Throughout my entire life, I have done my best to stay out of the spotlight. I never felt comfortable being the focal point of an audience. Perhaps the problem was insecurity mixed with general shyness. This is not to say that I do not enjoy being recognized for accolades or accomplishments, but that I do not particularly prefer a lot of attention being placed on me. I would much rather have people who I consider important authoritative figures (professors, bosses, parents, etc.) quietly recognize my accomplishments. Flying under the radar is a way for me to get work done without having to worry about other people noticing. I do not feel the need to be lauded or praised for things and would prefer to quietly build an impressive repertoire of talents and accomplishments.

That being said, I am currently going through the recruiting process for public accounting firms. The goal of the process is, obviously, to attain a position at a public accounting firm. The only way to be selected by an accounting firm is to stand out as compared to the other candidates. This becomes more difficult when there are hundreds and even thousands of people competing for only a handful of positions. Throughout this process, I realized that my previous notion of trying to fly under the radar no longer applied to my life. My moment of revelation came during a group meeting in HONR 3790 in which we were reviewing the themes of our group members. As I read Lauren MacLeod’s theme of not wanting to fade into oblivion, I suddenly realized that I no longer wanted to go unnoticed, but that I wanted to confidently stand out. If I want employers to notice and hire me, I must stand out from the other applicants and, truth be told, during my college career at UNC Charlotte, I have engaged in activities and organizations that will set my resume apart from all of the other applicants. As you can see, this is quite the shift in philosophy. I am currently making the transformation from wanting to go by
only being quietly noticed by those in positions of authority to wanting to completely stand out and be noticed by everyone in the public accounting firms. I never thought I would become that type of person. I always viewed “that type of person” as cocky or attention-seeking, and I vowed to never transform into that idea I had in my head. However, looking back, the shift will be very beneficial in my life and, specifically, my job search. There is nothing wrong with being confident in your own abilities. The goal of this portfolio is to use my artifacts to demonstrate this shift-in-progress. I plan on using each and every one of these artifacts as an example of how I am no longer trying to fly under the radar, but rather trying to stand out and be unique when compared to the masses of public accounting intern candidates, and even in life in general.

I have a very diverse group of artifacts that helps depict this shift in philosophy in my life. Unbeknownst to me as a freshman, by senior year I would be completely out of my shell and making every effort possible to stand out. I will start out by explaining my original view of life and how I tried to stay out of the spotlight and get by without people focusing their attention on me. Some artifacts that demonstrate this ideology would be turning down an invitation to join the tax team as a sophomore, and deciding to nix my plan of being a Political Science minor. I will then introduce the other artifacts and explain how they have individually contributed to the process of a shift in philosophy. For example, my badge from my first internship would go here because the job is something I used to gain experience and also to become more comfortable in a corporate working environment. I plan on talking about how the change in philosophy has benefited my life and things of that nature. I will also discuss some of the setbacks that go along with this shift in philosophy. One artifact that portrays this is the Hire a Niner website where I found out the results of my accounting interviews. Finally, I will conclude the reflection with the final result: that I have shifted to a different way of approaching life. I am in the middle of a transformation in the way I view myself and the way I want others to view me. I want to stand out and I want to be remembered for the things I have accomplished. I want to be noticed so that I can get a job
in public accounting. I also would enjoy the self-confidence boost of this self-actualization. As an overall person, it would be great if I could extrapolate this idea into every facet of my life.

My chapter 1 notes for Financial Accounting 1 make up my first artifact. They are a representation of my choice to study in the field of accounting. They also represent a time when I was still trying to fly under the radar. For example, during this class I was offered a chance to join the tax team at UNCC by my professor. I declined the invitation because I was unsure of the commitment it would require, and I was nervous about the whole process. If I could go back and tell myself to join the team, I would. It would have been a great opportunity to get out of my comfort zone and gain valuable experience. However, this artifact is essentially what started the whole process because my final product is me trying to differentiate myself from other accounting students who are seeking positions at public accounting firms, and this was my first accounting class.

My next artifact is a set of my International Politics notes. This would be another failure in my college journey. I thought I wanted to be a Political Science minor, which would have been another way of differentiating myself from other accounting students. I ended up disliking the subject and this was my last political science class. I was not comfortable enough with the curriculum to stick with the program. It is not to say that I could not handle the difficulty of the work, but that the subject matter no longer appealed to me. I believe part of this is due to the amount of opinionated people in the realm of Political Science. I remember being very annoyed with some of the students in my International Politics class and their outlandish claims about political matters. It was at this point that I realized the world of politics was not a suitable place for my ideals. Perhaps after some self-actualization I would have felt more comfortable in this environment. This class, and eventually the whole minor, could have been a very valuable learning experience and another way to differentiate myself from other candidates.
There are many artifacts that demonstrate my shift in philosophy. My response paper for HONR 3700 is focused on aspects of the Civil Rights Movement. It was a culmination of the events of the Civil Rights Movement that we learned about in the class. My old self would not have taken this class because it was too controversial of a topic. I never enjoyed getting into discussions about race due to the strong opinions everyone seems to have on the subject. I also did not particularly enjoy the notion that race is something that needs to be discussed because of all the ill feelings that are brought about. However, I had a gut feeling that I should take the class, and I am very glad I chose that option. I ended up speaking up in class a lot more than I would have in previous years of my life.

My next artifact is my Body Image Autobiography from another HONR 3700 class. This was one of the more difficult assignments of my college career because it involved me stepping very far outside of my comfort zone. We were assigned a series of questions that we had to respond to, and they were very personal. We divulged our deepest secrets while giving Professor Molinary an overall picture of ourselves and how we feel about that topic. I do not like talking about this sort of thing, and would normally just make up watered-down stories to answer the questions. However, I decided to open up the flood gates and write how I really feel. I am unsure if that was decided on a whim or if I felt more comfortable because I was typing it in a paper instead of discussing it in person. However, it definitely led to increased class participation because the first barrier was broken.

My fifth artifact is the first picture ever taken of my girlfriend and I together. She lives in Connecticut and I live in North Carolina. This sort of represents a unique challenge of balancing very long-distance relationship with the struggles of daily life. Also, using my old ideology, I would never try and date someone who lives 750 miles away. It would be too much work and I would be too afraid to make a commitment like this without having any prior experience. I am glad I am making this shift because it has led to an amazing and fulfilling relationship. I am getting much better at managing time and finding different ways to make my presence known without actually being in Connecticut. It has
proven challenging at times but I am confident in my ability to be a good boyfriend no matter the distance.

My sixth artifact is my t-shirt from Operation Christmas Child last year. At the end of your shift at OCC, they give you a t-shirt that has the logo and some other graphics on the front and back. This artifact represents my involvement in community service and how I use this as a talking point and as a way to separate myself from other candidates. In high school I grudgingly did community service. I was a typical teenager who did not want to give his time when there were more fun alternatives. Even in the first couple semesters of college I only did community service to fulfill my requirements. Now that I am going through a change in philosophy I am experiencing a joy for community service like never before. Operation Christmas Child is now my favorite community service event. Luke 12:48 says, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” Through this process of self-actualization, I am more aware than ever that I live an extremely blessed life. I am also aware that I have an ability to help others. It is my responsibility to make these abilities manifest through charitable giving of not just money, but more importantly, my time.

My seventh artifact is my first Gospel message. This was my first time publicly preaching about how the Lord Jesus can save sinners. This artifact will be used as a way to show my growth in public speaking and how I have grown in my spiritual life. Prior to this shift, I would never be able to deliver a message like this in a public setting. It requires standing in front of an entire congregation and talking for thirty minutes. I would have been much too nervous, and felt like I did not have much to offer because of how knowledgeable some of the audience members are about the Bible. Now I speak publicly every month, and sometimes multiple times in a month. I no longer believe that I am not fit to be in front of a congregation, speaking about a topic. I believe God has a purpose for me in my life and perhaps public ministry makes up a portion of that purpose.
My eighth artifact is my badge from Time Warner Cable. This was my first internship and my first professional experience related to accounting. I used to not want to have an internship because I was afraid of failing or not performing up to standard. I also did not want to go through the whole recruiting and interviewing process because of what it required. What if I was not meant for the corporate environment? Where would I turn? I am glad I went through with it because of the wealth of experience I now possess. I now know that there is a place for me in a corporate structure, and I can contribute effectively.

Another artifact that demonstrates this shift is my Beta Alpha Psi t-shirt. Previously, I would never have joined a student organization like this because of all the effort and requirements needed to belong. I declined the option to be in the organization during my first semester of eligibility because of this. Now I am a proud member and I am using the connections and experience gained in my search for an internship. I know I belong in Beta Alpha Psi and I can handle the responsibilities that come along with membership.

I have also experienced failures and hardships during this shift in philosophy. My next artifact is the Hire-A-Niner website. This website is the way students can apply to jobs through UNCC. I applied to eight accounting firms through this site. Four of the firms immediately said “no” and denied my application. After the first round of interviews, two more of the firms decided to not invite me back for the second round of interviews. As someone who expects perfection, I was disappointed by these results. It was disheartening to be denied by these firms and I began to lose faith in myself and my resume. However, due to this process of self-actualization, I did not let these feelings linger and I moved on and focused on the companies that accepted my request for an interview.

The artifacts and reflective essay of this portfolio will pursue the theme by demonstrating my shift in philosophy from being a student who wanted to fly under the radar and go unnoticed, to being a
young professional who wants to be recognized and chosen by public accounting firms. I will use the first
two artifacts to describe my previous ideology of wanting to get by without any recognition. I will then
use the rest of the artifacts to demonstrate how I am currently going through this change. They will
serve as evidence of this shift and how it affects my life. I will also go over difficulties of changing your
ideology and the concerns it brings into my life. At the end of the essay and presentation of the artifacts,
you will be able to see how I am dealing with this shift in my life and the impact it has had, and currently
has, on my experiences.

I chose Dr. Patricia Mynatt of the accounting department to be my thesis advisor because of her
prominence in my experiences at UNCC. I have taken three of her accounting courses and she is the
head of Beta Alpha Psi. I chose Ms. Rosie Molinary as my thesis reader because of her honors experience
and because of how much I respect her opinion.

My experiences at UNC Charlotte, and more specifically within the University Honors Program,
have played a huge role in this shift in ideology. The classes and opportunities presented to me during
my undergraduate career offered me a conduit through which I could facilitate this growth. College is a
time of figuring yourself out and I have successfully started the process of self-actualization. I am aware
that this is an ongoing process and I am excited to see what the future holds. I am very grateful for the
opportunity to represent this process through my senior portfolio.
Schedule for Spring 2015 Semester

- January 8th – Meet with advisor to discuss plan of the semester
- January 15th – Meet with advisor/reader to discuss progress
- January 19th – Finish overall design of website
- January 26th – Put artifacts on the website
- February 5th – Meet with advisor
- February 19th – Have 1/3 of the essay done/meet with reader
- February 26th – Meet with advisor
- March 12th – Have 2/3 of the essay done/meet with reader
- March 19th – Meet with advisor
- March 26th – Finish the essay/meet with reader
- March 30th – Finish the website
- April 2nd – Meet with advisor
- April 7th – Defend portfolio
Works Cited


<https://www.myinterfase.com/uncc/Activity>.