Eleanor Hayes-Larson ’11, SPH ’12 came to Yale from Princeton, New Jersey, with an outgoing personality and an aptitude for science. Needing to round out her sophomore year, she “shopped” Public Health in America, 1793–Present. The class not only fit into her schedule, but also opened up a new world. “Before then, I had never thought about public health. That course really changed my career track,” she said.

Wanting to learn more about global disparities in access to health care, Eleanor enrolled in Yale’s Select Program in Public Health, a track that would let her earn a bachelor’s in chemistry and—with an extra year of study—an MPH degree from the Yale School of Public Health. She expects to receive her master’s in 2012.

“I have always loved problem-solving,” she explained. “Chemistry allows you to find solutions on a microscopic scale. Public health is a much more “macro” form of problem-solving, but I love the complexity of the challenges.”

For her master’s thesis, Eleanor studies the impact of community-based interventions for populations at high risk of HIV transmission in Vietnam, work she describes as “very interesting and engaging.” Moving forward, she plans a return to the laboratory and a career in epidemiology. “One of the great things about my Yale experience is that I’ve been able to try so many new things to find the right fit,” she said.

A robust financial aid program brings exceptional students like Eleanor to Yale, regardless of their financial circumstances. To learn more about ways to support these students, please visit giving.yale.edu or call 800.395.7646.