

# Dakota McDaniels

dakot.ai

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## EXPERIENCE

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- **Pluto.fi** San Francisco, CA  
*Co-Founder and Co-CTO* May 2021 - August 2023
  - **Fundraising and Leadership:**
    - \* Raised \$5M in VC funding to build and scale Pluto's AI financial advisory product.
    - \* Scaled the technology and team to support 25,000 users and over \$40M in tracked assets.
    - \* Conducted 100+ interviews after sourcing candidates from AngelList, recruiters, and inbound applications.
    - \* Hired a team of 3 engineers and product designers.
  - **Infrastructure and Cloud Computing:**
    - \* Architected and deployed 50+ K8s microservices and cron jobs alongside CI/CD with CircleCI.
    - \* Managed a 30 node Kubernetes cluster with over 1TB of RAM to support a 10,000 pod workload.
    - \* Built an order management system to process 12.5M trading decisions every hour using Kafka.
    - \* Achieved 99.99% system uptime through comprehensive monitoring and observability.
    - \* Engineered a high-performance database architecture using MongoDB and Redis, which supported ultra-high transaction volumes of 100+ million per month with average latency under 10ms.
  - **Product Management and AI Innovation:**
    - \* Single-handedly streamlined the entire brokerage integration process to operational readiness in just 14 days – covering payment rails, KYC, order management, and compliance – shattering the typical 6-month timeline for a traditional team of 10.
    - \* Overhauled the user onboarding experience, simplifying KYC and deposit/withdrawal processes, which increased user conversion rates by 30%.
    - \* Introduced the first AI financial assistant that uses advanced NLP techniques like CoT, RAG, and ReAct to provide accurate and contextually relevant responses to user queries.
    - \* Implemented measures to reduce irrelevant or inconsistent responses by 90%, significantly improving user experience and engagement.
    - \* Pioneered an AI-powered UI that generates real-time charts and insights based on user prompts for a wide range of financial topics, from individual stock performance to market trends.
- **Lowe's** Mooresville, NC  
*Cybersecurity Engineer* May 2020 - May 2021
- **University of South Carolina** Columbia, SC  
*Internship – Network Security Engineer* October 2018 - December 2020
- **Office of Naval Research** Columbia, SC  
*Undergraduate Research in Cybersecurity* August 2020 - October 2020

## PROJECTS

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- **Quantitative Securities Trading System:**
  - Built a performant, event-sourced data pipeline for backtesting with over 700M minutes of historical tick data in Python.
  - Deployed a secure AWS infrastructure on ECS and Docker to manage over \$50,000 of personal investment capital.
- **BetterReplies:** An iOS app featuring a fine-tuned AI assistant capable of generating personalized replies
  - Developed with Python and SwiftUI, automatically deployed using GitHub Actions and Terraform.
  - Integrated a robust, cloud-native backend architecture on AWS, including ECR, Lambda, S3, and API Gateway.
  - Performed comparative analysis of LLM providers such as OpenAi, Anthropic, and LLaMa to optimize AI response quality.

## EDUCATION

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- **University of South Carolina** Columbia, SC  
*Bachelor of Science* August 2018 - December 2020
  - Degree in Integrated Information Technology (Hybrid degree for Computer Science and Cybersecurity)
  - Major GPA of 4.0, Overall GPA of 3.986

## PROGRAMMING SKILLS

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- **Languages:** Python, Swift, SQL, Terraform **Cloud Providers:** AWS, Digital Ocean, Heroku
- **Databases:** MongoDB, Postgres, Redis, Pinecone, Supabase
- **Technologies:** REST, Kafka, Kubernetes, Git, Flask, CircleCi, Github Actions
- **LLMs:** Prompt Engineering, Fine-tuning, Data Gathering, Retrieval-Augmented Generation, Chain-of-Thought
- **Paradigms:** Functional Programming, OOP, Microservices, Infrastructure as Code, Cloud Native