



STEM SPOTLIGHT

PROFESSIONAL: POWER SEAWRIGHT

NAME: Power Seawright
COMPANY: AutoZone
TITLE: IT Manager
COLLEGE: University of Mississippi

DEGREE: Bachelor of Accountancy, Bachelor of Business Administration (M.I.S.) / Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP) certification

Q: How did you select your college major, certification program, or career path?

A: If you asked my parents, they would probably say 'process of elimination'! I had several majors including pre-Med and political science. Ultimately I landed in Accounting but my heart was not fully in it—while I did finish my degree I decided to get another in Management Information Systems to follow my love of computers and fascination with the Internet.

Q: What was the biggest influence in your selection of career path?

A: Honestly I think my father's interest in engineering, computers, and technology was a huge influence. I guess the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree as he was a CAD engineer most of his career designing pianos and grandfather clocks for Baldwin Piano and Organ company. However, I admit early on I never thought that "I could be a computer programmer, that is for really smart people!" Somehow I thought that it might be too complex or sophisticated and I would never figure it out. But I also had some good friends that helped encourage me that I was smart enough and I just needed to give it try. I already had a background in computers from my father and I guess the rest you could say... is history!

Q: If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college/career, what would it be?

A: Wow that was a long time ago... I don't recall that we had electives but if we did I would focus on communication. No matter what job you have your ability to communicate and collaborate with others will have as big an impact on your effectiveness as any other skill or trait you can acquire in any discipline!

Q: What is your favorite aspect of your job?

A: Working to build a collaborative team environment. I think when we work well together and have each other's backs we can achieve incredible things. I've witnessed it first hand and once you've had that kind of success you strive to protect that culture at all costs.



Herff College of Engineering

memphis.edu/herff



STEM SPOTLIGHT

PROFESSIONAL: POWER SEAWRIGHT

Q: How do you/your company make a positive impact on society/our community?

A: One of our core values is to care about people and put others first. We can accomplish this by helping develop others and that's why I was anxious to participate in a program like STEM. I didn't have a lot of guidance in high school about my career opportunities. I think I could have saved my parents a lot of money if I had been more focused on my future going into college. Maybe others feel the same way I did in high school and are just looking for someone to "point them in the right direction". So hopefully my speaking today can help someone else find what they are passionate about and fast track their own career paths.

Q: What's the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your career?

A: I was able to visit Japan and Mexico as well as many other exciting cities across the United States. In addition, I worked on an exciting project partnering with Amazon as part of their Amazon Dash program. This has allowed me to build a professional network of over 300 people from all walks of life. Traveling, meeting new people, building your professional network, and learning to communicate and collaborate with others will take your career to great heights and keep things interesting for sure!



Q: What makes you get up each morning excited about your profession?

A: Technology is always evolving which makes the industry challenging but refreshing. There is never a dull moment trying to stay competitive and current in areas like Cloud infrastructure, DevOps, Software as a Service, or Internet Security just to name a few.

Q: What advice would you share with K-12 students who are considering your profession?

A: Research great companies like Netflix, Amazon, and of course AutoZone! Know what types of jobs are out there in areas like Ecommerce, Application Programming, Cloud Infrastructure, DevOps and Security. Find a mentor and get to know how they got into the business. Start thinking about the classes you take now and the intern programs you can participate in tomorrow. Don't wait to talk to industry professionals until you have your first job interview scheduled. Get ENGAGED now and start COLLABORATING now!

