**How will opportunities at Purdue support your interests, both in and out of the classroom? (Respond in 100 words or fewer.)**

“Security” would be the word that best reflects my interests: digital security and self-defense. This is why I plan to focus my Computer Science courses at Purdue on the Security Track. This will allow me to explore the methods of developing secure software. I also hope to deepen my knowledge in securities by pursuing the opportunity to work with Prof. Celik’s research group, particularly in “Program Synthesis for Security and Safety”. As for self-defense, I intend to join Purdue’s Judo Club to add grappling to my arsenal to complement my Boxing and Muay Thai self-defense skills.

**Briefly discuss your reasons for pursuing the major you have selected. (Respond in 100 words or fewer.)**

I have trust issues. Not with people, but with our data. The fast progression in technological innovations has made things more convenient to upload data into the digital unknown. From chats with friends to financial transactions, our sensitive data is at risk if we’re not careful. This inspired me to become a software developer that could play a vital role in advancing technology securities. Hence, extensive knowledge in multiple programming languages is necessary to develop algorithms that will enhance data protection. This drove me to pursue a Computer Science major which will bring me one step closer to developing secure digital usage.

**Please briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences. (250 words)**

I was thrown headfirst into the lion's den. It was the summer before senior year when I decided to challenge myself by interning as a backend developer at McEasy, a logistics tech startup. Coming in as a high school intern, I was just an inexperienced student surrounded by professional programmers.

The first few weeks were intense: I had to learn a new language, SQL, while juggling my coding tasks. I had to code 9 query functions in Python, which connected to the SQL database. These tasks were ruthless, they tested my tenacity as I had to keep debugging my programs. As a result, the tasks really tempered my programming skills and tenacity.

Additionally, discussions with older, more seasoned programmers forced me to be more confident as I had to be assertive to explain and convince my solutions to them. Furthermore, their harsh criticism taught me the beauty of being a better listener as well as to self reflect. Every day presented new opportunities to learn from my colleagues. Soon, not only did I start to think and code like them but I started taking inspiration from their excitement in wanting to solve the bigger, more difficult problems. It was then I realized my goal of improving our society through coding.

To this day, I am thankful to the experience and my colleagues for not only helping me flourish my knowledge in back-end development but also for helping me find my ultimate goal as a programmer.

Hi Vincent,

You have quite a lot of good points in this last prompt. As a reader, I can see that you’re trying to show your persistence, how you’ve developed your confidence and way of communication, as well as open-mindedness and reflectiveness. However, make sure to describe and provide enough evidence of these traits instead of stating them. I’ve inserted a few comments where I think you could elaborate more on.

All the best!