

# Building Resiliency & Overcoming Failure

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# Nancy Amato, University of Illinois

PhD Illinois: MS Berkeley; BS Applied Math & AB Econ Stanford

Texas A&M (1994-2019): Asst, Assoc, Full, Emeritus (!)

(back at... ) UIUC (since 2019): Prof and Dept Head

## Research – Applied Algorithms

- Motion Planning, robotics, comp biology & geometry
- Parallel & distributed computing

## Research Group

- 2 postdocs, 12 PhD, 2 MS, 4 ugrads (+ open source team)
- Graduated 29 PhDs (13 profs, 9 research labs, 6 industry, 1 postdoc)

## Other Stuff

- Bernese Mountain dogs – currently Fred & Wilma
- highlights: bucket trip to Machu Picchu and diving!
- Husband Lawrence also CS Prof – Grad School, A&M and now Illinois



# Heriberto Acosta - PRNG

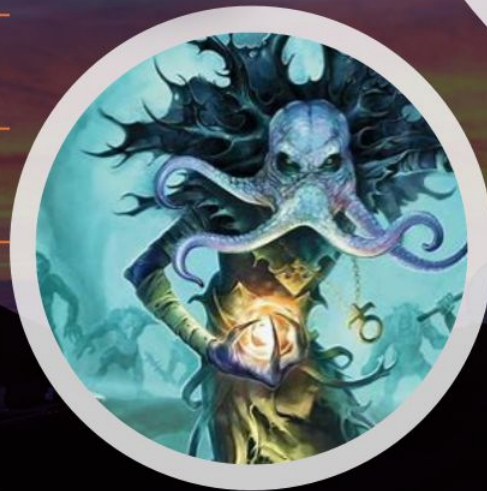
Bachelor's Degree: Computer Engineering at Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico

Master's Degree: Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining at Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico

Ph.D.: Information Systems Security at Nova Southeastern University in Ft Lauderdale, Florida

Professional Experience: Worked with the Puerto Rico National Guard (PRNG) for 15 years and currently serving as the Program Administrator for the Distributed Learning Program & Research Consultant with the National Defense University

Hobbies: Astrophotography, General Photography, Dungeons & Dragons (Level 12 Rogue Inquisitive Half-Elf exploring the ruins of Undermountain)





# PRESENTER's Stories

Why we do what we do

# Journey

- Academic journey
- Professional journey



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# Reflection



Who motivated you to go to graduate school?



What do you want to do with your degree?



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# Resilience



What is it?



the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.....



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# Ph.D. Journey



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# How to Get There: Identify Your Assets

Skills

Capacities

Strengths

Unique talents

Academic

Technical

Linguistic

Artistic

Social



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# How to Get There: Identify Your Role Models and Allies

## Role Models

someone you look up

someone you want to imitate  
aspects of their story



## Allies

provides assistance and  
support in an ongoing effort,  
activity, or struggle



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# Resilience



Can we be intentional about creating it?



Absolutely....stay tuned



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# How to Get to There: Plan



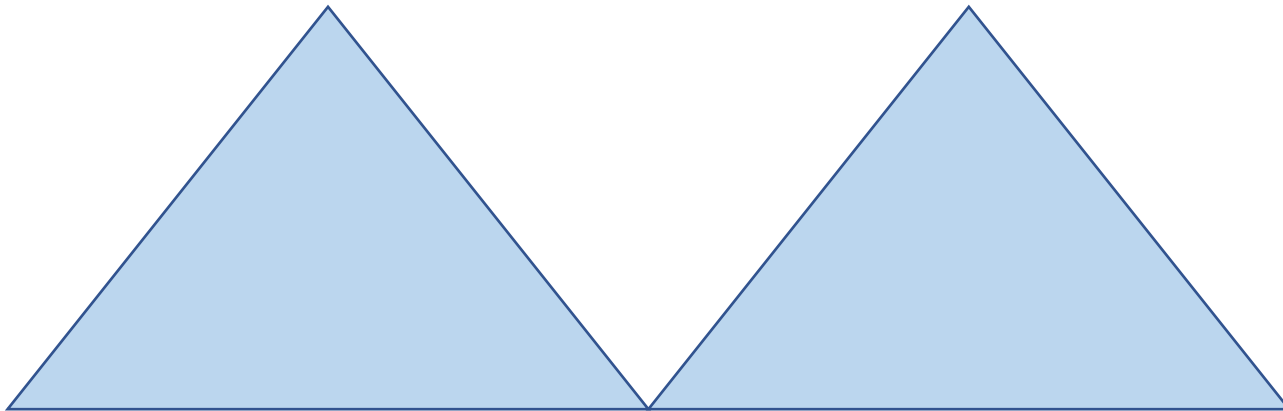
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# Life's Peaks and Valleys

Think about two mountaintop experiences: What assets helped produce the high points and which assets were revealed by the mountaintops?

Think about a deep valley in your life: How did you get through that deep valley? What assets got you through?



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**Assets: Resilience  
and Perseverance**

Failure translates to learning.



Example: rejection of a paper

Breathe

Reflect

Seek other  
opinions

Grow

# Resilience : Taking Care of Yourself



“Priming the pump” for  
resilience



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**Questions?**