

Future Career Aspirations and Goals Essay

Michael P. Currier

University of South Florida, School of Information

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Dr. Richard Austin

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As I approach my graduation in December of 2023, defining my future career aspirations has never been more relevant for me than it is now. While I have wanted to build my career in the field of web development since early high school, planning out the details of such an entrance has always been a challenge for me. Fortunately, getting my B.S. in Information Science with a concentration in web development technologies has aligned me well for entering my field. As I have progressed through this degree, my initially broad vision of working as a web developer has become more specific towards full stack web application development. In the future, I would like to be a part of the entire development process from start to finish, involving choosing the stack, building the architecture, developing the front end, organizing back-end data, and so on. The position that would best suit this vision would be a lead developer/project manager role. I think I ended up with this desire by building so many projects myself from start to finish and gaining a real love for seeing projects all the way through.

My history as a developer is long and full of improvement. I have been taking on freelance projects, building static HTML/CSS sites since my junior year of high school. Most of these projects used basic skills in the field to develop simple websites. I developed my first full-stack web application in the beginning of 2023. During that project, I learned more about the field I will be entering and gained more skills in one month than I had in my entire time building web sites. I felt as though the project tied together all the loose ends of miscellaneous skills that I had developed over the past several years.

I have visited the Career Services website many times looking for internship opportunities and to look for full time positions after I graduate. Handshake has been an invaluable resource for me in searching for available positions. I have also attended Career

Services events (namely the technical career fair) and will be attending the upcoming career fair on 9/20/2023. I interviewed for a position at a company that I spoke with at the last event, though my knowledge of the time was significantly less than it is now. I hope to network with more companies and explore different opportunities there. Currently, I am working as a Software Developer Intern at Improving Aviation, LLC. The company is a startup based in Tampa, FL that uses drones and AI/ML algorithms to predict the paths of forest fires with the most accurate and timely data possible. I feel very fortunate to use the knowledge I have gained throughout my experiences to develop a product that has the potential to not only impact lives but potentially save them.

Aside from the resources available through Career Services, I have made use of many online resources to prepare myself for entering the development industry. Some resources I have used for job postings include Indeed, CareerShift, LinkedIn, Dayforce, and Zip Recruiter to name a few. The listings I found on all these sites were very helpful not just in introducing me to new companies but also in showing me the skills that I should brush up on before applying. As far as gaining new information to prepare myself for the field, I think my biggest resource has been the many different online course videos that exist on YouTube or other instructional materials that exist online for free. These sources have been instrumental in building my understanding of both the material and the general field of web development.

To enter the field, I plan on maintaining good relations with my current company and hopefully transferring to a full-time position upon graduation. Before then, I hope to send out applications to different companies and explore all the options that are on the table for me. My expectations are realistic due to the current status of the industry, though I do believe that my prior freelance experiences and strong ability to work through tough problems makes me a strong applicant for

entry level positions. I would like to enter a position that has room for growth because I would ultimately like to become a project manager/tech lead. Overall, I believe my exposure to the industry and the resources I have available both from the University of South Florida and from online resources will lead to me entering the field on the right foot and having everything I need to move up from there.