One of my biggest takeaways from today’s Alumni Panel is how useful taking APCSA and APCSP can prove to be. Even though the alumni all took APCSP and/or APCSA, many of them didn’t specifically major in computer science. Some majored in cognitive science, aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, and more, but they all used some aspects of computer science in their major. Furthermore, knowledge of computer science can open so many opportunities that wouldn’t have been possible without it, for example the alumni who did internships despite not being in a computer science major. Specifically, I took notice of Mabel who got an internship at Northrop Grumman where she analyzed flight data which was possible just because she took APCSA. This really shows how APCSP and APCSA is useful even just as basic skill and knowledge, and knowing the foundations can be really helpful as the world becomes more technologically driven.

Another takeaway was the fact that you should actually try and learn instead of cutting corners and just focusing on grades. I feel like so many students nowadays are grade oriented and don’t actually focus on actually learning the material and taking it to heart, and not just in this CSP class. As many of the alumni said, this could be due to several different reasons such as competitiveness among students, pressure from parents, and more. They made several good points that you shouldn’t let others discourage you and that you should focus on your own learning path. This helped open my eyes and reinforce the fact that I should take this class seriously and not give up, especially considering how important it is as stated in my first takeaway. Similarly to Nitya, I have been interested in computer programming and STEM since a very young age, so what the alumni mentioned helped remind me that I’m taking this class because I am interested in expanding my knowledge of computer science, not just for a grade.