Ever since I was a kid, I was not only passionate about mathematics but also extremely good at it. It was the subject of my biggest interest during high school and I always knew it will take a major part in my future career. After finishing seventh grade, students in Bulgaria have the choice to hold a national exam, which can give them the opportunity to continue his or her education in the best high schools in the country. This was the time when my math skills really stood out for the first time. Being one of the twenty-two students to receive the maximum grade on the math exam out of nearly two thousand, got me into all top high schools.

During my last year of high school I was already certain that I want to pursue a business degree in a foreign university. Even though I decided to remain in Europe in order to be closer to my family, my first-choice university had the SAT test as a requirement. It was another opportunity for my math skills to help me achieve my goals. Scoring 760 on the math section of the SAT was a big boost for my application and I was admitted to the university with a partial scholarship.

As I progressed through my bachelor degree and took different courses, my passion for mathematics slowly evolved into passion for finance. From all the business classes I enjoyed finance the most as I was able to apply my strong analytical and quantitative skills. I was fascinated and intrigued by topics such as financial planning and equity markets and soon realized that I am destined to pursue a career in the financial sector.

Even though my undergraduate degree played an integral part in shaping my personality, values and career path, it was a not an easy and at times challenging step. Coming from a middle-class family from a country with very low standard of living, my parents could not afford to support me financially during my whole period of study. As a result, after my first year, the circumstances forced me to start working part-time in the recruitment department of the university. Working as much as twenty hours per week, I was determined not to let my part-time job affect my studies and GPA. I became more organized and learnt how to efficiently allocate my time between classes and work without compromising on the quality of the efforts I put in both. All the hard work paid off as I successfully preserved my GPA and finished among the top students in my class.

Apart from my studies, I participated in several extra-curricular activities. I was part of the university soccer team and as its captain I lead the team to winning the soccer tournament organized at the annual Campus Fest. During the second year of the business program, in one of the mandatory financial courses students were required to participate in an investment simulation game that would go on for three months. From all the people who volunteered, I was chosen to organize and direct the game and assist students with any help needed.

After finishing my business degree and faced with a choice to make about my career path, I decided that it would be best for me to find a job in the field of my interest. My reasoning was that I wanted to gain experience, apply the acquired skills and knowledge and save money for my next step – master in finance – towards reaching my goal and dream job of becoming a financial analyst. For the past four years I have been working as a day trader on the US markets, specializing in Mergers & Acquisitions and Pair Trading. During that time, the strong business foundation and theoretical expertise my business degree gave me were enriched with a vast amount of practical knowledge that has helped me understand the financial markets and their mechanisms like never before.

I have selected the Master of Science in Finance program at FIU because it perfectly matches my career goals and study objectives and will help me achieve them. Its strong and diverse program, covering advanced and in-depth financial topics, is the perfect preparation for a future financial analyst and will provide me with both the theoretical and practical expertise that I have been missing. At the same time it offers the flexibility to choose your own specialization and the freedom to attend classes while still left with time for personal matters and even work. The university's modern facilities and latest technology and software will help me complete my analytical and quantitative abilities.

The US culture and the lovely Florida environment, combined with the reputation and recognition of the Florida International University and its Chapman Graduate School of Business, have convinced me that I am making the right choice for my development in personal and professional plan and reaching my dream job.