What's your proudest achievement? It can be a personal project or something you've worked on professionally. Just a short paragraph is fine, but I'd love to know why you're proud of it, what impact it had (If any) and any insights you took from it.

One of my proudest achievements to date would have to be the success I had at planning a hackathon during my summer internship at BNY Mellon. My interest in hackathons initially began during the academic year previous to my internship. The unique challenges and intense excitement-driven atmosphere of hackathons made for a great learning environment that truly allowed one think outside of the box. I became quite addicted to these competitions, to the extent that I attended 10 such events over my junior year alone.

My initial idea, during my time at BNY Mellon, was to create an event that would bring together the technical and business interns in an effort to solve a common problem. I had thought that this could potentially create a camaraderie between the other interns, that would also translate to further inter-departmental successes and projects. As I pitched this idea to my managers and upper-level administrators, I was met with great enthusiasm. However, with regards to actually moving forward with planning, I was confronted with many setbacks due to various bureaucratic difficulties. Along with the various road blocks I faced, many of the managers and senior engineers doubted my chances with regards to convincing the CTO of BNY Mellon to come aboard and participate as a judge.

In spite of all the logistical problems, I was not deterred and kept moving forward as I truly believed that this could be a great event. This proved to be true, as even the CTO enthusiastically gave full approval to proceed. By sheer luck, I had passed him in the lobby of BNY Mellon and had pitched my idea on the spot. With this support, I was able plan the rest of the hackathon without any further issues. Challenges were put forward by various executives across the company and with a grand prize of tickets to a Pittsburgh Pirates game, I had over 60% of the intern class participate.

Planning this event taught me to be relentless, and not be detracted by negativity or various setbacks; instead, I had learned that one must keep working at problems to find solutions as well as the benefits of approaching an issue from multiple angles. These are ideas that I continue to make use of with regards to my work.