Ryan Jarrell

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Bio

My name is Ryan Jarrell. I am on my way to becoming a full stack web developer. I am from Readington, NJ, which is a small town in Central Jersey. I studied at Virginia Tech University for 5 years, where I obtained a Master’s in Accounting and Information Systems with a Tax focus. Two weeks after graduation, I began working at New York Life Investment Management as an accountant, and I have been there for three years. You might be wondering why I am switching to coding now after spending the last eight years of my life focused on accounting. It’s a question I thought a lot about when deciding whether or not to start the Rutgers Coding Bootcamp.

When I started college, I chose accounting as a major because I heard it was an in demand field that would provide a stable job. But as I worked through my accounting classes, I never had any passion for it. Learning the material was always a chore that required an immense level of willpower. I have found that I enjoy accounting more at work than I did at school, but after three years, I yearn for something more.

My journey with code began in senior year of college. I took a class that taught Microsoft Access and VBA. Our final project was to build a program to allow customers to place orders for a fictional flower company. I enjoyed this class more than any of my accounting classes, and always had that experience in mind since then.

About a year and a half ago, I became heavily involved in an effort my company was going through to implement a web based solution to allow us to scan invoices and store them into a database, which is to be used for monthly journal entry automation as well as improved reporting. I worked closely with the IT team to give business requirements for the application, and was involved with testing and providing feedback to the IT team. My experience on this project piqued my interest in coding again, as I became fascinated in what must be going on behind the scenes to make this application work. It also helped me realize that in any field, even accounting, technology is going to play a major role in how work gets done. A combination of this newfound passion for technology that I never had with accounting plus the sense of a growing demand and almost need for these skills brought me to the conclusion that it was time to refocus my career.

Towards the end of 2015, I began a free course called CS50 to learn the fundamentals of computer science, since by then I did not remember much from the coding class I took in college. It was a fascinating course with great explanations on how computers work under the hood. I did a lot of coding in C which I feel gave me a great baseline.

While I learned a lot in the class, the self-taught nature of the course made it very difficult, and I thought it would be more meaningful when job searching to have taken an in person and paid for course to show that I was serious about pursuing coding. I chose the Rutgers Web Development Bootcamp because I have heard that the web is a growing field in technology. I believe that I made the right choice, and I have been immensely enjoying spending hours on the homework assignments and learning in a collaborative class environment.

After the Bootcamp is over, I hope to find a job where I can utilize my coding skills and learn new things every day. I would like to find something in New York City preferably. I currently work in a corporate environment. I like the structure that such an environment offers, but I would be open to working for a smaller company as well. I am not sure if my personality fits well with a startup environment, but I might consider that too. When I started the course, I was thinking that I could somehow merge my accounting experience with coding. I still think this may be the ideal scenario for my career, but I have come to the conclusion that if I would still be open to taking a position that was far different from accounting, as I have discovered that coding is my true passion and what I would like to do.

Outside of working, I enjoy playing music on the guitar, obsessing over NBA basketball, spending time with friends and family, and being outdoors. I also enjoy the hustle and bustle of a busy city. It is great being close to a place where there is always something to do.