A brief summary of Jillian Shepard and Josh Cohen

Jillan Shepard

As stated in the email that Dr. Carbonara sent the DSA 501 class, Jillian is a data scientist at Kangarootime. She can also be found on LinkedIn, TheOrg.com, and co-founded BDSC; the Buffalo Data Science Community. I have also had the pleasure of having attended a class (or two) with her at Buffalo State College. Jillian is a very knowledgeable, capable, and accomplished data scientist. On her biography she has stated that she has been working in the software development industry as a data scientist for 9 years and has an affinity for working in education.

The Buffalo Data Science Community is a very new organization that had started in 2022 and was formalized in 2023 with the buffalodsc.com website. There are two main objectives of the community:

1. Create a network of learning opportunities for the Buffalo, NY data science and tech community.
2. Ensure our network is as accessible and welcoming as possible to Buffalonians of all backgrounds and learning levels.

There are links on the BDSC website to register for upcoming BDSC events as well as signing up for Discord (a chat app) to communicate with other members in the community. If a person provides their email address, updates and news are sent periodically (They promise not to send a billion emails). When I checked there were no upcoming events, however, the last event was Wednesday, September 6th which was yesterday.

Josh Cohen

Josh Cohen also worked with Jillian at Kangarootime. According to his LinkedIn profile he was an intern at Kangaroo time from January 2023 to May 2023 and performed these duties:

1. Enhanced the performance of existing Python scripts through careful refactoring, resulting in a 50% reduction in code length and streamlined output generation while eliminating redundant steps.
2. Performed advanced SQL queries on production database to produce records client requests.
3. Collaborated on projects in a shared Azure DevOps repository using version control tools to track changes.

Currently he is employed by Delaware North as a Data Engineer and has been employed there for 4 months.

Questions to ask the presenters:

1. What skills do you think were the most important that you took away from the Buffalo State Data Science program when you were a student?
2. What skills do you wish you were taught or shown in the Buffalo State Data Science program?
3. What does a typical day look like at [Kangarootime, Delaware North] or are they generally atypical with new challenges every day?
4. What are some of those challenges?
5. Are there any problems that arose that were just unsolvable and had to be re-thought?