Describe your passion and preparation for your intended major, including your readiness to succeed in upper-level courses at Tech.

Four years ago, I changed my major from Pharmacy to Computer Science. It was a perfect choice because I loved computers and wanted to use them to find interesting ways to solve real world problems. Working with computers, I know I could contribute to creating practical applications to help people and society. While at Pitt, I used my time and efforts wisely to learn and develop a solid foundation of basic programming concepts under an object-oriented programming early-focused curriculum. The curriculum gave me invaluable experiences such as learning the basis of data structures, assembly languages and using Java to manage prospective real world problems. My grasp of the fundamental knowledge and good academic standing prove that I can successfully move on to upper-level courses.

My learning is not limited to the classroom. I found interesting opportunities where I could obtain outside-class experiences. I participated in some events such as Topcoder Algorithm Competition. Although I was not awarded the first place or the special achievement, I met many competent students and programmers from various countries all over the globe. I learned many useful tips by sharing stories.

Compared to my current university’s curriculum, Georgia Tech’s Computer Science curriculum stands out because of the significant amount of mathematics courses. I absolutely love this requirement because I believe some higher-level math courses are needed for computer scientists and engineers. The curriculum in Georgia Tech definitely will prepare me for further challenges and future success.

Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others over time.

In 2014, I joined the South Korean army as private. I went through 5 weeks of basic training session in the Korean Army Training Center. During basic training, drill instructors, platoon and squad leaders pushed me beyond my limit. Even though every trainee was unaccustomed to the military culture, all trainees, including me, obeyed and followed the leaders’ orders without any hesitancy. These leaders showed me great examples of leadership because they were not overly forceful but rather dignified and convincing. They were strict but also generous and kind at the same time. They knew how to handle recruits very effectively.

After finishing basic training, my new unit that I was assigned to was notorious for irregularities in barracks. My comrades and I were hazed and sometimes mentally abused by senior soldiers. I had to endure many hardships until I eventually became the squad leader. Some of my comrades insisted that we should treat new rookies as we were treated. However, I did not agree with them because I knew that true leadership was what I saw by squad leaders back in the basic training center. Thus, as leader, I enthusiastically helped rookies adapt easily to our squad. At the same time, I was strict and comforting. As a result, I managed to eliminate most of the bad habits and irregularities. A joyful atmosphere finally was settled in the troop. After completing military service, I learned good leadership could change and influence people, and a situation can improve over time.

Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge.

What would you say is your greatest skill or talent? How have you developed and demonstrated this skill or talent over time?

Starting at the age of 16, I left home and my parents. From this point, I had to work hard in order to “survive” in an alien land. Learning new vocabulary, practicing pronunciation, and improving listening comprehension were only one step for me to communicate with American people. Since I was on a strict budget, I had to teach myself how to shop cost-effectively, manage household accounts, read contracts carefully, and find good housing. However, the most difficult challenge while studying abroad was to conquer homesickness and loneliness. By bearing homesickness for so many years, my mental and emotional endurance became stronger, and I gained a strong spirit of independence. Being independent is my greatest asset. Often, my independent mind helps me to produce positive outcomes and results. During military service, I adapted to the new environment quicker than many others as they were feeling homesick, while I was not. Because of my independent spirit, I was recognized by the executives and selected as the General’s secretary assistant. Eventually, I was awarded special honor from the General.

After finishing the military, I returned to my current university, and another new environment surrounded me. However, I was not afraid of adapting and worked hard to “survive” two consecutive semesters. Consequently, I achieved outstanding academic performances, such as dean’s list and made several good connections. Now, I remain very confident that I can adapt to new social and academic environments like Georgia Tech due to my remarkable skill: independence.

What sets you apart from other candidates applying to the Georgia Institute of Technology?

Georgia Tech is always looking for innovative undergraduates. Have you had any experience as an entrepreneur? What would you like Georgia Tech to provide to further your entrepreneurial interests?