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Honors 100

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Who Are You?

It had always been my dream to be a software engineer working with a close team of friends on cutting edge technology since I was in middle school. However, the path to achieving this dream has only recently become clearer. Back in middle school when asked what I wanted to be in the future, I simply replied “computer scientist” since I thought that the study of computer science would qualify me to be such. The topics of math and science appealed to me as a student and I felt that I was certainly on the right track to achieving my ideal career.

This path suddenly took an unexpected turn when I entered high school and began learning the details of software development. Hearing the stories of hours of endless coding in a tight cubicle made me feel unsure about my aspirations to becoming a developer. My uncertainty pushed me to explore different areas of discipline and I achieved this by joining the International Baccalaureate program. The program challenged me to interdisciplinary studies, allowing me to make new connections that I had not seen before. The endless links I made between the different areas of study lead to a gradual demystification of the true potential of software development. My initial perceptions and fears of studying computer science gradually subsided as I became aware of the multitude of different possibilities.

The next stepping stone from high school was continuing my education at a university. The University of Washington seemed like the perfect choice as it was close to home and was well regarded for its Computer Science and Engineering department. However, in addition to the regular application, I also decided to apply for the Honors program since I had heard that the goal of the curriculum was similar to that of the IB program. I felt that studying between multiple disciplines would offer up new opportunities and insights.

Now that I have finally arrived at the place that I have long aimed for I can certainly start seeing the additional steps that I will have to take to continue my progress. My main goal for my time at the University of Washington is to obtain an internship with a company that has a culture that I can fit into and whose work I admire. Up to this point, much of my experience has been largely applied within the classroom environment. This controlled environment feels like a safe and enjoyable place to learn and develop new skills; however it certainly will not be as comfortable out in the industry. The main point that upperclassmen and teachers have stressed to me is applying my knowledge and skills in a competitive and realistic environment. My high school internship taught me that this can not only be incredibly challenging and different but also enjoyable. My supportive mentors made me feel like an essential component of the team. I also hope to explore the many student organizations and events that the UW has to offer. Extra-curricular activities add a whole new dimension to my work routine in high school and I hope to find similar, positive hubs of teamwork and passion. My third priority at the University of Washington is to become involved with research. Although I haven’t quite figured out what I want to focus on, I know that I’ll get a better sense once I complete my introductory programming classes. Above all, coming to the University of Washington, I definitely hope to meet a new group of friends and establish long term connections.

In the near future, before graduating from the university, I aim to continue with software development. I intend to find my focus however, through the interdisciplinary studies during my time in the Honors program. I hope that new topics will engage my interest and perhaps guide me in a new direction.