



STEM SPOTLIGHT

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HOW DID YOU SELECT YOUR COLLEGE MAJOR?

I got my BS in Chemistry from ATU in Russellville, AR, then my Masters and PhD in Analytical Chemistry from U of Memphis. My favorite class in high school was AP Chemistry, so I knew I wanted to explore that more in college and decided to make that my major.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR SELECTION OF MAJOR/CAREER?

My high school AP Chemistry teacher was very passionate and he sparked my passion for science, specifically chemistry. When I got into college, I really enjoyed my chemistry classes and labs, and got involved in undergraduate research. I wasn't sure where I wanted to go career-wise yet, so I continued into graduate school and found my passion for analytical chemistry.

IF YOU COULD GO BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL AND SELECT ANY ELECTIVE COURSE TO TAKE THAT WOULD HAVE BETTER PREPARED YOU FOR COLLEGE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I wish I could have taken a 'General Adulting' class -- personal budgeting, preparing your resume, car and health insurance, doctor appointments, etc. There are so many things I didn't know I didn't know about being an adult until I got out into the real world!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

I get to help solve all different kinds of complex problems with my R&D team, specifically the Analytical Team (aka, the A. Team). An Analytical Chemist is a jack-of-all trades and is involved in all kinds of things -- in addition to working with analytical instrumentation and doing bench chemistry, my job also involves engineering, troubleshooting, data crunching, statistics, power tools, sensors, field work, and way more! I do something different almost every day and get to work with a great team to contribute to the company in lots of areas.



HOW DO YOU/YOUR COMPANY MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY/OUR COMMUNITY?

Our BuckmanCares program partners with local schools and organizations, giving associates opportunities to volunteer our time to help out as well as donating to various causes. We are encouraged to get involved with the community, including activities like STEM competitions, 5ks, bike rides, nature events, blood drives, etc.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING THING YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO IN YOUR CAREER?

We are a global company with R&D labs in several different countries. I've gotten the opportunity to travel to our locations in Belgium and South Africa to set up lab equipment and train other associates. I've also visited customer sites throughout the U.S. (e.g. paper mills and equipment partners) to get field experience and see our work applied out in the real world!



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH K-12 STUDENTS WHO ARE CONSIDERING YOUR PROFESSION?

Get as involved as you can with your school and get outside, real-world experience however you can! You won't know what it's like until you try it -- maybe you'll end up really enjoying something you thought didn't sound interesting at first. Ask around local organizations and colleges about shadowing someone for a day, for example, and/or visit career fairs to ask questions about what people do.

