

During my entire education at Iowa State University, it helped prepare me in so many different ways. Although I was pushed to learn new topics and learn new study and work habits, I grew. The hands-on experience, professional experience, and extracurricular experience have prepared me for my future goals. The involvement here at Iowa State University has trained me into the cybersecurity professional I am today, with experience and a desire to grow and learn more.

My classes at Iowa State have prepared me very well, enabling me to not only learn in a classroom environment with many other peers, but also giving me hands-on experience. Whether or not that was a lab, a homework assignment, project, they all tied in very well with the lecture material and taught me so much. Having direct access to the professor and teaching assistants. It is constantly developing and changing in the cybersecurity world, making cybersecurity coursework difficult to develop. The ever-changing landscape of the cyber world makes a constantly developing industry difficult to teach, but classes knock it out of the ballpark when it comes to this. These classes first cover security concepts in our lectures to familiarize us with the subject, and then we work with software to gain experience with the concepts. These labs, homeworks, and projects use many industry tools and teach students the modern methods that security professionals use today. While it even managed to teach us the history behind the software and tools. This, in combination with my professional experience, has set me up for success in the future.

I have been well prepared by the course here at Iowa State University, allowing me to bring in experience with industry tools and processes, enabling me to learn and grow quickly on the job. I was given the opportunity to learn about the Cyber Operations sector, which couples very closely with the two cyber courses I was taking at the time. Most importantly, I gained professional-level security operations experience from the security team's perspective and how

that interacts with the rest of the organization and the overall security posture. In my second internship, I was allowed to work in Cyber Engineering. During this internship, I was using a tool called SPLUNK, which I was taught to use during CPR E 2300. The coursework had prepared me for the industry to apply what I had learned. These work experiences have taught me how all view all sides of the industry, a business, and care about security. This experience paired nicely with my experience in student-led organizations

Throughout my time as a student, I participated in many student organizations. My main focus was learning through the ISU Cyber Defense Competition. This allowed me to practice the skills I learned in my coursework and professional experience. The Cyber Defense Competitions are an event where students form teams and work together to defend a network against industry-standard professionals. It is a great chance to experiment, try new things, take risks, and learn. I have been able to directly apply the experience from my Cyber Operations role, and the Cyber Engineering role. I have won a few competitions and learned better ways to lead teams, organize efforts, and teach others in addition to continuously practicing my cybersecurity skills. These competitions have prepared me, taught me how to continue to learn, and has given me a plan for continued growth these coming years. I want to participate in the Red team for the cyber defense competitions, potentially complete the concurrent masters here at Iowa State, study for and earn security certificates, and learning red team operations through programs like hack the box.

My experience here at Iowa State University has taught me that I also want to experience the many different fields of security hands-on and would like to have multiple types of positions in security throughout my life. This University has taught me to be a lifelong learner. Doing all this, I hope never to stop learning because security and computing are fascinating.