QUICK FACTS

- **Shaped by life across four continents, I've collaborated with people from all walks of life, including Wall Street executives and families in small villages affected by leprosy, gaining resilience, adaptability, and the ability to face complex challenges with clarity and care.**
- I'm a **strong independent learne**r who's comfortable diving into unfamiliar code, **troubleshooting tough problems,** and asking smart questions when needed
- My projects reflect a focus on **real users** and **clean architecture**, with careful attention to **data flow**, **edge cases**, and **long-term maintainability**
- Rooted in **cross-cultural experience**, I bring persistence, clear communication, and a steady approach to problem-solving and **teamwork**
- I care deeply about **building tools that make people's lives better**, and I'm excited to keep growing as a **thoughtful**, **reliable engineer** who cares deeply about the **end-user experience**

LOOKING FOR

- **Based in Chicago,** open to **in-person**, **hybrid**, or **remote** opportunities
- Seeking **backend** or **full-stack software engineering roles** (junior or early-career level)
- Have experience in **education**, **civic tech**, **finance**, and **nonprofit work**, open to any industry
- Looking for a role where I can **take initiative** on real-world challenges, **ask thoughtful questions** when needed, and help build tools that deliver **real value** to users
- Committed to **writing reliable code**, **learning continuously**, and being a teammate others can **rely on**

WHY ME

- **Backend-focused software engineer** with hands-on experience in **Ruby on Rails, Node.js, TypeScript**, and **SQL**
- Built and deployed **scalable APIs**, designed and queried **relational databases**, and applied **test-driven development** practices to ensure reliability and maintainability
- Most recently **taught science remotely** for U.S. schools without on-site teachers, requiring adaptability and confidence working with **distributed systems and digital classroom tools**
- Lived and worked in six countries—**the U.S.**, **UK**, **India**, **Kenya**, **Mexico**, and **China**
- I've come to see **code as a kind of universal language**, one that crosses cultures and connects people through shared systems and logic
- Projects designed with **clean architecture**, **complex queries**, and tools that solve **real user needs**
- **Strong independent learner** and **debugger**
- **Proud mom** to a geeky and thoughtful teenage son
- Outside of work, I enjoy playing **soccer**, **hiking**, **swimming**, walking my two dogs (Artemis and Apollo), and exploring global cuisines through cooking

Curious to see more of my work?
Scan to visit my portfolio
and connect:
bio.link/tamaradowis

Tamara Dowis
Software Engineer

MY STORY
Tamara

My non-linear life

I left home young, found family in unexpected places, and built my life across continents, including the US, the UK, India, Kenya, Mexico, and China. I have worked on Wall Street, in classrooms, and in remote villages. Every chapter has taught me something different: curiosity, resilience, perspective, and acceptance. I'm still learning and always evolving.

I have spent most of the past decade teaching science to high schoolers, both in very exclusive communities and in very poor communities. I love teaching and the students, their questions, the chaos, their curiosity. But the system is too broken. I realized I needed a new path. Friends had told me for years that I'd probably love coding, and during COVID, I finally gave in and took a Udemy course.

They were right. It felt like solving puzzles, building tiny systems, and making sense of complexity. These were all things I had always loved. It clicked. And for the first time in a long time, I felt excited about what could come next.

They knew me well, and very quickly I knew that coding is my space in this world. I very much enjoy the process of building with code. The debugging, logic problem-solving, architecture planning, it all lights up my creative mind and gives me a deep sense of purpose and clarity.

I'm so excited to keep learning, keep building, and step into this space that feels made for my non-linear brain.

WHAT SHAPED ME

I started working at Merrill Lynch at 18, and by 25, I was working with one of the firm's largest private client financial advisors. Our office was across the street from the World Trade Center. 9/11 drastically changed the trajectory of my life, as it did for so many others. I had to come to terms with the fact that although I loved the work I was doing, deep down, I knew this was not the life for me.

With the severance from Merrill Lynch, I took a one-way solo trip across the globe to India.

For me, traveling has always been about seeing others, the culture, parenting, living, building community, cooking, and observing how they move through the world. I sat alone in so many spaces, taking everything in and trying to understand. I came away with a deep sense that as much as we are different people, with different ambitions and viewpoints of the world, there is much more within us all that is the same.

I would return a few years later, this time to help manage a project in southern India that helped families that had been affected by leprosy. Later, I moved to Kenya, where I helped build a solar power network for remote communities. We were able to bring solar power to homes, schools, and hospitals into communities that were far from ever being connected to the electric grid.