

Computer Science Master's Graduate Chronicles Her Journey at USU

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May 25, 2018 — Mounika Arukala joined the master's of computer science program at Utah State University in August 2016. She recently joined Amazon Web Services as a full-time professional and shared this perspective of her experience at USU:

"When Dr. Qi asked me to tell my story, I was totally surprised. I still don't know if I am one of those who truly deserves a space on this wall but because Dr. Qi asked, considering all the respect I've for her and USU, I've decided to write down my experience with Utah, with the hope that I inspire at least one.



Firstly, I would like to thank all my professors for all the support given and efforts put in making sure I wasn't taking any pressure for not being able to attend the classes when I fell sick during masters. For those of you who don't know, I struggled for eight long months during my second semester at USU. Doctors have done all kinds of different tests using huge, scary and expensive electronic equipment, but I never gave up on hope which eventually won over fear. When I finally came back to school in full form in the third semester, I realized it was time to concentrate on career after an 8-month long break. I always believed that persistence is the key. While my stay in Utah gave me a lot of friends to treasure for a lifetime, Utah State University taught me a plenty of interesting things which when put to

beneficial use, helps one in analyzing all different routes to one's career. It helped me understand the importance of data science and there began my journey.

Although USU offers courses on-campus, I feel every individual should do self-prep to grow more every day. There are an overwhelming number of courses being offered on Udemy, Coursera, EdX, Lynda, Plural Sight and many others, which assists us not just in exploring and realizing where our interest lies, but also gives us in-depth knowledge and helps elevate our skill set.

In my final semester, when I slowly began to get calls and give interviews, I took every opportunity as a challenge while preparing my mind to not settle down for less and with all the hope I always had in myself, with the exposure and support that USU has given me, and all the sleepless nights I've spent to learn more, I could finally crack Amazon. As a token of gratitude, I would like to make use of this opportunity to thank USU, and I must say that I owe a lot of love and respect to you.

Planning our career not only helps us grow professionally but brings enormous change in our personal life, too. It truly did a lot to my life personally. Hard work can beat talent when talent doesn't work hard. The harder you work, the more luck you seem to have.

Success begins with a single step. Let's all continue to strive for progress and let success follow. Make history. Good Luck."

Thank You,

Mounika Arukala

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