

What is your favorite word, and why?

The baby hits the air, and begins to cry, letting us know that she's here, and she's ready for life.

Life impresses me. In my science classes, I marvel at how sophisticated the human brain and body are. I look under the microscope to view amoebas and paramecia, and I'm struck by how we came from such tiny beginnings.

How we treat life is the defining act of our existence.

I flick on CNN, and immediately see war and destruction. Life is precious to me, so it concerns me that we conduct our disputes in any way that interrupts it. But I also see many acts of kindness in times of crisis, many people working to nurture and support life.

Paradoxically, the same medical research we do to preserve life can turn into a weapon of mass destruction in the wrong hands.

We've had mixed success treating non-human life on our planet with respect. We've been able to conserve and protect many species, but we've managed to extinguish nearly as many with carelessness or selfish purpose.

As a member of the highest form of life on our planet, I feel a deep responsibility to contribute to the quality of life of human beings as well as our plant and animal cohabitants.

I plan to spend my time at the University of Virginia learning how to foster my favorite word: life.