The hardest part of life is taking control of it. Controlling my life was not always easy for me. Those closest to me would often pressure me out of love to succeed academically, always suggesting different programs, clubs, and activities for me to volunteer or participate in. This pressure, of course, wasn't necessarily a negative factor in my life as I became a more well-rounded person as a result. Yet, satisfying these expectations and responsibilities often induced stress and anxiety that left me no room to breathe. I pushed myself to get perfect grades, spent my invaluable youth seeking volunteering opportunities and clubs that were not intriguing to me. It was a source of unneeded stress. However, after discovering the world of computer science, everything changed.

There is a club that I have been actively participating in for the past four years, known as Financial Business Leaders of America. This club helps driven students like myself demonstrate their unique abilities through skilled competitions. Despite not having started high school yet, those around me pushed this club in my direction. I entered this club aware of only the benefits that came in the end. In the club, the coordinators appointed me to an event known as Spreadsheet Applications. They expected me to memorize the fine details of software like Microsoft Excel and apply them in the business world. It was stressful to meet my club's expectations when I wasn't too interested in that particular subject. Whenever competition season came around, I often felt suffocated between the need to perform well and my disinterest in competing.

This stifling situation of mine improved upon taking the opportunity to compete in coding a game for the club. As an avid proponent of technology and computers coupled with my enjoyment in playing games, I considered this opportunity like a breath of fresh air. Instead of forcing myself to remember the functions of various buttons in Excel, I observed myself enjoying learning, and creating my own functions with code. I often found myself unable to concentrate while studying for my business-related competitions. Yet, while coding the game, I spent hours upon hours in one sitting. My previous blind following of this club started to have focus and purpose. To my surprise, I started feeling like participating in this club was something that I wanted to do instead of needed to do.

Spending months researching and learning how to program a game exposed me to various ways in applying computer science to my life. One of these ways has enabled me to express myself better than before. I discovered that I could create websites to illustrate my interests, passions, and thoughts and feelings. Of the websites that I have created so far, my favorite is the one I have devoted to expressing my love for a certain music group. I publicized my favorite songs, pictures, and information from that group and shared them with my closest friends and peers. To have the ability to demonstrate

my interests, passions, and feelings to anyone with an internet connection, is the reason why I consider this form of computer science effective in seizing control of my life. Although I have only been making websites for fun so far, I know I can do much more with them. Whether it be personal interests, like music, or stance on a controversial topic, I know that if I have something to say, I can always do it through this medium.

Computer science is something that I never knew I needed in my life. I consider it as an intersection between my responsibilities and passions, where I can decide on which route to take and when to change lanes. I continue to learn this ever-growing field of study in hopes that I can work in this particular area in the future, and have responsibilities and expectations that I will enjoy upholding.