

COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

5 MINUTES WITH...

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1 You knew you were headed for a career in Computer Science when...

I re-discovered my oldest brother's Commodore 64 with some old C64 games in early high school. I had never really understood the existence of computer programming until I sat down to that light blue-on-blue C64 command prompt.

2 What is your favorite class and why?

I've only my thesis left to complete here at RIT, but I would say my favorite class was *4005-800 Algorithms*. Simply put, it was a great course (small section with interested students) with great content taught by a great teacher (Professor Bezakova).

3 One piece of advice I have for 1st year students is...

To conscientiously figure out where you'd like to specialize in the field of computer science. Talk to your professors, especially those from whom you take courses. Explore your options by taking a sampling of courses in different areas. And unless you have a *very* good reason not to (e.g. advice from a mentor), you should seek to master at least three things: the C programming language (preferably via a strong dose of complex data structure/algorithm implementation); a good, standard shell (like Bash) with its commands and scripting environment; and the LaTeX computer typesetting tool. I believe that mastery of these three things will serve any computer scientist well, directly or indirectly, throughout his or her career.

continues on reverse...

4 If you could have dinner with a famous computer scientist, living or dead, who would you choose?

I wouldn't mind dinner and discussion with Jack Edmonds, the fellow who is widely attributed as the first to recognize the importance of the distinction between polynomial-time and exponential-time in algorithm analysis. He also developed the polynomial-time non-bipartite matching algorithm, one of my favorites.

5 What is the most interesting project you've worked on, either in a course or on the job?

That would have to be my thesis, "Sampling and counting edge covers". It's only fitting that this is so. If your thesis/project topic is less interesting than some previous work, you should probably do your best to change your topic to an interesting extension of that previous work!

6 Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Assuming my current plans for a Ph.D. work out, I'll be a 33-year-old algorithms researcher with several years under my belt, probably as a university professor, but maybe as an employee of a government or commercial laboratory. **CS**

