Reflection on Our Interview with Engr. Jomarie Dupaya

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Introduction

The purpose of this interview was to help us, as first-year Computer Engineering students, gain deeper insight into our chosen field and prepare a reflection paper based on the real-life experiences of our alumni. We interviewed Engr. Jomarie Dupaya, a Batch 2025 graduate who is currently working as a Security Engineer at RT&Co., and who chose Cybersecurity as his Computer Engineering Elective during his studies. During the interview, we explored a wide range of topics, maximizing the opportunity to learn about his career path, the challenges he faced as a Computer Engineering student in T.I.P., the tools and skills he recommended, and his overall experiences and advice for Computer Engineering students like us.

Summary of the Interview

In our interview with Engr. Jomarie Dupaya, a Batch 2025 Computer Engineering graduate who now works as a Security Engineer at RT&Co., we learned a lot about how he started his career in cybersecurity. He shared that choosing Cybersecurity as his elective in T.I.P. helped him discover his interest in the field and eventually guided him toward his current job. He also talked about what he does at work, such as checking for system vulnerabilities and helping protect the company's digital security. According to him, cybersecurity requires constant learning because "technology changes fast, so you have to keep up."

Engr. Dupaya also opened up about the challenges he faced as a Computer Engineering student, like dealing with heavy workloads and understanding complex lessons. He said these struggles helped him become more disciplined and improved his problem-solving skills. Throughout the interview, he gave us helpful advice—such as practicing with tools early, strengthening our programming and networking skills, and trying out hands-on projects to apply what we learn. He reminded us to stay curious and dedicated, saying that having the right mindset is just as important as having technical skills. Overall, his experiences

motivated us and gave us a clearer idea of what to expect in our own journey as future Computer Engineers.

Personal Reflection

Macasaet

During our interview, the part that struck me the most is that from just how he speaks and looks back on the past, Engr. Dupaya clearly put a lot of effort in finishing college despite how challenging it is. Even though I knew it already, the interview reminded me again how hard and stressful this program is going to be. Due to this, I am now going to try and improve my way of learning and time management so that I can be ready for the coming years.

During the interview, I learned something new. Before then I did not know what the purpose of career centers are in TIP. Our question about how the school prepared him for his job and how it made it easier for him to find work led me to knowing all about career centers and how it helps students for their future profession. The two lessons that he gave that impacted me the most are about just enjoying ourselves and to try to build ourselves as much as possible. You will not survive the course if you don't enjoy it as you will get easily burnt out. Lastly, building ourselves through experiences, learning skills, and gaining knowledge related to our field will make it easier for us students to be successful in the future.

Macatangay

What struck me most from the interview was how clearly the alumni connected their educational experiences to their current role as a Security Engineer at RT&Co. Cybersecurity. Hearing that they graduated in 2025 and quickly advanced into a specialized field showed me how important preparation and continuous learning are even before entering the workforce. I was also impressed by how honest they were

about wishing they had learned certain tools earlier especially STM32CubeIDE and Linux because it showed that even professionals still see gaps they want to improve on.

Their story affected my own views on my academic and career goals by reminding me that the skills we choose to focus on now can shape the opportunities available to us later. Knowing that subjects like Computer Networks, Embedded Systems, OOP, and Data Science turned out to be the most useful in their cybersecurity career made me realize the value of mastering these fundamentals. It encouraged me to think more seriously about how my current subjects could support a future specialization, and to start exploring tools and systems that go beyond classroom requirements.

One of the most inspiring parts of the interview was the alumni's emphasis on learning advanced tools early, even if they seem challenging. Their advice to start exploring industry-level tools like STM32CubeIDE and Linux reminded me that stepping out of my comfort zone is necessary for growth. From their story, I plan to apply several lessons: start learning deeper technical skills sooner, take my major subjects seriously, and actively explore technologies aligned with the career path I want. Their journey reminded me that preparation today can become my competitive advantage tomorrow.

Miraflor

What struck me most from the interview was how honest and down-to-earth the alum was when talking about their journey. They didn't pretend that everything went smoothly; instead, they shared the challenges, doubts, and unexpected turns that shaped their career. Hearing someone who once sat in the same classrooms talk about navigating uncertainty made the whole idea of building a future feel a lot more real and relatable.

Their story definitely made me reflect on my own academic and career goals. I realized that it's okay not to have everything perfectly figured out yet—what matters is staying curious, open to opportunities, and willing to put in consistent effort. A surprising moment was when they said that the skills they rely on most today weren't even part of their original plan; they came from trying new things and stepping outside their comfort zone. That was inspiring, because it reminded me that growth often happens in unexpected places.

The biggest lesson I'm taking away is to be patient with myself and not be afraid of change. The alum emphasized that progress isn't always linear and that setbacks can actually guide you toward something better. I plan to apply that mindset moving forward, especially by taking advantage of opportunities on campus, exploring different interests, and staying open to where those experiences might lead.

Villaruel

What struck me most from the interview with Engr. Jomarie Dupaya was how practical and honest he was sharing his experiences as a Computer Engineering student. The way he answered each question also stood out to me. He was very professional, informative, and straightforward, making it easy for us to understand the realities of the course and the industry. His recommendations, such as learning STM32CubeIDE and Linux early, made me realize that building technical skills outside the classroom is essential, especially if I want to pursue specific fields. I also found it interesting how he emphasized the importance of subjects like Computer Networks, Embedded Systems, OOP, and Data Science, which helped me understand which areas will matter most in the industry. His story about struggling with programming but staying determined was inspiring, and it made me feel more confident that challenges are part of the learning process, not a sign of weakness.

The biggest impact on my mindset came from his advice to explore widely, build strong friendships, and invest in myself through extracurricular activities and hands-on experiences. His honesty about the competitive job market and the need for both hardware and software skills made me realize that while the school provides support, I also need to take initiative in preparing for my future career. I appreciated how he valued T.I.P.'s laboratories, ABET accreditation, and the guidance of knowledgeable professors, which reminded me to take advantage of the resources we already have as freshmen. Moving forward, I plan to apply his advice by being more proactive, improving my skills early, and surrounding myself with people who can help me grow and stay motivated throughout the Computer Engineering journey.

Connection to Course or Program

This subject is for preparing us for our future not only in the Computer Engineering program but for our professional careers as well. In line with this, the interview conducted with an alumni prepared us on how to survive and finish this program. An example of this is that the alumni reminded us to improve our time management and they emphasized how important connections and friends are. The interview clearly reinforced our knowledge about our future profession as it helped us gain more insight into how challenging computer engineering can be.

Conclusion

Overall, the interview was a valuable and eye-opening experience that helped us better understand the practical side of building a career in the tech and engineering field. Hearing the alumni's insights, especially their honest reflections on what they wished they had learned earlier gave us a clearer sense of how to prepare ourselves and which skills to prioritize moving forward. We are grateful for the time and advice they shared, and we plan to apply their guidance as we continue developing our academic and

career goals. If possible, we would also like to stay in touch, as their experiences and perspective could be a meaningful source of inspiration and mentorship in the future.

Appendices