**CS-499 Self-Assessment**

My time at SNHU started tumultuously; I had just recently left BNSF Railway after being told that I was going to be one of many individuals who were being laid off in 2017, so beginning this educational journey was akin to hitting the reset button on life, especially with a wife and two children depending on me. Undoubtedly, I was intimidated by the world of computer science. Although I had at least some exposure to programming from my time in the United States Marine Corps, where I used Python to help parse through thousands of lines of csv files, and as a hobbyist game developer using C#, I doubted whether or not I would be able to code professionally. However, these fears slowly started to fade as I took my first few programming classes at SNHU.

It was within my first few classes that I found out that coding is highly similar to learning a foreign language, it takes time, patience, practice, and persistence to fully understand. Also, just like when you are learning a new language, as you become more proficient you begin to make it your own. In keeping with our foreign language analogy, once you know grammar and syntax, you can begin to formulate your own sentences, paragraphs, and even books in the form of methods, classes, and projects in your respective programming language. This is where everything clicked for me and I realized that not only would I be able to program professionally, but I would also be pretty creative at it.

Just like how writers often draw inspiration from other writers, I learned to draw inspiration from other programmers and their experiences. This concept was further strengthened when I began my first job as a Junior Software Developer for a small company called Torch.AI in Leawood, Kansas. Torch is a small company, there’s less than 25 of us in total, and our two architects didn’t mind me shadowing them whenever possible while attempting to pick their brains for every tidbit of information that I could. I got to not only learn more advanced programming concepts, such as deploying applications to Kubernetes or containerization through Docker, but I also learned about more fundamental concepts, such as community accepted naming conventions for MVC controllers in C#. With these newfound programming abilities and hunger for further problem solving, I solely took on the issue of creating mock data for a web application we created for a client. Luckily for me, since the logic that I used to generate the data was solely mine, my supervisors had absolutely no qualms about me sharing it.

Creating the mock data for app.moneypeer.com (the web application we created) was the basis for my final project.