

# Ben Soyka

 Minneapolis, MN

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## Summary

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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

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**BS      University of Minnesota - Twin Cities**, Computer Science

Minneapolis, MN

- Cumulative GPA: 3.84
- Anticipated graduation: Dec 2027

Aug 2024 – present

## Skills

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

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

## Experience

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**Thomson Reuters**, Software Engineer Intern

Remote

Contracted through Maverick Software Consulting as a software engineer intern.

Feb 2026 – present

1 month

**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.
- Work independently during overnight and late-hour shifts, demonstrating reliability and independence.

Jan 2025 – present

1 year 2 months

**Ben Soyka Photography**, Photographer

Apr 2023 – present

2 years 11 months

- Run a self-employed photography business, specializing in senior, family, event, and headshot photography, with 50+ client galleries delivered.
- 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

6 years 7 months

- 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.
- 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

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### Nudge

Feb 2026

- Developed a full-stack social habit tracking application using React, TypeScript, and Firebase.
- Created as a hackathon project for MinneHack 2026 with a small group of students.

### 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

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### 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

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### UMN College of Science and Engineering Dean's List

Minneapolis, MN

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

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|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Leavenworth High School Horizon Scholar</b><br>Recognized for academic success with a 4.0+ cumulative GPA.   | Leavenworth, KS<br>Apr 2024      |
| <b>Operation Homefront Military Child of the Year Semifinalist</b><br>Awarded for positively impacting local military families, schools, and communities. | San Antonio, TX<br>Jan 2024      |
| <b>Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout</b><br>Demonstrated long-term leadership, initiative, and commitment to community service.                           | Fort Leavenworth, KS<br>Oct 2023 |
| <b>US Army Civilian Service Achievement Medal</b><br>Awarded for supporting morale activities for thousands of military family members.                   | El Paso, TX<br>Apr 2022          |