My interests in computer arouse when I was a little boy no more than 10 years old. At that time a computer was merely an entertainment for me and video games are all the things it can offer to me. Games, in my very personal opinion at that time, are entertaining but not that useful and hence computer did not have a greater meaning. Until years later, one day I accidently opened a map editor of a game (Star Craft) and saw a complex tool with multiple leveled menu and hundreds of buttons that can literally control every piece on the screen. Through that map editor I imagined a whole different usage of a computer, that is, it can run powerful software to perform and organize complicated tasks far beyond games.

Several years later, in the long summer days after high school graduation, it was time to choose a university and major. I was considering what to learn for future years. Suddenly one day the old impression of the map editor came up into my mind and it drove me to choose a computer related major. With an excellent performance in the China’s College Entrance Examination, actually 86th place in Jilin Province among 170 thousand peers, soon I was accepted by School of Software of Beijing Institute of Technology, one of the premier universities in China.

Since my ethnic group is Korean-Chinese, a minority in China, my university life also presented me with ethnic identity issue and the cultural gap between Chinese culture and mine. Fortunately, these issues did not trouble me for long and at the third year of college, I decided to attend the graduate school in the United States to further my education. I worked for this goal and received several admissions at the spring of my last year in college. However, because of the unfavorable financial condition, I had to postpone the enrollment date for one year. Instead of attending a graduate school, I decided to work for one or two years to save money for my graduate education and gain working experience at the same time.

After exciting and encouraging job hunting, I seized a chance to work in a foreign country. I won a place in a Korean IT company which takes the lead in mobile multimedia solutions. Without knowing what a big change I will go through in the following years, I started my life in Seoul, South Korea. It was quite challenging for a college graduate to work and live in a foreign country all by himself. These two years were eventful and it helped me to further develop my capabilities. At work, I extensively developed my programming and communication skills to handle complex tasks which often involved many people. Out of work, I practiced my leadership as a leader and manager of an armature soccer team of twenty members.

However, slowly I realized though I like the job and life here, this is not what I envisioned of myself, simply put, not the ones that I genuinely love and willing to spend my future life for. The career that I dreamed about was working as a research engineer working on next-generation technologies and products in a leading IT company. To achieve this career goal, a further education is a must. Furthermore, as the first generation in my family to receive the college education, I understand how education changes the life of a man and his family. I witnessed the hardships, especially economical, that my honest and hard-working parents had to go though. They grew up in a society where opportunities of higher education were extremely rare. If they could have received college education they could have lived a totally better life. This familial factor is also a strong drive for my pursuit of further education.

My career goal and familiar factors indicates that I need to pursue graduate education and my academic background and working experience have prepared me for the graduate education. I am eager to purse a graduate education in UC Santa Cruz. Though no one could foretell the future, I believe that when looking back this important decision in my forties, I would be proud since it will be a right one.