Agnes Kim

First year, first semester of college, I received my first C in CS 1112-introduction to programming class. I cerebrated to myself, is there a future in computer science if I am such an awful programmer? The answer-yes. I just needed to challenge and push myself even harder. So, I took the next course, CS 2110-Software Development Methods, taught by professor Nada Basit. This class was arduous, but not impossible because of the professor’s assistant and enduring comfort. Professor Nada Basit impacted my life in ways that I cannot explain in one page. She is my inspiration and epitome that I wish to be. After a few days into the class, professor Basit gave the class its first homework assignment. Although the homework assignment was simple and easy, I struggled to program working code. I felt ashamed and embarrassed to ask for help on the first assignment because I did not want the professor to think that I was an “idiot.” However, I walked into her office regardless of how I felt during the time. At that point, I had zero self-esteem, and I was solely concerned about finishing and turning in the assignment on time. Many things happened that day-I turned in my assignment on time, but more importantly I found out what I wanted to do with my life. I also realized that I should have never felt those emotions because teachers are resources and mentors that students can go to without feeling abashed. Professor Basit helped me regain my confidence back, and opened my eyes to see that majoring in computer science was possible again.

In the dictionary, teacher is defined as “a person who teaches or instructs.” However, if you ask people to define “teacher” or more essentially what makes a great teacher, there are countless answers that people acknowledges. I think the key to great teaching seems to be more like alchemy than science, synthesis of inspirational hocus-pocus and endless drive of dedication and perseverance. My life’s mission is to find this key through my knowledge as a programmer and as a teacher. In Barack Obama’s State of Union Address, he mentioned the word “change” notably and perpetually. What was his underlying message when he talked about this “change?” I believe “change” is referred to the new generation of technology and education. Nearly all aspect of society is swayed by technology in some form. Technology does not replace teachers, but instead allows them to further share their knowledge and expertise with society. Technology opens the doors to unpredictable and infinite ameliorations, whether it be medical breakthroughs or new innovations. Teachers partake in an important role in educating and inspiring the future pioneers, founders, and innovators that will change the world. From Barack Obama’s State of Union address, when he said “by providing Pre-K for all, offering every student the hands-on computer science and math classes that make them job-ready on day one,” this statement caught my attention. As I was listening to his speech, I felt that Obama was inside my head and articulated exactly what the future for elementary teachers would be. Without early childhood instructors, this “change” cannot commence. Elementary teachers play a pivotal role in shaping a child’s character by implanting the right ideals and preparing them for later education. They set the foundation for dreamers that will make an impact in the world. As a programmer and an educationist, I want to give back to society by applying my passion and insight about technology to the growing education system.