach permanganate and turn orange dichromate green, just with a harmless-looking metal. The reigning refrain is "Wonders shall never end".

In my personal moments, I burrow through Advanced Chemistry textbooks for a feel of Theoretical problems challenging Chemists of my peerdom. Outside this, I recently used a rude method to compute pi obtaining 3.16, and also developed a series, the partial sums of which give different powers of 2.

These manifest enthusiasm for Science, my experiences and my distinctions- National Merit Scholar, Students' Government President of my College, National French Contestant etc., make me sufficiently primed for graduate studies; a further step towards becoming another proof of humanity's noblest capabilities.