**Code CracklePop**

**What is the most fascinating thing you've learned in the past month?**

For the past few years, I researched different milk alternatives taking into account health, taste, and sustainability. I settled on Oatly because I love the taste, the brand had bold sustainability goals, and the main ingredients are just water and oats. Recently though, I came across a blog article that explains the negative health effects that Oatly imposes even though the ingredients are seemingly so simple.

Interestingly, sugar is not listed with the ingredients, yet there is still “added sugar” in the nutritional facts. The reason is because this sugar, maltose, is a byproduct of the process used to liquify the oats. Maltose has a glycemic index (GI) of 105. This index is used to indicate how different sugars affect the human blood glucose levels, where the higher the GI number the worse health effects. The GI range is between 0 to 100, which means that maltose is off the chart! To compare, high-fructose corn syrup (an ingredient I actively avoid) like in Coca-Cola has a GI of 65-75; Oatly has worse sugar effects on the human body than a bottle of Coke! I never would have thought it to be this way.

I find it fascinating how complex food science can be: although sugar is not an added ingredient, it is still created in the production process. I am also amazed at how this product is marketed so well as something healthy and good, when in reality the product’s contents impose negative health concerns.

(the blog: https://every.to/almanack/oatly-the-new-coke-821556)

**What do you want to be doing in two years?**

I want to have a technical position that challenges me to use my analytical and problem-solving skills. I want to be using my programming skills to make a positive impact and help my company move forward. It is very important to me that I will also be continuously learning and growing in my career. I hope to be working on projects that will feel fulfilling and rewarding. All the while, I hope to be in a position that will allow me to have a healthy work-life balance to ensure my own physical and mental health.

**Why do you want to attend RC?**

I want to collaborate with peers on projects, which I believe will expose me to different ideas and perspectives that will allow me to learn and grow. For the past few months, I have been self-learning various programming topics. I also periodically spoke to other programmers for advice and insights. I found that from just one hour of chatting, I am presented with many different perspectives and ideas. This reveals the great value of group projects and collaboration. There is so much that I can learn from other people. I believe RC is the place that can provide me with this opportunity. There is an unlimited amount of knowledge that I can learn from others, whether or not they have many more years of experience than me. RC is not structured as a traditional learning space. This allows for many different perspectives and insights to flow while working on or discussing a project. I am eager to work in such an environment that enables creativity for problem solving. Ultimately, I want to be surrounded by like-minded people with shared goals to improve oneself and to just enjoy programming daily.

**What would you like to work on at RC?**

I’m quite open to working on a breadth of projects while at RC. Some projects I have in mind include the following:

1. Food Desert Analysis – Use publicly available data to analyze, understand, and visualize access to affordable and nutritious food from grocery stores, community gardens, and food banks.
2. Recipe Bank Chrome Extension – Build a chrome extension to easily extract and store online recipes in a standardized format to create a personalized cookbook.
3. Online Order Tracking Gmail Extension – Use Gmail APIs to automatically keep track of online orders from confirmation until receipt or return.
4. Use a new visualization tool while working on a project
5. Create a Pandas to SQL “cheat sheet”

**Describe your programming background in a few sentences.**

In college, I really enjoyed a C++ intro course because of the challenging problems I had to solve. I also self-taught some HTML to create a blog for my academic studies. Until a year ago, that was the extent of my programming experience.

Last year, while working as an Environmental Scientist, I realized the tasks I enjoyed most involved dealing with data. I decided I wanted to build my programming skills so I can better manipulate data in my career. That is why I started to learn Python.

After completing an intro course, I decided to pursue a programming career. My next step was to research the necessary skills to be successful in this transition. The first thing I found necessary is to have a strong fluency in a coding language along with understanding of its ecosystem. To satisfy this, I furthered my self-study of Python through a combination of online courses, reading documentation, and programming exercises.

After gaining Python fluency, I knew I wanted to expand my toolkit for dealing with data, extracting insights, and visualizing data. I spent time learning the most relevant Python libraries used for data: NumPy, Pandas, Matplotlib, as well as SQL for accessing data.

I found suitable and detailed courses for these subjects after a lot of research into different programs and courses. To ensure I was on track, I made myself a schedule with deadlines for completing each course. I also paired this learning with personal projects to implement the skills I was gaining.

**Have you worked professionally as a programmer?**

My experience as a professional programmer has been very minimal. For the past couple of months, I have been contracted by a health care services firm to complete a couple of small programming projects. These projects include building a web crawler and extracting and transforming open-source datasets.

**Do you have a Computer Science degree or are you seeking one?**

I do not have and am not currently seeking a Computer Science degree.

**What other commitments (work, life, family) would you have during your batch?**

I am a practicing Jew and cannot attend RC during the Jewish Holidays. For the Summer 1 batch this is only on May 17th.