Before I turned 18, one of the coolest things I did was to intern as a software engineer at a tech company in Shanghai.

My boss believes that everyone in the company should be part of the decision-making; thus, we were invited to listen to different meetings from many different departments. There was one time I was at an education department online meeting of the hosted by Google Meet Up. People were talking about designing programming courses for the kids, and I was asked to be there and offer some advices as a programmer. Although most of the time I was playing with my phone secretly, but there was one speech that has caught my attention. It was from a volunteering teacher from India, she said that in India not many kids get to touch the computers, don’t even mention teaching them programming. This insight she shared has stunned me, because I thought most people in India should be able to use computers. The CEOs of Google, Microsoft, and Adobe are all from India, how come their country have little access of computer resources to the kids?

After this meeting, I had an idea of building an easily accessible and free programming learning platform for everyone in the world like a programming version of Khan Academy. I discussed a little bit more with my Indian colleague about the programing education environment there and did some researches for this idea. I am currently working on preparing the prerequisites for this project.

Such ideas consistently emerge during all these cross-disciplinary talks. I get to discover ideas or encounter problems that I have never thought of or met throughout my life living around my community. Despite the idea of building a free programming learning site, I also had an idea of building a set of computer that is cheap enough for everyone to purchase and learn computer programming after I have heard from my Canadian colleague that Canadian students use a laptop called Raspberry Notebook which is super cheap to study computer related courses. I love to hear all these insights from people from different cultural and occupation backgrounds, and they have given me so many cool ideas.

To achieve these ideas, I must learn relevant knowledges from different fields. Although I can self-study some of them, but I will still need systematic learnings to get the fundamentals straight. NYUAD has offered so many courses for me to choose. I could learn Computer Science, Electronic Engineering, and Education in NYU AD to help me with building the cheap computer board, developing the software on the computer and the programming learning site, and designing the course curriculum for that site. For example, with the Artificial Intelligence course, I could be able to design an algorithm that allows the website to recommend the users different types of course curriculums according to their own preferences and statistics automatically.

After I have learned all the required knowledge and started to work on the projects, I could get help from the startAD program to get the resources I need. Under workshops that offers me experiences and knowledges outside conventional classrooms and components I get to use in Al Warsha, I could boost the progress of the project and made them into reality faster than before. And if my project was finished, I could go for the venture launchpad and get a start up money for the project’s future development.

Participating in the local hackathon event hackAD can also help to promote my projects to a greater variety of people. Especially in the middle east, where the programming resources is also lacking. I could help the kids in the central Asian countries to learn computer programming and gain more influence for my project through hackAD. If I have won the top prize on this event, I could even promote this project to the whole world!

Despite the hackAD event in Abu Dhabi, I am also vey interested in exploring the city itself. As a person who loves to travel around the world, I have never been to the middle east before, and I would love to go there. I would bring my camera with me and take pictures of the moments that I believe worth preserving. I would talk with the locals and learn the local culture, language, and traditions. Just like NYU’s school spirit has mentioned, “In and Off The City”, I would like to spend the every seconds besides course times in and off this unknown and fascinating Arabic World.