**Essay 4**

**Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.**

DRAFT 1:

Who knows that randomly playing with a calculator can greatly impact my life. One problem in my primary school math club’s entrance test perplexed me. It seems like an easy addition problem, but adding all numbers from 1 up to 100 given a limited time was not easy at all. Luckily, I remember the number that popped up after randomly adding all 1-100 when I was bored, 5050. Being accepted to this highlight selective math club was just the beginning of my math journey.

Through this club, I realized that being good at math was more than just calculating accurately. Logical reasoning and efficiency is also crucial. In hopes to do well in all aspects of math, I decided to take extra math lessons that train my logical reasoning. The more challenging the problem, the more passionate I became. I started joining math competitions and trained for it. After multiple participation awards, I finally did it. I won a bronze medal in the 2015 American Mathematics Olympiad. Solving logical problems became a hobby. Day and night, I would work on problems on the Math Olympiad Contest Problems book that I bought in a local bookstore. At school, I would explore different methods than what my teacher taught me, to solve a problem. As I grew older, I discovered the applications of math in real life such as finance, engineering, and computer science. Out of these three, computer science stood out to me.

The baffling algorithms found in this field quenches my thirst for logical challenges. Coding started to excite me. Before I knew it, I was always trying to simplify the algorithm in a code that my computer science teacher taught me. I started exploring coding on my own outside of the classroom. Developing my first ever website that allows users to calculate their BMI and giving them a list of recommended foods really immersed me into the coding world. I got to experience first hand what developers feel when they’re coding, starting from planning, designing, coding, up to debugging. Although it gets stressful, the satisfaction I felt when the code works is what kept me going. Seeing my devotion for coding and taking into account the fact that I wanted to get more exposure to coding, Brian Sumali, Garuda Hacks’ managing director, decided to put me in-charge of Komodo Hacks’ (the highschool version) web development team where I lead a group of 4 into developing Komodo Hacks’ website.

Exploring more fields related to math and coding, I discovered data science. Despite the fact that my high school experience didn’t expose me to the data science field much yet, I can’t wait to focus and pursue my interest further in the University of California’s data science program.