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Profiles in Computing

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Advice to students: Strive to study at the best university you can. Do not specialize until after your degree. Studying computer science will leave your options open for better job opportunities.

Q: What is your job and why do you love it?
A: I work as a forensic scientist providing expert services in IT, security and telecommunications cases within the UK and Ireland. This involves all types of legal matters in which I provide advice involving anything from a USB stick to cell site analysis. I also provide forensics and information security consultancy to the private sector including responding to incidents (hacking, internal issues etc.).

Information security/forensics provides a great deal of variety. Every day I am provided with problems from which I need to formulate accurate solutions which may involve writing some bespoke software or researching something I have not seen before.

Q: Please describe a computing-related project of which you are most proud.
A: I was instructed to investigate the computer evidence in a murder case. Upon examining the computer of the alleged murderer, it became apparent that there were potentially two persons using the computer since there appeared to be different types of usage at different times. I explored this hypothesis further and determined that keylogger software had been installed (software which logs the entered keystrokes from the user keyboard) correlating with a specific pattern of usage. At a later time, a second keylogger was installed which appeared to correlate with a different pattern of usage. Since the first keylogger was logging all activity, the installation of a second keylogger was known to the initial user. This ended up being the motive for the murder.

Q: What are your hobbies/ interests/ passions beyond working in computing?
A: I enjoy many hobbies from windsurfing to reading. I particularly enjoy cooking and dining out in order to sample different types of foods and flavors. I also love to travel to diverse places, meeting new people and experiencing the different things that life has to offer. I like to be without a computer for a few days!

I have a West Highland White puppy who certainly keeps me on my toes. He is far too intelligent for his own good so I have to keep making up new tricks for him to learn. He'll do anything for a treat!