

Ben Soyka

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Summary

Creative and motivated undergraduate computer science student looking forward to gaining real-life industry experience in a fast-paced team. Passionate about guiding others through all things technology and excited to leverage skills learned in classes and activities to help other people.

Education

BS University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, Computer Science Minneapolis, MN
• Cumulative GPA: 3.84 Aug 2024 – present
• Anticipated graduation: Dec 2027

Skills

Programming Languages: Python, Java, R, C, OCaml, HTML, JavaScript, CSS

Tools: Git/GitHub, Docker, Amazon Web Services, macOS, Linux, Windows

Experience

University of Minnesota Housing and Residential Life, Office Assistant Minneapolis, MN
• Provide essential support at 24/7 information desks in student residential halls, ensuring efficient customer service while also responding to building emergencies. Jan 2025 – present
• Work independently during overnight and late-hour shifts, demonstrating reliability and independence. 1 year 2 months

Ben Soyka Photography, Photographer 2023 – present
• Run a self-employed photography business, specializing in senior, family, event, and headshot photography, with 50+ client galleries delivered. 3 years
• Manage all aspects of the business, including photography, editing, client relations, advertising, and financial operations.
• Promote services through social media, a self-designed website, and campus marketing, fostering a strong client base through referrals.
• Deliver high-quality, true-to-color edits using Photoshop and Lightroom, with a focus on bright, candid poses tailored to client needs.
• Ensure seamless client experiences from booking to final delivery using Pixieset for management and distribution.

Medium, Freelance Contributing Writer Aug 2019 – present
• Write and publish articles on a variety of topics, including programming news, tutorials, and writing insights, with a focus on providing valuable content to readers. 6 years 7 months
• Authored 60+ stories, accumulating a total of 198,000 impressions, including a widely shared article with 100,000 views.
• Engage with readers by responding to comments and fostering discussions to enhance reader interaction and community building.
• Develop article ideas through research and personal insights, aiming to address and assist reader needs across diverse subjects.

Projects

Wikipedia Editing Bot

Mar 2022 – present

- Used Python to develop several scripts that perform daily automated edits on the English Wikipedia through the MediaWiki API.
- Reduced errors and mistakes to near-zero as the bot has performed over 20,000 trivial edits on live articles, saving human editors valuable time.

Personal Website

Aug 2020 – present

- Designed and built a personal landing page from scratch using Astro, Svelte, UnoCSS, and Motion, with a focus on accessibility, responsiveness, and mobile-friendliness.
- Manage the live deployment using Cloudflare Workers.

Advent of Code Practice

Dec 2019 – present

- Solved 100+ programming puzzles during annual Advent of Code events using Python, practicing dynamic programming, graph algorithms, and testing workflows.
- Learned techniques to process large inputs with efficiency and accuracy.
- Maintain a collection of public solutions with proper documentation and a focus on clean, easy-to-understand code.

Activities and Leadership

UMN Twin Cities Rotaract Club, Vice President, Past Communications Coordinator

Minneapolis, MN
Sept 2024 – present

- Assist in leading an active student organization dedicated to volunteering with various community initiatives in the Minneapolis area.
- Elected as president for the 2026–2027 academic year, requiring careful preparation for a smooth transition.
- Previously managed professional email communications to over 200 club members.

UMN Rocket Team, Midwest Recovery Lead, Special Projects Subteam

Minneapolis, MN
Sept 2025 – present

- Research, develop, and test high-powered amateur rocketry projects focused on testing new concepts, including two-stage flights.
- Lead recovery design and operations for the team's entry in the 2026 Space Grant Midwest High-Power Rocketry Competition.
- Instruct and assist team members in the use of Git and GitHub, including standard branch and commit conventions.
- Designed, built, and launched a [personal rocket](#) to 1,995 ft, used to earn a Level 1 certification from the Tripoli Rocketry Association.

Verticality Casual Climbing, Treasurer

Minneapolis, MN
Aug 2025 – present

- Serve as a founding officer of a student organization dedicated to casual rock climbing.
- Handle legal/financial matters as the club develops, including managing budgets, grant proposals, and compliance with IRS regulations and university policies.

UMN Science and Engineering Student Board, Mental Health Subdirector

Minneapolis, MN
Sept 2024 – May 2025

- Worked with other college-level student and administrative leadership to plan events that promoted positivity in the University of Minnesota community.

Awards

UMN College of Science and Engineering Dean's List

Minneapolis, MN

Recognized in 3/3 semesters for "superior academic performance."

Leavenworth High School Horizon Scholar

Leavenworth, KS
Apr 2024

Recognized for academic success with a 4.0+ cumulative GPA.

Operation Homefront Military Child of the Year Semifinalist

Awarded for positively impacting local military families, schools, and communities.

San Antonio, TX

Jan 2024

Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout

Demonstrated long-term leadership, initiative, and commitment to community service.

Fort Leavenworth, KS

Oct 2023

US Army Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Awarded for supporting morale activities for thousands of military family members.

El Paso, TX

Apr 2022