Co-op Job Summary

Ivy Action Tank is a start-up company started by two Cornell Students and the main focus of the company now is website development. Since it's a start-up and the company size is very small, there is no clear division of working groups. We brainstorm ideas together and build what we decided to build. The major project I worked on this summer is a housing sublet platform called Yorango. It is limited to Cornell community now and is focused on the subletting market for the moment, but we will expand it to other colleges and other kinds of space listings such as parking spots and storage spaces. Before the program starts, we all get an account on Treehouse, which is an online course website for website development and iOS application development. I learned a lot and got myself ready for the work from this training. When I have questions, I can approach to anyone in the team and everybody is super friendly and helpful.

I plan to pursue MEng in CS after I graduate and this job provides me exposure to what website development is like in real life. What gets me interested in Ivy Action Tank at first was the entrepreneurship experience the manager mentioned that I would have during the summer. As he promised, I did get exposure to the software start-up industry from my work here. We brainstorm ideas together, evaluate feasibility and value of different projects, and build things from scratch. It's a very good experience. It's kind of like a final project for a course, but involves more real-life issues that we need to consider, and most of all, we'll need to find a way to make money from it.

Apart from the website programming skills I learned, I, as an ECE major, really feel the difference between CS and ECE from this experience. In my opinion, what we do this summer is more of a E-commerce business, and the technological challenge is not the biggest challenge. As an ECE, I used to always think that as long as I could build something that does not exist yet and is useful to some people, I could start up a company very easily and
wouldn’t need to worry about how to make money. On the CS or E-Commerce side, however, there is no such barrier as ECE that the customer has to purchase the hardware to do something. Most successful websites have no barriers for customers at all. That makes me really think out of the box.

Since this is a company in Ithaca, it's very easy to find housing and there are many things to do after work. Sometimes our team hangs out together and go hiking or watch movies together. The best feature of this job is that I have the freedom to build what I want to build and work with a group of smart people is very exciting. There is no worst feature in this experience. If I have to say, maybe getting stuck in Ithaca the whole summer is one. But after all, Ithaca is very beautiful in summer and I really enjoy it.