When Siya Gu came to the United States from her hometown in China in 2013, she never imagined that her journey and the education she received would impact her life in so many ways.

“When I first came to America for school, I was nervous and scared, because I had no idea what would happen, what to expect. To my surprise, everyone was so nice and my dorm parents helped teach me some basics—like laundry, etc.—and were always there for me for support when I was sad or homesick.”

According to Siya, the education she received at Menaul School was unlike anything offered in China. “At Menaul, I was able to experience an amazing one-on-one relationship with my teachers and my advisor, which really helped me grow and flourish during my time there.”

The two years she spent at Menaul and the relationships she formed with other students, faculty, and staff have greatly impacted the professional choices she’s making. “I had the chance to meet many great Christian students, as well as students with different religious backgrounds. We also had the opportunity to openly discuss our differences, which ultimately led me to a deeper consideration of my personal faith. With that, I realized that glorifying the name of God was my true passion, and our school president, Mr. Gilbert, saw this passion and helped connect me to a wonderful Christian college—Wheaton College in Illinois—where I’ll attend classes to study this fall.”

Siya plans to study sociology at Wheaton, thanks in large part to her academic experience at Menaul. During her two years at the school, she notes having the opportunity to explore her faith; in addition to her academic and extracurricular interests, she really learned who she is as an individual and where her passions truly lie.

She adds that the support she and her family received from the church also played a pivotal role in shaping her faith and commitment to God. “I had a great environment to study, and we had a great place to work to build our relationship with God. I always felt that I was living in a safe place where I could develop myself academically and spiritually at the same time, and this would not have been possible without the support of the church.”

The Christmas Joy Offering honors God’s promise by making and delivering upon meaningful promises of our own: to church workers through assistance in their time of need and racial ethnic education and leadership development.

Please give generously, to help others like Siya.