**Tell us why you are pursuing your selected major:**

**Computer Science**

I have found my passion and deep seeded interest in Computer Science somewhat late and by chance in my academic journey so far. I was first exposed to and took my first ever computer science class in highschool, but at the time it did not inspire me and didn’t think that it would be for me. For a while, the word that came to mind about the subject was that it was “stale” but I have come to find that computer science is anything but.

One of the major reasons why I gravitate to computer science is the “creation” aspect of it. There is something about turning an idea into reality that makes me salivate about potential opportunities. I constantly ponder about how I can combine all the tools at my disposal to create something that could potentially change the world. It may sound cliche, but it really is the truth in a lot of ways. Much like a painter with his paintbrush, all one really needs is time, ideas, and a computer to make their masterpiece. For me that could be my fashion app that I am currently building or taking up a project and using existing data about Chicago and gaining new insights about the city.

Going hand in hand with this, the impact, reachability, and versatility of the field is what also attracts me to it. I absolutely love the fact that the applications and products one can build with computer science has the power to potentially reach millions quickly and have a direct effect in people’s lives. I grew up in an age where everyone has a computer and a smartphone and I’ve seen how technology has fundamentally shaped society as it is today and the creative ways people have been using it to network, start businesses, artistically express themselves, learn about new things, or literally whatever else it may be. I think that in the future people will start to figure out how to build upon and create new forms of art which only exists digitally. One can already see this with things like photo and video editing, and the rise of electronic music production. Specifically, I dream about developing technologies that would help people pursue creative avenues in a readily accessible and digital medium.

I find that this above all is what draws me towards computer science. Not the fact it is the hot new thing on the block for a while now, not the fact that people deem it as a field where one could build a solid career from, but for that fact that it can be used to have real impact.

Versatility is a major element of computer science that pulls me towards it. I view it as being “flexible” but in the sense that later down the line I can go into any field and have immediate serviceability regardless of if it is something that I have expertise in. Every industry benefits from computer science and the capability it can bring. What I mean by this is that I can go into the medical field and make a program that helps regulate a patient's breathing or conversely go into personal finance and help people do their taxes. Computer science gives me the flexibility to explore other pathways other than the one that I am studying and working in. It gives me the autonomy of choice.

The imaginative but logical mindset one must adopt to succeed in the field is yet another feature that pulls me in. To me it's about using every weapon in your arsenal in ways you haven’t seen before, only to make a new weapon no one has seen before.

One specific example that solidified computer science in my mind for me was with the Towers of Hanoi. I remember playing this game that was based off the concept at a young age at school. It was my favorite puzzle because I could not find an obvious answer immediately. With such a clear objective and simple rules, it took me a lot of tinkering and days to figure out how to exactly move even a three block set to the other side. That “thinkering” is what I have found I live for. That “thinkering” is what sets the gears in my brain turning and puts me into a problem solving mindset which I can translate to other ventures.

After much internal contemplation of the puzzle, finally coming across a solution and the feeling of elation it gives you is what made it all worthwhile. Many years later, I find myself faced with the exact same conundrum in college as a challenge problem me and my friends were tackling for fun. In the underbelly of my mind, I remembered that I have seen something very similar to this before but I couldn’t quite get my finger on it. However when working through the problem in code, inspiration eventually flooded through and once I got the program to work I realized it was in fact the same thing that I did when I was a child, but only now I was really able to wrap my head around it and understand it at the most fundamental level.

Taking those minute details and reconstructing them is what made me realise that I really like doing this. The fact that I can adapt and reuse this mindset when solving other problems in my life makes me, for a lack of a better word, exuberant and excited.

This mindset has helped me in a myriad of ways: from being able to analyze a problem or situation to find the best possible solution or approach, breaking down a puzzle to its most basic elements, or even how to better efficiently handle my work and day to day life. I probably would not have attained this mentality if it wasn’t for the ethos of computer science.

On a more personal level, another feature of computer science that makes it the field I want to study is the virtually never ending nature of it. I can do this for the rest of my life and there will always be ways to improve and continually learn new things. Also given the tech industry and the space surrounding computer science, new products and newer ideas are coming out every day which not only excites me at the possibilities, but makes me wonder about how technology will continue to be innovated. I want to be in the middle of it all.

I’ve been talking to a lot of people who are in the space or work in a related field and from their accounts the responsibilities that they have are matters that I am genuinely interested in and see myself doing. I see myself building a framework in which people can easily create and publish their artistic work, or maybe even the next big social networking platform. In the industry creativity and collaboration is valued and essential in the workplace. I really like that type of environment as it reminds me of the classroom and I feel like that is the most representative of my personality and where I would like to be later in life.

Lastly, the reason why I want to pursue computer science is because of the low barrier of access to it. Even outside the classroom, by taking up projects that I am passionate about and talking to like minded people in the space, I can always be doing something cool. I can always be learning. This is important to me because it gives me a sense of freedom and exploration out of life. I want to do something that I can do for fun at home and professionally, and I believe my passion for computer science can take me there. Once again, all one need is time, ideas, and a computer to make dreams come true.

Ultimately, the reason why I am pursuing computer science is for the all the reasons stated above: the intellectual stimulation, versatility, scale, impact, the imaginative yet logical mindset, contributing to innovative technology, developing a creative platform, and finally the never ending nature of it. These reasons and the feelings of learning, improving, and accomplishing are what will draw me to computer science for a very, very, long time, if not forever.

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**Alternative intro with the Towers of Hanoi:**

When I was growing up in elementary school I remembered our teacher giving us puzzles to solve on Friday afternoons when the day’s work was done. It was my favorite time of day because we could play games and socialize while also being incredibly mentally stimulating. I remember having long debates with my classmates for the best way to beat the puzzle and many times we would get into arguments about whose way was better. (75 words)

[ Growing up in elementary school I remember our teacher giving us challenge puzzles to solve on Friday afternoons when the day’s work was done. It was my favorite time to day because it meant we could socialize and play games while also being incredibly mentally stimulated. (46 words) ]

[ I can consider having this line: *I remember having long debates with my classmates for the best way to beat the puzzle and many times we would get into arguments about whose way was better.* - this line isn't bad but doesn’t really contribute directly to the topic of computer science. It leads the reader to think that I am going to talk about the debates we had in class or something along those lines, not computer science necessary. It is 29 words. Will probably leave this out for conciseness but an option to keep.

One day our teacher presented with a problem so hard that it hurt my head just thinking about it and left me confused for days. This puzzle was the Towers of Hanoi. It was my favorite puzzle because I couldn’t { or *could not* } find an obvious answer. With such a clear objective and simple rules, it took me a lot of tinkering to figure out how to exactly move even a three block set to the other side. We revisited the game the next week and by this point I allocated such an absorbent amount of time and energy to this problem {*idk what to write next}.* I was obsessed with solving the problem and finally coming across what I thought was a solution came with great relief. Sadly my dreams were crushed right away as I quickly realized that my solution was not going to work. After a little more thinkering, a move that I deemed was a mistake ended up being the inspiration that led to striking gold for the first time. My sense of elation surged through me as I frantically tried out my idea and vuala, I solved the Towers of Hanoi. (185 words)

[ One day our teacher presented us with a puzzle so hard that it hurt my little brain thinking about it. This puzzle was the Towers of Hanoi. It was my favorite puzzle because I could not find an obvious answer immediately. With such a clear objective and simple rules, it took me a lot of “tinkering” to figure out how to exactly move even a three block set to the other side. We revisited the game the next week and by this point I allocated such an absorbent amount of time and energy to this problem that when I finally came across what I thought was a solution I almost

Sadly my dreams were crushed right away as I quickly realized that my solution was not going to work, at all. After a little more thinkering, a move that I deemed was a mistake ended up being the inspiration that led to striking gold for the first time. A rush of elation surged through me as I frantically tried out my hunch and vuala, I solved the Towers of Hanoi. (180 words, not much I can trim off here) ]

{Let’s see what I can combine from the first full go around and the second barley shorted but rewritten version. I feel like I can combine the best parts of both and have that as the probable final, but I will not really be able to trim off that many words. This should be fine tho}

One day our teacher presented us with a puzzle so hard that it hurt my little brain just thinking about it. This puzzle was the Towers of Hanoi. It was my favorite puzzle because I couldn’t find an obvious answer. 1) With such a clear objective and simple rules, it dazzled me with its subtlety and took me a lot of “tinkering” to figure out how to exactly move even a three block set to the other side. 2) With such a clear objective and simple rules, it took me a lot of “tinkering” to figure out how to exactly move even a three block set to the other side. We revisited the game the next week and by this point I allocated such an absorbent amount of time and energy to this problem that I [ something about me being overconfident in myself. I know what I want to say but I am having trouble finding the words]. ~ I like this a lot and will finalize this from here.

Sadly my dreams were crushed right away as I quickly realized that my solution was not going to work, at all. After a little more thinkering, a move that I earlier deemed was a mistake ended up being the inspiration that led to striking gold for the first time. A rush of elation surged through me as I frantically tried out my hunch and vuala, I solved the Towers of Hanoi.

{Is eleation really the best word for this - what is another word to describe the feeling of figuring something out or the good feeling of breakthrough you get?}

Many years later, I find myself faced with the exact same conundrum in college as a challenge problem me and my friends were tackling for fun. In the underbelly of my mind, I remembered that I have seen something very similar to this before but I couldn’t quite place my finger on it. However when working through the problem in Java, insight eventually flooded through and once I got the program to work I realized it was in fact the same thing that I did when I was a child, but only now I was really able to wrap my head around it and understand it at the most fundamental level.

That “thinkering” is what I have found I live for. That “thinkering” is what sets the gears in my brain turning and puts me into a problem solving mindset that I can apply not only to computer science, but to all aspects of my life.

{I can change the phrase “...problem solving mindset that I can apply not only to computer science, but to all aspects of my life” or something else that does not include all aspects of my life. Maybe something like “problem solving mindset'' that I can apply to programming, drafting, computer science, and other computer science related things. It is cliche the way it is written now, but it is not that bad/acceptable.}

Taking those minute details and reconstructing them is what made me realize that I really like doing this and solidified computer science in my mind. To me, computer science is about the creative yet logical mindset

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This mindset has helped me in a myriad of ways: from being able to analyze a problem or situation to find the best possible solution or approach, breaking down a puzzle to its most basic elements, or even how to better efficiently handle my work and day to day life. I probably would not have attained this mentality if it wasn’t for the ethos of computer science, and the reason why I will pursue it.

// is this something that I want to keep? I’m going to have to rewrite this to better fit the vibe of the essay so far. I am also open to deleting it. As it stands right now it does not really flow into the actual reasons why I am pursuing computer science below.

// I really like what I have written up top a lot. A good and specific example that I can use that brought me to computer science and I would think is written relatively well.

{

I have found my passion and deep seeded interest in computer science by chance in my academic career and have not looked back ever since. I was first exposed to computer science in highschool, but at the time it did not inspire me and didn’t think that it would be for me. For a while, the word that came to mind about the subject was that it was “stale” but I have come to find that computer science is anything but.

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Going hand in hand with this, the impact, reachability, and versatility of the field is what also attracts me to it. I absolutely love the fact that the applications and products one can build with computer science has the power to potentially reach millions quickly and have a direct effect in people’s lives. I grew up in an age where everyone has a computer and a smartphone and I’ve seen how technology has fundamentally shaped society as it is today and the creative ways people have been using it to network, start businesses, artistically express themselves, learn about new things, or literally whatever else it may be. I think that in the future people will start to figure out how to build upon and create new forms of art which only exists digitally. One can already see this with things like photo and video editing, and the rise of electronic music production. Specifically, I dream about developing technologies that would help people pursue creative avenues in a readily accessible and digital medium.

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