Overview

This will be personal narrative that reflects on my personal, as well as my professional experiences that have guided me throughout the stages in my life as well as what the future holds for me. This will only reflect a portion of my life due to the fact that talking about my whole life would drag on and steer away from the main idea I am trying to convey. My goal with this personal narrative is to effectively share my path in my career and the choices I made to get here.

My interests

To be honest, I am not sure specifically where everything started to align in terms of interests, but early on there were signs of some of the things I would most like to do. Before cybersecurity, I actually was more into engineering and the concepts that go into that. When I was younger, I used to enjoy playing with Legos and other building blocks and trying to either create what the box was supposed to be or use the pieces to try to create a totally different item. Playing with those day in and day out was how I started my interest in engineering, and from there, it grew as I got older. Although I did have that passion for engineering, once I hit the 7th grade, I started to realize that I also had a passion for technology when I took my first ever programing class. Honestly, I was not sure what caused me to the class because it was not required to take. I had a whole list of classes I could take but I decided to go with that one. Looing back at it though I am glad I did of course. The class was an intro to programming and game design class to be more specific. If I really had to guess what prompted me to take the class, I would have to say that maybe it was because I was already into video games to a degree so I thought this class would be cool to take as well. In any case, this class was one of the reasons that I started to get into technology (video games also definitely was a factor in this too).

Although it was just an introduction class in middle school, I definitely learned a lot from it. Another key factor that led to my interest in technology would be movies about it. Movies that depicted advance technology like Star Wars and transformers really opened my eyes about it, even if it was just a movie and obviously fake. As stated before as well, video games was a big factor for my passion for technology. Even to this day I still play and enjoy video games similar to the ones I used to play when I was younger. Depending on the game, it really captured my interest in technology, or my interest in engineering. Various Star Wars games would redefine my passion for technology, and building simulator games would do the same for my passion for engineering. I could go on about the many games that did this or that, but I think this gives enough detail about how it shaped me. For awhile though, I was content with having those two main interests. I enjoyed doing other things too, like sports and playing music but I would say that these two are the ones that were essential for my academic career, at least until I had figure out which one of the interests I wanted to do long term.

Deciding on which interest

This part of the journey would be during high school, mainly in my upperclassmen years. Around this time for most, the would be figuring out what they want to do after high school and what college and degree they want to go for. Thankfully, I did not have to worry so much about what I wanted to do or where I wanted to go. The only real issue I had was deciding on which interest I wanted to pursue. I was not 100% sure on whether I wanted to study engineering or if I wanted to study a degree in technology. I still had a little bit of time left before deciding but not knowing which one I wanted to do was bothering me. It was hard to choose since I found out about both passions at an early part of my life, so it was hard to choose which one I really wanted to do. It would have just been better for me if I could find a way to mold both interest

into a single degree. I tried to way the pros and cons of each interest, but I never could find a definite answer to which interest I will pursue in college. Even with outside help it was no use. Ultimately I ended up picking engineering due to the fact that I found that interest first and I did not want to part ways from it yet. Kind of similar to how someone may have an attachment to their first pet or their first car. It was something that I bonded with in the beginning so I wanted to see how far I could go with it. I know it isn't a glamourous reason, but this was good enough for me, however if I had a good enough reason to switch then I would of considered it later. So, when I applied to my schools, I applied under the degree of engineering and mechanical engineering (If the school offered it then I chose mechanical engineering but if they did not have it then I just went with regular engineering). But now that I have chosen what I was going to pursue, I was ready to start college.

The change from the one to the other

Now this point takes place at the start of my college career. I was getting settled in with the new lifestyle, meeting new friends, just the typical newbie college life. Now I should throw out there that in high school, I never really had any issues with stem classes, specifically math and science. With that in mind, I felt like I would have no issues once I got to college. But soon after once I started to get into my main course is where I realized that I had a struggle for math, and it would start to eat away at me. With that struggle also meant that sciences that utilized the math would also be a struggle for me. It was more than I could take and if I wanted to graduate on time I would have to do something about it and soon. One of my electives that I chose early on was centered around information technology because I saw an opportunity to learn more about technology on a higher level. In that class it introduced me to cybersecurity and from that point, I made the switch from mechanical engineering to cybersecurity. I figured out the solution

to my issue as well as still learning about one of my passions. Looking back at it now, I think that was the best choice I made. It reminded me of how I made the choice to take the introduction to program and game design class when I was in 7th grade. Ever since I switched majors, I have been enjoying my academic journey.

Current status and next goals

Currently at the time I am writing this, I will be completing my junior year of college and starting my senior year soon. In terms of short-term goals, I am currently looking for ways to gain experience before I graduate, whether it is an internship or a basic IT job. I am in the home stretch for completing my degree and I have been enjoying the ride, from the start all the way till now and I will continue to enjoy the ride up until I walk across the stage. While this stage in my life was not at all easy, it was rewarding. I am not sure what is going to happen after I graduate but I know I will still be greatly involved with technology. I truly think that I was meant to be in the field of technology although I first fell in love with engineering.

With all of this being said, you can only visualize so much of someone's experiences through writing, so with this e-portfolio I have here, you can visually see the different collections of my work throughout my time studying cybersecurity. With doing this should better demonstrate the person that I am as well as the growth over the course of my time at ODU. If you are also someone who is studying cybersecurity, maybe some of my work can help inspire your own and give you ideas from a different light.