***Prompt #1***

***Most students choose their intended major or area of study based on a passion or inspiration that’s developed over time – what passion or inspiration led you to choose this area of study? (300 words)***

I've never liked learning languages. Although I speak three languages—English, Indonesian, and Mandarin—I have always had trouble remembering words or crafting lovely sentences. However, with computer languages, this isn't the case. Computers and I, we seem to have a similar predilection for straightforward, methodical, literal language. As a result, I thoroughly enjoyed learning computer languages and sometimes preferred them over speaking with people.

I still remember the first time my class was tasked to code an HTML website. The sheer quantity of work felt overwhelming to the entire class, but I managed to find joy in it. I thought of programming as a way to converse with computers. I felt as though I was speaking to them every time I ran a line of code since they always answered with an error that invited me to fix it. I also saw it as a game: to produce a usable product while figuring out the mysteries behind the line of code's faults.

After conversing with them for a while, I began to discover their limitless potential as efficient and indefatigable machines capable of processing information much faster than humans, just that their capabilities are limited to the imagination and skills of the programmer. This inspired me to study programming to nurture those computers into something big, capable of changing the world for the better. So, I started learning more computer programming languages: CSS, JavaScript, SQL, and Python. Along the process, I also developed several websites and a small financial database on building materials and their prices for my parent’s architectural firm. The more I learnt them, the more they grew on me. Hence, I intend to continue learning computer languages to develop more advanced software, making human tasks easier. This way I can create something truly beneficial for society.

***Prompt #2***

***Many students pursue college for a specific degree, career opportunity or personal goal. Whichever it may be, learning will be critical to achieve your ultimate goal. As you think ahead to the process of learning during your college years, how will you define a successful college experience? (300 words)***

During my internship at an architecture firm, I realized just how inefficient architectural plan presentations currently are. Clients have to visualize 3D geometrics from several 2D CAD blueprints, relying solely on their untrained estimations when imagining measurements, displeasing them. Therefore, I dream to create a software that implements virtual and augmented reality technologies in architecture plan presentations. A fully immersive 3D simulation would allow clients to realistically visualize their house, taking into account aspects that could not be interpreted from a 2D blueprint.

To achieve this dream, I will be determined in pursuing my studies in CMU’s computer science program, particularly enrolling in the newly established interdisciplinary major of human-computer interaction. To meet people with similar interests and conduct research on mixed reality together, I will join the Augmented Perception Lab. There, I can marvel on some of the ongoing projects similar to mine, learning skills and methods to apply to my own. Furthermore, I could have my project mentored by Prof. David Lindlbauer, the head of the Augmented Perception Lab, where his specialization on VR and AR technologies and research focused on advancing the interactions with the digital world would surely aid the development of my project.

Furthermore, I believe that it is crucial to build connections with other students. Hence, I plan to do so since the start of my freshman year by enthusiastically participating in the Orientation Day of Service to befriend other students while doing good for the community. With the help from SPLICE generously provided by CMU, I would get the opportunity to actively participate in more activities like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and Pittsburgh Connections to expand my connections and further help society. In the future, I would like to establish an organization of my own connecting students across different programs to work together in collaborative projects creating functional products that can be beneficial for society. This organization could be a place where students would build friendship, implement their studies, and hone their creativity.

***Prompt #3***

***Consider your application as a whole. What do you personally want to emphasize about your application for the admission committee’s consideration? Highlight something that’s important to you or something you haven’t had a chance to share. Tell us, don’t show us (no websites please). (300 words)***

My debut as student council president started with a mess. I was a strict perfectionist who always made sure everything worked according to expectations. On one occasion, I found an event poster lacking in effort and creativity, only simply copied from a Canva template. Disappointed, I berated the arts team and forced them to do a full revision. Consequently, the art division was devastated and grew bitter. Some were even planning to leave the council before the inauguration ceremony.

I realized that the harsh approach created tension, so I decided to attempt a softer approach. I first tried to learn the art team’s side of the story by conversing with each member. After understanding their busy conditions, I apologized for being too harsh and clarified that my critiques were only meant to help improve their designs. Once the tension subsided, I tried spending more time with them, using my knowledge to teach them photoshop. Not only did I invest my time acting as a mentor, I also wanted them to feel comfortable in the student council. As months passed by, I felt proud as I saw their designs gradually improve. They are now able to create original designs utilizing professional softwares other than Canva. This approach was much more effective as the council members appeared more motivated and enthusiastic about their work.

I discovered that being a leader involves more than just directing and instructing. A successful leader should be mindful in giving feedback and have the flexibility to offer both counsel and assistance. A great leader should also attempt to foster a positive atmosphere by getting to know his peers, forging bonds of solidarity with each individual, and gradually gaining their trust. This atmosphere will then motivate and inspire others to become more productive and dependable.