Getting to where I am today has been arduous. At the age of seventeen, I was already on my own with nothing more than the clothes I was wearing, and a couple of extra shirts and a pair of shorts to get me by. Many setbacks had to be overcome and I have learned, through experience, that sometimes you fall into a hole that feels so deep, it is easy give up on ever climbing back out, but progress is only possible with the work of our own two hands. I refused to let my circumstances define the rest of my life, and this resilience allowed me to finally open a door I thought would never present itself. The gift of an opportunity that I have with software has been an enlightening experience. The challenge that comes with each new project has been met head-on with enthusiasm, and for the first time, my path has felt right and full of opportunity to grow, achieve, and help others. The world has changed and much of that is due to advancements in software, and my goal is to be a part of this change for the benefit of our future.

My first memorable and most impacting experience with software and technology was the Super Nintendo. By the time I was six years old, I had seen more than what many people see in an entire lifetime and videogames became my haven to get away from the drugs and abuse circulating in my home. The most intriguing part was not Donkey Kong leaping around catching bananas; however, it was the mystery of how the press of little purple and black buttons transform into a hulking ape with a red tie.

Software is growing more essential to our already technology dependent society. It is extremely versatile in what it can do and this is what makes software engineering so enticing. It can be used to connect the world, to help catch and prevent crime, and even for cool and innovative uses such as automobile accident prevention and self-driving cars. My interest in software is fundamentally machine learning, deep learning, and artificial intelligence. Many of the greatest recent innovations have come from learning algorithms and artificial intelligence and this is only skimming the surface of the possibilities. I look forward to being an integral part of an industry responsible for connecting the world and making life easier for all its users.