Karin Eichelman

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Dear Hiring Committee,

I’m excited to apply to the Information Systems Engineer position. Having fallen in love with both the Amherst area and web development as a career, I’ve been in search of something like this, and I know I’d be a perfect fit because the requirements are exactly the things I’ve been doing for the past two years.

Transit IT is a unique web shop because our customers are both people at UMass Transit itself as well as people we’ve never met. Because of this, I have an intimate understanding of how AGILE development should work and how important it is to have easily-accessible data and minimize down-time. I’ve never been far-removed from the user experience; one of the most rewarding things about my job is to make people’s lives easier with the amazing technology I have at my fingertips.

Our primary application is a massive monolith written in an outdated version of Rails and it is crucial to the operation of UMass Transit that it stay running, so not only do I have experience fixing bugs on the fly for people who need things to run right fast, I have experience maintaining and even adding necessary features to legacy code. I have also helped build other applications in newer versions of Rails when a different and separate interface was desired.

A little bit about my background: Though it may appear odd that I would go from completing a degree in Linguistics to a career in Computer Science, it was actually the relationship between the two fields—dealing with the generation and comprehension of language using logical algorithms—that sparked an interest in the latter. It was through using Python to work with regular expressions in a class I took in Senior year that it dawned on me that I liked writing Python more than anything else I’d done and decided to teach myself how to program when school ended. After graduating I taught myself enough JavaScript to show that I had what it took to join the IT team at UMass Transit, and have been happily working with Ruby on Rails ever since.

Sincerely,

Karin Eichelman