

The professional whom I interviewed was Darnell Bartee from the Technology Center right here at Curry College. It was an excellent interview to learn about what he does. We did have to stop once to answer a question in the center when a call came in. The interview was done over Zoom; it did take a little bit to get the interview done. As my first pick fell through, and then my professor's contact gave me never got back to be. But Darnell was good with getting back to me and was able to get the assignment done. As you will see soon, it was great to interview him and talk to him about his role at the college. The biggest thing that I learned from him is that you don't find Information Technology as a career; sometimes, it can find you.

Darnell Bartee is originally from Boston, Mass, which is just fifteen minutes down blue hill Ave from Curry. He currently lives in Rhode Island right now and takes the commuter rail into the college, which is about a two-and-a-half-hour commute both ways. Darnell did say about half of his day is spent commuting to and from the college. For Darnell, it was not an easy road to get to where he is today. It started back in 2009 when he left the airlines. He then went into security for about six months or so doing contracts. He then went back to school for about a year. He was in the process of looking for a job once he finished his program. When he started pulling up contracts and staying persisted through email and into jobs doing phone interviews. He was filling out about ten to fifteen applications a day. He finally landed a contract with a company called Robert Half, who then in August 2011 placed him here at Curry. Darnell started at Curry back in August 2011 as a temporary worker, and then as of January 2012, and he became a permanent employee of the college after the contract was up. He has worked his way up through the levels of support for the college. As of this interview, he was just

promoted from Support Analyst two to Support Analyst three. I chose Darnell since he was the last option that was willing and got back to doing the interview. He is a relevant and creditable source because he went through the same process that I will be going through when I finally graduate from college. He has also worked in the field for close to ten years. The process that I went through to secure this interview was off the professor's recommendation, and then I emailed him, and he got back to me within two days. We then scheduled the zoom call to get the interview completed, and he was more than happy to accommodate the time that we agreed on. What I had hoped to acquire from this interview was some of the field's requirements when you are getting started.

Throughout this interview, I did learn a fair amount about the field of Information Technology and some of the requirements. The first thing I did learn was that not one piece of software could do everything. You will need multiple pieces of software to get the job done within a business. The next thing I learned is that in the field of Information Technology, things do change rapidly as technology is always advancing. But one change that Darnell did mention was being able to support himself better and not just by the pay but also by doing what he loves, which he says never feels like he's at work. The most significant change that he sees in the next five years will be to enhance a lot of stuff. The biggest thing he says is that we will need more people in cybersecurity within this field than anything as he sees a lot more cyber-attacks, which in the next five years could skyrocket. Some common career paths for this field is extensive as you can go anywhere with your career. It's really what the person feels comfortable with doing.

Most people start at the helpdesk and then branch off into Information Technology that they want to go into. He does see certification as a significant role in the field as you can't get started with them while working on your degree. So it shows that you don't need a degree to get the job done, but a degree is required in this line of work. The most common certifications in this field include CompTIA A+ and Network +, which are recognized by the fortune 500 companies and the US government. Each certification can also open up a lot of doors to careers. Darnell then goes on to recommend to stay persistent and to go what you want. As well as be open to learning as being in this field as technology changes a lot. You have to be a team player and a self-starter in this field and be teachable. The current issues within the field mostly are around cybersecurity from being hacks to unauthorized activities, including unemployment fraud claims and fraudulent activities.

Overall, this interview when as planned, but it was done later than I wanted it to be done. I stayed with my original questions for the most part, but they flowed nicely as some of them basically follow-up questions that were not planned. Some of the questions were made up as we when alone with the interview. Most of the information I found very useful as I prepare to enter the Information Technology field within the next few years. It also showed me what I need to focus on the most to get where I need to be. With regards to certifications, Darnell just confirmed what I thought about how essential certifications are.

## Interview Transcript

**Michael** [00:00:06] All right, so you want to tell me a little bit about yourself?

**DARNELL** [00:00:12] OK, I am from Boston originally. Not too far from Curry, actually, it's just about a 15 minute drive down blue, all of which is essentially also one thirty eight. I started at Currey as a temp back in August of 2011, and then I became a permanent employee as of January of about 2012.

**DARNELL** [00:00:43] And I've been here ever since then. I'm just making things that I really do is just support for the faculty, staff, students and classroom support mainly.

**Michael** [00:00:58] So what are your main responsibilities?

**DARNELL** [00:01:03] Well, as of about a week ago, those responsibilities kind of shifted because I did get moving.

**DARNELL** [00:01:11] I did move into a new position. So with that, my responsibilities kind of changed. And mainly, a lot of the things that I'm going to be dealing with is just. Trying to make that technology on campus better.

**Michael** [00:01:31] OK, and what does a typical day look like for you?

**DARNELL** [00:01:37] A typical day for me when my day don't start until about 12 o'clock here, so by the time I get here, most of my coworkers day, those are already halfway over.

**DARNELL** [00:01:50] But for me, once I get here on campus. It can range from anywhere, just from starting with meetings or starting with just reviewing tickets and everything. Sometimes I'll just jump in and start having them answering the phone, cause sometimes it really depends on how the day is here. I carry on mainly and some days it's quiet. Some days it can be really busy.

**DARNELL** [00:02:19] So my day to day definitely depends on what I walk into from what happened in the morning, which were mainly pretty much in the office helping out.

**DARNELL** [00:02:34] I do classroom runs. I'm not sure you probably see me in one of the classrooms I've got to troubleshoot and the projector sound. So even changing the bulb. Right now I'm working.

**DARNELL** [00:02:47] We're going to be working with the nursing department to try to see how we can get this lab up and running to new equipment so that they can do real life simulations for, you know, given birth and everything.

**Michael** [00:03:05] What do you like most about your work?

**DARNELL** [00:03:09] The community.

**DARNELL** [00:03:12] And that most of my work is me, so it's not there's no micromanagement here, so a lot of my work is coming from me, my creativity of where I see where we want this to go. So.

**DARNELL** [00:03:33] There's a lot of input, we have a lot of input onto a lot of the things that do happen around on campus with the software technology that does get implemented, which is actually good. So having the support of the community is just awesome.

**Michael** [00:03:51] What do you like least about your commute?

**DARNELL** [00:03:59] I live in Rhode Island right now and. I take the commuter rail in and it's a two and a half hour commute both ways.

**DARNELL** [00:04:10] So I am literally just alone. Half my day is spent commuting.

**Michael** [00:04:18] What kind of problems do you deal with?

**DARNELL** [00:04:22] A lot.

**DARNELL** [00:04:23] A lot. It's a lot of de-escalation and pretty much just making customers happy. So who likes being told now? So a lot of it is trying to tell users no.

**DARNELL** [00:04:40] But in a nice way.

**Michael** [00:04:44] What kind of decisions do you make?

**DARNELL** [00:04:53] Type of decisions that I make is more like implementation, implementation decisions like what software are we going to use the hardware for the Macs that are in the classroom? How are those going to be deployed?

**DARNELL** [00:05:12] Tanks, management and really. But it's more on like the hardware software level.

**Michael** [00:05:25] How does your job affect your general lifestyle?

**DARNELL** [00:05:32] My general lifestyle, as of recently, I haven't really been traveling, and that's mainly because I had to stay here and pretty much, you know, work usually I would have have traveled about only three to four times already.

**DARNELL** [00:05:53] And also my family and so did a lot of stuff that we do throughout the year, like little events here. We need to celebrate our culture and everything. So just my general life, just me not being able to attend those. It really put like that effect on my general lifestyle of what I would do outside of here. Well.

**Michael** [00:06:20] How did you get involved? How did you get to where you are?

**DARNELL** [00:06:29] It wasn't easy. It definitely was not easy, I would say it started back in 2009 and then I left the airlines. When I had left the airlines, I went into security and then I believe in security. And then that's when I just started doing contract. I would say for about six months or so. And then I know I'm sorry for over a year, so I went back to school for about a year. Wow. I was in the process of looking for a job once I finished the eight month program. That's when I started pulling up contracts for not for about six months and just, you know, staying in persisted with through email and into jobs and doing phone interviews. Like, I can see that I was possibly filling out anywhere from 10 to 15 applications a day, which is emailing people, emailing my resume. And then eventually I landed a contract with. A company called Robert In have and they have placed me here at Currey. And then once I got placed here in August of 2011.

**DARNELL** [00:07:55] I just never went nowhere.

**DARNELL** [00:07:59] I so it was definitely a lot of hard work and dedication.

**DARNELL** [00:08:04] It wasn't easy if I had to stay persistent on what I was doing and just looking at the end goal of what I really wanted.

**Michael** [00:08:14] How have things changed since you started working in this field?

**DARNELL** [00:08:22] I would say things change dramatically once I got into the field because I was able to really start supporting myself not only just with making the money, it's health care to it's my career by working in it of my career. So as long as I'm doing what I what I love, I would never feel like I'm at work.

**Michael** [00:08:50] What would you have done differently when you started in this field?

**DARNELL** [00:08:54] Nothing, I would probably say. I'll probably within went and got my certification, but other than that, I probably did nothing different from.

**Michael** [00:09:07] Was there any experience that pushed you into the field?

**DARNELL** [00:09:13] Yes.

**DARNELL** [00:09:15] The whole incident that happened, the reason why I left the airlines. So when I left the airlines and while I was still at Currey, I actually have a wrongful termination lawsuit open with the company that I was with. The company that was where I can't disclose that part because I did not disclose it. I can't say the company's name, but once that happened, that pushed me into my career.

**Michael** [00:09:46] Where do you see the industry in five years?

**DARNELL** [00:09:55] The industry in five years, it's.

**DARNELL** [00:10:00] It's going to be interesting to see where do we go, because there is a lot of changes coming down the line that is supposed to enhance a lot of stuff. So I would say with that. With Anything, I would say we would need more cybersecurity than Anything is going to be a lot of cyber attacks within the next five years.

**DARNELL** [00:10:30] I only say that is because of the recent election when, of course, the one guy a question to detain and question one of the more concern, a security risk than Anything.

**DARNELL** [00:10:49] What are some common career paths in this field?

[00:10:59] So the main common career path in the field is. It is a very broad career, so it's like you can go anywhere within the career. It's literally like what the person feels comfortable with doing, like with my. Knowledge, in my experience of what I have gained over the years, I can literally stay where I'm at now on the support engineer side, or I can go into management or I can go into the security side.

[00:11:37] So it's like the more it depends on the company that you wear and who the person is. Me, I like to gather as much information as they divert so that I can go different route.

[00:11:50] Yeah, some people are not exposed to a lot of the stuff that that I was exposed to here at Currey, so I would say I support animals.

[00:12:04] Anything from the service desk would be the mainstays of careers that some people usually get started out with and then they branch off into that they really wanted to do. But a lot of us really do start on the Help Desk and that sort of stuff.

**Michael** [00:12:26] What kind of tool or assistance do you use to get the job done?

**DARNELL** [00:12:31] A lot of it is a lot, so like right now I'm working with my supervisor on just building better deployment for Windows PC, the ninth PC that those and just the software that we have to use alone.

**DARNELL** [00:12:51] We use a lot of third party software because not one piece of software can do what anybody needs to do to keep a business up and running. So I would value.

**DARNELL** [00:13:07] Let me see everything that my computer right now, I would say I have at least right now about six to seven different programs running, but that's not even probably half of the programs that we use here or that I run home.

**Michael** [00:13:33] How important do you see certifications?

**DARNELL** [00:13:45] They played an important role, a very important role. So.

**DARNELL** [00:13:53] I didn't have a degree when I first started out in the field. I'm still working on that, which I'm almost done with, that I just had certifications and I landed a job, that country. So it goes to show that within the field, you really don't need a degree to get the job done. But if it's required that you have it. But to get the job done, it's a lot of us are really self-taught when it comes to this field. And not all of us have a degree in this field. Most of us have a degree in a different field. And technology was just a hobby of ours and it just turned into our career.

**Michael** [00:14:36] Any certain certification you would recommend?

[00:14:41] And he said, if it isn't that, I highly recommend that I have or just in general or you have in general, so I am two of the sort of cases that I have is and that close.

**DARNELL** [00:14:53] And I'm also GM certified to the net plus is actually really big. It's because that is that shows that I have a good understanding of the Nexus systems within pretty much any organization. And that certification is recognized by, you know, a lot of Fortune companies even further from the government itself. Mm hmm. Now, my gym certification that pretty much opened up a lot of doors, and so too is because of the way that everything is going with, you know, mobile MBM and deploying P.c during the pandemic to wear.

**DARNELL** [00:15:39] We're streamlining a user's experience, but we're not also compromising the security of the company, of the college and everything JMW allows me to literally ship and that to a user from Apple itself, they get the Mac at their house and they can just open the box up, hit the power button and enter in a user name. And then there's no statutory. So it's literally a two step process in their email and everything gets automatically provisioned. They have all the tools that they need from, you know, email the software applications that they need all the way down to the neck drive so that they can help your team so that they can teach your material from off campus. That's pretty. Dell. There was a big project that we actually did work on while I was away on spring break. So when the whole covid happened, that was one project that we was working on, was that how are we going to get all of these users, faculty and students online so that we can resume classes? It wasn't easy. It was long days. And when I mean long days. I mean long days. About 12 hour days.

**Michael** [00:17:07] What advice would you give to someone who was in this field.?

**DARNELL** [00:17:09] stay persistent, go for what you want.

**DARNELL** [00:17:16] And always be open to learn, because within this field, a technology changes a lot. And just like with Anything, things change. So you literally have to be teachable. You have to be willing to learn on your own to and you definitely have to be a self starter.



**DARNELL** [00:17:44] And being a team player is also important, too, because it's everything that we do here intertwines with different people. So we literally have to work together to come up to complete the common goal.

**Michael** [00:18:02] What current issues and trends in the industry that I know about?

**DARNELL** [00:18:08] Common trends and issues, I would say right now, it's just really cybersecurity. And. You know, the fraudulent aspect on top of stuff like I'm not pretty sure if you heard about since Cole that happened, there been like a spike in fraudulent activity when it comes to unemployment claims.

**Michael** [00:18:32] I didn't hear about that one yet.

**DARNELL** [00:18:33] It's like that that was a big thing when all this happened. And if we continue down the way that we got, I just think it's going to get worse.

**DARNELL** [00:18:45] So, like me, I rotate out since this has been happening. I've been literally rotating on my debit card like every couple of months.

**Michael** [00:19:07] how does your position fit within the organization?

**DARNELL** [00:19:21] So. I love those three families, so whatever you don't know, analysts can't figure around it automatically comes to me. So me. This position is Fitzwallace, because it's very, very much customer-facing, like the main, I would say my main responsibility is keeping the relationship between us and the community afloat pretty much happy.

**Michael** [00:19:57] What kind of accomplishments tend to be valued and rewarded in this field?

**DARNELL** [00:20:13] A lot, I would say. If you stay persistent and you go and you stay course of your career path, a lot of the stuff that we need to be done is pretty much based off of promotions or even moving on to a new job.

**DARNELL** [00:20:32] So pretty much knowing when. You.

**DARNELL** [00:20:38] No one, when you say Vietcong's and it's time to move on to that, you can grow with it is definitely valuable and important.

**Michael** [00:20:48] What steps would you recommend I take to prepare to enter the field?

**DARNELL** [00:21:04] To enter the field. OK, what steps can you take? I would say first, since a degree is required, I would say finish off your degree, but also at the same time, try to grab at least one or two certification along with even an internship with.

**DARNELL** [00:21:29] Working on the Help Desk or something to where you get exposed to just the basics, even when being exposed to the how best, you get that experience of answering the phones, having access to a ticketing system, like knowing how to work a ticket system, one of the big, big fields. And it is going to be ITSM and knowing how to navigate that with the ticketing system would actually get you foreigners failed.

**DARNELL** [00:22:06] Civil rights computers.

**Michael** [00:22:11] So what skills, abilities and personal expertise are essential to succeed in this field?

**DARNELL** [00:22:28] Be yourself personality. A lot of us are like, I can see me with the crew that I work with where ourselves, so it's like it's what you see is what you get.

**DARNELL** [00:22:48] I try to stay as authentic as I can so that I feel like I'm not coming to work, you know, and so I would just say just let your personality shine, because literally that's what we do. And it is we go based off of personality, like my desk is decorated or you'll find stuff that tiva directly to my personality.

**Michael** [00:23:33] All right, the last one is, why did you choose this job?

**DARNELL** [00:24:06] I honestly don't think I chose that. I think it chose me. One thing that I believe in is what's for you can't miss you. So if I ended up here, there was some purpose for me to be here. Not only do I actually work in the tech. I also do help. The diversity committee with some work on the mentor program, even before I came to Kearby, I was a youth leader. And with me being a youth leader, I was also working inside of their lab. So mixing those two things together and me being on a college campus and still doing that, it just makes me feel like. I was meant to be here at this point in time, if it makes any sense.

**DARNELL** [00:25:06] And.

**DARNELL** [00:25:13] It's sort of like the universe led me here for a greater calling because I like what I do not only in the tech sector but also in a diversity committee community as well.