

SHATHAR'S STORY



GETTING STARTED

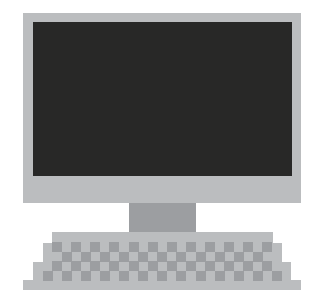
GC: How hard was it to get in? How did you prep for your application and interview?

S: I was already taking programming classes online to make sure I was interested and able to get a hang of it, so it wasn't too difficult to get in. I took courses online on codecademy and also used edx.org to take an intro to Computer Science course.

GC: What was a life or lifestyle change you had to make in order to meet the bootcamp commitment?

S: The childcare struggle is real! Getting someone to watch my sweet boys all day and even some weekends for me to study was a huge change. I had to quit my job and rearrange my current routine. Time management was a huge change for me. Every minute, every hour mattered. Every minute I was at bootcamp was spent learning. It was a huge change but prepared me for a big workload at my current job.

CAREER CHANGE



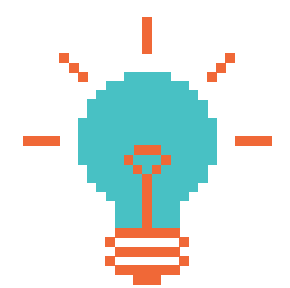
GC: The job search thing--does that really work? Why or how did it work for you?

S: Yes! It works. It is daunting, and scary, and makes you feel unworthy, and frustrated. But once you start getting interviews and land that job, it feels empowering and incredible. Cliche alert: It is ALL about networking along with the job hunt. Again, taking your emotion out of the job hunt and not taking rejections personally was something I struggled with. Actually, just landing an interview was difficult for me. I didn't even have my bachelor's so it was difficult for me to stand out in a virtual stack of resumes. All my interviews I received were from networking (including asking the people I already know if they knew anyone).

GC: Why do you think your employer hired you?

S: They actually told me why they hired me. They interviewed developers more qualified than me but they said my personality was what won them over. It made me think of when I was presenting our final project for bootcamp in front of the Grand Circus staff. Celena, the Director of Operations at Grand Circus, told me to let my personality show when presenting. I thought about this a lot during my job hunt and I have to admit, it was only when I was acting like myself did I get a response or even an interview somewhere. I am really lucky to have the support from Grand Circus to get me where I am today -- as a developer, and as a person. I feel so grateful for the experience. I am able to take care of my family and get to work at a job that I love. If I just had my face on a Grand Circus t-shirt, my life would be complete.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE



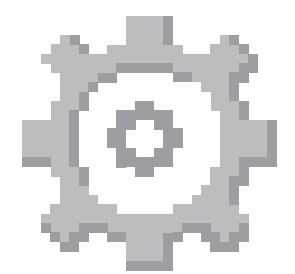
GC: What was learning in a bootcamp like?

S: It was like nothing I've done before. When you take regular college courses, it's only a few hours a week and the pace is slow. This was learning a new topic everyday and applying said topic to the topics you learn the day before. For 40 hours a week. It was extremely fast paced, but with the help from my instructor and classmates, it didn't feel overwhelming.

GC: How was the learning process managed? Was there time to ask your questions?

S: I was fortunate enough to have an incredibly intelligent and patient mastermind of a teacher (Dr. Kamel) so questions were not only welcomed, but encouraged. We were given enough tools and resources to keep up the pace of the bootcamp. There was always time to ask questions. Dr. K would ask if anyone had questions at least twice an hour during lecture.

BOOTCAMP TAKEAWAYS



GC: Why did you end up feeling that the bootcamp was worth it?

S: I would have never learned enough to be able to land the job that I did. I was talking about computer programming to my family for over a year before I even got them to push me to do it. Even with no work experience, I was able to get a full-time development position that found me because they called Grand Circus for developers!! I am literally the poster child for Grand Circus. I am waiting for them to put my face on their T-shirts.

GC: What was something you learned about yourself through the bootcamp commitment?

S: I learned that my self doubt could hinder my learning process. I didn't realize how much my negative emotions could affect my learning. Once I came to terms that I am just here to learn, and this is the start of a lifelong commitment to development, I felt much better and did so well on my final assessment. Enough where I squealed like a school girl and cried happy tears in a corner. For real, ask Kim.