Summer Internships
Meredith Ringel Morris, Microsoft Research
Alan Bivens, IBM Research

2020 CRA URMD Grad Cohort Workshop

CRA-WP
Computing Research Association
Widening Participation

About Alan

Education:

B.S. Computer Science
University of Alabama

Ph.D. Computer Science
**Rensselaer
Polytechnic Institute**

Career:

- IBM Research - 14 years
- IBM Blockchain - 3 years
- IBM Public Cloud - 0.25 years

Current Role:

- Director, Data Services - IBM Public Cloud

Work Activities:

- Drive external offerings
- Lead geographically dispersed teams
- Invention / Research
- Corporate Diversity Initiatives

What I do for fun:

- 2 little guys (8 and 10)
- Volleyball league
- Travel
- Collaborative board games
- Numismatist

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About Merrie

What I do for fun:

- 2 little kids (9 and 10)
- Getting a puppy in June!
- I geek out about: LEGO, Harry Potter, zombies, Dominion, baking
- I read a novel a week!

Education:

B.S. Computer Science
Brown University

Ph.D. Computer Science
Stanford University

Career:

- Microsoft Research – 14 years
- Also an Affiliate Professor at Univ. of Washington

Current Role:

- Sr. Principal Researcher and Research Manager of the Ability Team
- Accessibility and HCI research
  - Just got elected to the CHI Academy!

Online:

- http://aka.ms/merrie
- @merrierm (Twitter)

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Practical Value of Internship

- Experience
- Improve resume (+ papers)
- Try out potential career alternatives
  - Industry
  - National Laboratory
  - Academia
- Live in a different area
- See different work environments
  - research, product, etc.
- Sharpen your research area at school

Getting Started: Finding An Internship

- Common Intern Hiring Windows
  - November
  - February
- Professors and advisors contacts
- Apply to large national programs (SHPE, NSBE, NACME, etc.)
- Career Center
- Network!
  - Conferences
  - Career fairs
  - Professional meet-ups

Preparing your application materials and yourself

- Get your web page up-to-date –highlight experience
  - Link in a copy of your CV (get critiques)
- Create a LinkedIn page
- Do mock interviews
- Identify at least three references
- Develop and practice an 'elevator pitch'
- If on a visa, know what paperwork is expected

Interview: Putting Your Best Foot Forward

- Before the interview
  - Ask about the format of the interview
  - Research the company/group/personnel
- The Interview
  - Show motivation and enthusiasm
  - Ask clarifying questions
  - Ask about particular projects
  - Talk through as you answer technical/complicated questions
  - Be ready to ask a few questions of each interviewer
  - Ask about their decision timeline
- After the Interview
  - Send thank you notes to the folks that you meet
  - Follow up in ~1 month

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Interview: Common Questions

- What are your strengths/weakness?
- Tell me about your research?
- What is the largest project you worked on? What was your role?
- Give an example of how you handled a difficult situation
- Puzzle/Brain teaser
- Coding Challenge

Now That You Got the Job, What's Next?

- Before the Start Date
  - Ask what to prepare
  - Agree start/end + any necessary time off
- On the Job
  - Do a good job!
  - Understand expectations and deliverables
  - Keep your supervisor informed of your progress
  - Interact with the people around you (learn the culture)
  - Attend talks and seminars
  - Work independently but don't' be afraid to ask for help
  - Have fun!

Post Internship: What's Next?

- Keep in touch with host, recruiters, etc.
- Ask about the hiring process for full time
- Ask about the potential for returning next year
- Write a paper about the work

Exercises to try back at school

Exercise #1: The Elevator Pitch

Elevator Pitch Requirements:

- Duration should be no more than 60 seconds
- Sections should include
  - Problem area background / motivation
  - Problem statement
  - Technique created / used
  - Results
  - Conclusions

Exercise Activity:

- Form groups of your peers / advisors
- Practice giving elevator pitch
- Group members help critique with a focus on 3 areas
  - Clarity
  - Timeliness
  - Story Completion

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Exercise #2: Mock Interviews

- Pair up with one person.
- Play the interviewer and the other the interviewee
- Then switch roles

- Format
  - 5 minute questions
  - 3 minute feedback