So why did I choose front-end development? That’s a very good question! If you’ve read my previous blog, I wrote about what lead up to the decision to pursue a career in the tech field. In this blog, I wanted to explain why I chose to go with front-end development out of all the options out there.

You wouldn’t believe how many different careers there are out there unless you spent some time browsing the job listings on the multitude of job websites that exist on the internet. Funny side note; I still remember when no one was using the internet for business, just chat rooms and that dancing hamster page. It still exists although it has been updated. I was watching tv one day and I saw a commercial that showed a factory worker busily working away while all the machines around her were steadily becoming automated until it was finally time for her job to be handed over to the new technology that replaced everyone else. Instead of quitting and giving up, she went to school and decided to learn how to make/repair those machines that replaced her job. By the end of the commercial she was back on the factory floor of her old job, fixing the machine that now has her old job. It got me to thinking that maybe I should invest in my future as well.

I had already been to audio engineering school because of the musical path I pursued early on. All the doors I had hoped would open sadly, never did. While I did get a great education, I also got a huge, steaming, pile of student debt to go with it; so, investing more money into a school was out of the question. A quick search for coding schools lead me to sites such as Udemy, CodeCademy, freecodecamp, treehouse, and many more. I started with the free ones first to see what they had to offer. I’ll write my opinions of each of these in a later blog. While each site offered an abundance of courses, I still didn’t know what I should be studying! I did a search on the easiest language to start learning and a lot of articles and forums pointed to Python so, I began exploring.

I was able to grasp the basics quickly. I likened a lot of the concepts to how a calculator might work, just more complex. Approaching the material from this angle made sense to me so I kept at it. After a few weeks of learning what functions were or how to construct an array, I noticed I was learning the language, but I wasn’t learning any real-world application. When I was teaching myself how to play guitar, I could play along to a song with an open book and hear the techniques I was supposed to learn to play a piece properly. Right away, I could associate the movements needed with the desired sound it would produce. Real world application. Learning arrays and functions was exciting because I was understanding what I was trying to learn but, how does this manifest into an app or a website? Keep in mind that I was still very new to all of this at the time. It took me learning JavaScript to answer that question.

I found a course on freecodecamp for front-end development which contained courses for html, css, and Js. Instead of focusing one language, I turned my attention to learning a set of skills. From the first lesson of html, I was immediately hooked! I could see how the commands worked on the test UI provided by the site. It was exactly what I had been looking for. I tore through the html and CSS courses. Learning JavaScript has still been a challenge, but since I had studied Python for a bit, the concepts already made sense to me. I just had to learn the proper syntax. Also, because I was new to the whole coding experience, I didn’t have the complaints that I hear about from some people when they learn Js. Ignorance was indeed bliss, so I was able to take any frustration in stride and chalk it up to “It’s ok. You’re still learning. Just keep at it.”

I’m still learning, but I have been able to build my confidence with each new lesson I learn. I would consider myself a novice at best, but I know that I can and will progress as time goes on. I have a ton of books and websites that I use constantly for reference end education. I will include those in a later blog as well. It’s not an easy journey, but if you put in the time to research what you are looking for, you will find it. Do not be afraid to ask questions either! I have found that there are numerous people in the field that are willing to help new comers like myself should they need it. As vast as the internet is, sadly, it doesn’t have an answer to every question yet. But I have found I can get where I want to go by taking the initiative and doing a little research.

I hope my story helps you feel better about where you are in your journey. I always feel a sense of relief when I read articles from other people who are new as well. Keep building new projects, no matter how mediocre they might appear. Even Van Halen had to learn to play the guitar! It’s a big world and there are things to do in it.