

Hello Friend

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Introduction

This document is intended to be an introduction of both myself and my interests. As this is being created to fulfill a requirement for a statistics class that is being taken in pursuit of my Software Engineering degree it will also touch on my technical experience and future aspirations. Finally, because I believe it to be pertinent to the person I have become, I will provide a brief outline of my professional history and where I see myself working in the future. Without further ado, I shall start this story at the most logical point... the beginning.

Personal Information



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Early Years

I was born on 17 September 1977 in the small town of Machias, ME. My father was an Airman stationed at the now closed Bucks Harbor Air Force Station as a Radar Technician and my mother was a local resident of the area. Due to being born into a military family, my childhood was spent in a constant state of transition. As such, I do not have any real “home town” to which I identify but instead every location has imprinted itself on my memories. The most notable is the 4 years spent in Belgium, where my family lived off-post among the local community. According to my mother, during this period I spoke French well enough to cause havoc throughout the village with the Belgian children who became my friends. It is notable, that I can now remember little more than the common conversational phrases that any first year language student would know. My families travels ended when my father was stationed at Tyndall AFB in Panama City, FL. This is the location that I would consider most similar to the traditional “home town” because it is where I spent all of my high school years.

High School Years

While my high school years were some of the best years of my life, full of great friends and great memories... I was, to put it lightly, A sub-standard student. This pattern of under-achievement in any subject other than Mathematics was not due to being unable to learn the material but an unwillingness to even try. Any class that I did not find interesting, eventually just became a good excuse to skip and go play basketball. I found High School to be boring and repetitive, and as such the experience likely soured me on education for a good portion of my life. After graduation, I had no interest in pursuing higher education... this was a decision which not well received by my parents. After spending about two years performing random jobs which had no realistic future, I decided that a career in the United States Air Force would be a good option for me.

Profesional Information

United States Air Force

On 19 March 1997, I enlisted in the United States Air Force (USAF) and shipped off to Basic Military Training (BMT) in San Antonio, TX. Due to my scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, there was a wide range of career choices available to me and I entered with guaranteed placement as an Electronics Technician. While it was an “interesting” experience, BMT was likely something that I needed in my life as it reinforced personal responsibility and provided an organized/structured way of life which up to that point I had lacked. After BMT, I was sent to technical training in Biloxi, MS to be certified as a Ground Radio Maintenance Technician Apprentice. I believe this opportunity allowed me to understand that it wasn’t school that I didn’t like but the way that my high school years were structured. When given the opportunity to study things that actually interest me (technical subjects), I had no issue with applying myself to the material and truly enjoyed the learning experience. That appreciation for the subject matter led to a long and what I would consider distinguished career.

Over my 17 years in the USAF, I progressed from apprentice to journeyman and finally to the craftsman level. The journey allowed me to experience different cultures throughout the country and the world; North American, Central America, South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and South-West Asia. This inspired in me an appreciation for experiencing new cultures and environments which persists to this day. While the military is definitely not an optimal environment for many, it was exactly what i needed in order to prepare me for the life I wished to lead and I look back on all the trials and tribulations with a great sense of appreciation. The friendships and experience along the way cannot be assigned a monetary value... in my mind they are invaluable. Unfortunately, as it is with most fields the further you move up the ladder the farther you get from the technical challenges which initially drew you to the field in the first place.

After a two year tour supporting counter-drug operations in Honduras, I was stationed to Columbus AFB, MS. This would end up being my final duty station prior to retirement and I was placed in the position of Flight Chief for Airfield Operations. For the first time in my career, I was in a purely management position and it bored me to tears. While there is a positive side to managing people, and the money is obviously better, my job satisfaction level plummeted. At some point during the years serving in that position it dawned on me that administrative and management roles would be entirety of my career in the USAF from that point on. So, when they offered the opportunity for early retirement in 2013 I applied and was eventually approved. It was now time to try my hand in the corporate environment.

Post Air Force

At the conclusion of my USAF career, I decided that I wanted to experience the joys of living in an all new environment. The two options which seemed to appeal to me were either middle-america or the west coast. After exploring job opportunities in those areas the pacific northwest became what I believed to be the obvious decision for someone interested in technical fields. The Seattle area especially became a stand out option because of the vast number of opportunities in aerospace. After applying for multiple positions across many companies, I was contacted by an aerospace company which focused on power conversion technologies and needed an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) repair technician. I flew out to Seattle for the

interview, they gave me a tour of the facilities, and found the idea of being able to troubleshoot and repair equipment used for commercial airlines to be very enticing. A few days later I stopped my job hunt, accepted the position, and began my move to the Seattle area.

It took me very little time to find that being back in a technical position was exactly what I wanted for my life. The opportunity to work on vastly different projects on a daily basis, to diagnose and repair failures, and coordinate with engineering staff on root cause analysis was very satisfying. I held this position for about 2 years until I was contacted by Engineering staff and offered a Senior Engineering Technician position. The opportunity to work on and verify designs from the theoretical idea phase all the way to implementation was too good to pass up, the extra money was a nice bonus... I accepted.

During this time I began to get the itch to learn something new, I had worked on the hardware side of things for my entire adult life. I decided that I wanted to study Software Engineering, so I went to the WSU Everett campus and discussed my aspirations with the adviser. After getting my transfer application and the associated paperwork submitted I entered the program. This was an eye-opening experience and I found that when I had the opportunity to choose the subjects that I was going to study, school was actually an enjoyable experience. While there were still non-technical pre-requisites that needed to be completed for the degree program I felt like I was in control of the process and able to focus on subject-matter that I found interesting. Looking back now I believe that was the main issue I had in High School, I was never in control... there was always someone else deciding what I should study and when. Which brings the story of my life to the current day, I am now a Senior in his last semester at WSU and looking forward to my eventual move into a Design Engineer position with the company I currently work for after graduation.

Personality

As a conclusion to this document I would like to take the opportunity to discuss how I characterize my personality traits. My current self is obviously the result of a lifetime of experiences which have shaped the person I became. But there are certain characteristics which I believe have always existed; curiosity, loyalty, calmness, logical, and even-handed. I am for the most part a highly structured individual and dislike unexpected occurrences, structure and planning are something that calm me and I dislike taking action before I have time to think through the path forward. I believe this is why I like the technical fields, in every problem there is a definable failure which only requires cautious approach and time to identify. The soft sciences and purely theoretical fields tend to bore me, I want to be able to instantiate an instance of the design into the physical world... to see the results! There is one area of my life where these characteristics do not seem to apply... I have a terminal case of wander-lust. The 7 years I have spent in Washington is the longest I have lived in one location for my entire life. I consistently get itchy feet and start looking at job opportunities in random locales in which I've never visited. The logical part of my brain has, up to this point, always gotten the better side of the argument and reminds me that I have a great job at a great company with great future potential. These are the thing that all responsible adults strive for but that doesn't stop me from day-dreaming about just picking up and leaving. If I was to guess, at some point that itch will become too strong to ignore and I will end up applying for some position in Wyoming, Alaska, or maybe even a different country like Ireland!