Led by dreams of innovation in my mind, I started my tech track at Columbia with the python course. However, sometimes I feel the course material doesn't give me the chance to jump into the tech world and engage in creating useful applications. I really believe JADE would inspire me and equip me with skills to transform my aspirations from abstract forms into reality, both in the technical and personal aspects. It goes without saying that I would be constantly interacting with equally passionate peers while embarking on the web application project. Instead of learning from lectures, I would get the most out of these interactions and team problem-solving experiences. In my mind tech is never about solitary coding for long hours. In addition to the technical knowledge and soft skills I would gain, I am also excited about the personal inspiration I would gain from immersing in the environment of entrepreneurship. For someone unfamiliar with the tech world, entrepreneurship remains to be a distant dream, unless I actually dig into some startups and learn about the choices that other people made at our stage. Coming out of JADE, I believe my "colleagues" and I would be never more ready to start our journeys in the tech industry in the immediate summer.

My uncle runs an advertising startup in Wuhan, a major city of China. Though not familiar with their services, I am most impressed by the brisk and lively atmosphere of the startup: I could see everyone busy with their work, but they all carry around joyful spirits and inspire those around them. This is strikingly different from the mutual fund company where my father is working... This year, I also enjoyed the startup fair hosted by ADI: talking to entrepreneurs has always been stimulating as I leave the room full with thoughts on what I could do. I luckily remained in contact with some of them (digital ocean, dots, and triplelift!), who I will look to for future guidance and internships if possible.

Normally I enjoy going outdoors for a hiking or biking trip, but when I feel like having some intellectual challenge I would work on my book of chess puzzles. I usually like to start with simple ones that takes ten seconds and work my way up to some 4-move puzzles spending twenty minutes. It's like a math problem set but with no grades, and I feel way more joyful deciphering these than math problems. While working on them, I am not competing against anyone, since I am my own adversary. My old self would always attempt to bog myself down in past mindsets and strategies since it's always easier to recall those. My other self, however, is fighting to break this barrier of thinking brought by comfort and to come up with out-of-the-blue ideas which sometimes are keys to the harder puzzles. I definitely learned to manage my own thoughts from along with having fun in this activity.