

Mentor Biographies '23-'24

Ben Carlton

I'm Ben. At IBM, I support all sorts of amazing people by helping them with various problems, usually related to tech. I started off learning to combine my love of literature with deep analysis at WSU. Today I still use analysis and communication at IBM, and my love of literature remains, as I continue to teach writing and literature in Austin, Texas. I firmly believe that networking and mentoring is a fantastic tool for any individual who possesses an open mind, a willingness to learn, and drive enough to be an active participant in the mentoring relationship. Go Cougs!

Christian Schoen

My name is Christian, and I lead global operations for IBM's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) / Environmental Sustainability & Governance (ESG) team. My team is responsible for handling all budget / finance matters, compliance / business controls, and overall operations for the CSR / ESG team. I started my career when I was 19 and still attending university. I completed my degree in Business Administration from WSU during this time. My career started in sales, working with small and medium businesses, then as a consultant / project manager for government and healthcare entities, followed by my work as a Program Manager and now Operations Leader in CSR / ESG. I serve on several non-profit boards and enjoy giving back to my community and helping young individuals prepare for their careers.

Christopher Rose

My name is Christopher Rose. I'm a Cloud Platform Specialist for IBM here in the NW where I sell Cloud Services to help Enterprise Customers improve operational efficiency, gain competitive advantage and delight their customers experiences in the digital town square. I started my career as an Account Executive at Allied Telesyn International selling Data Networking hardware for Local and Wide Area Networks into the State, Local and Education markets. I've always been curious how technology improves efficiency and fosters communications. I graduated from Washington State University with a degree in Business Administration and minors International Relations and Southeast Asian Studies. I was blessed to be an exchange student at Prince of Songkla University in Thailand and study a Semester abroad at the University of Bonn in Germany. Todd Hall on the WSU campus was a sanctuary for me during my time in Pullman. I spent most of my time in Todd Hall learning about Economics, International Business and Collaboration with others from across the Globe. I am passionate about giving back and I hope I have the chance to make an impact through this IBM and WSU mentorship program.

Greg Deffenbaugh

Hello, my name is Greg Deffenbaugh. My title is a Storage Brand Sales Specialist focusing on data management solutions for OpenShift, watsonx and CloudPaks plus driving IBM Ceph business. I am somewhat unique here at IBM, I don't have direct account responsibility, rather I support storage sellers with their opportunities. I am also very technical, but not hands-on (anymore) so don't fit the Brand Technical Sales Role. I am strong believer that you don't need to know how to pound a nail to architect a house.

I grew up on a wheat farm in SE Washington state. Graduated in 1984 with a BS in Agricultural Engineering because it was only program that taught real-time computer science. My career path has been opportunity driven not a planned journey. Started working for Department of the Navy as a Sonar Engineer, parlayed that to a role at Boeing doing real-time programming an early AI analytics. Then went to work for a Boeing supplier selling tools for real-time programming. My career. since has been in technical sales, marketing, and product management. I went to work for a very small company in the mid-90's developing clustered application availability software. The company was funded by reselling Data General Storage systems, which got me into external storage sales and marketing. 13 years at EMC, 4 years at Dell, 1 yr. at DELLEMC, 3 yrs. at Red Hat, and now about 6 months at IBM.

One of my employers relocated me from Portland OR to Rhode Island where I have lived for the last 29 years. Last time I checked the alumni site, there were 3 WSU grads in RI, so looking forward to working with some Cougs.

Fun Fact: My father has a WSU building named after him.

Favorite Quote: *If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.* – Albert Einstein

A couple of my Blogs can be found [here](#).

Hannah Chen

Hi, I'm Hannah! I'm a Brand Technical Specialist at IBM and I sell AI technologies to help clients improve customer care and uncover data insights. I started my career at Deloitte as a data analytics consultant where I analyzed data to discover business insights to drive strategic change for human capital. I graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering with a concentration in Quality and Statistics and it was during college where I received the mentorship and guidance that helped me get to where I am today. I am passionate about giving back and I hope I have the chance to make an impact through this IBM and WSU mentorship program.

Helmuth Naumer

I graduated from WSU twice, in 1982 in Wildlife Biology and again in 1987 in Computer Science. I loved hanging out at the CUB, walking the hills of campus from one class to the next, and going to watch the Cougars lose at football. In 1986, my first position at IBM was as an Intern in Poughkeepsie, NY. 26 years ago, I rejoined IBM as an IT Architect and an Associate Partner out of Boulder, Colorado. My specialty is aerospace, as I started my career at The Boeing Company in Tukwila, WA, and I have been in the domain for the last 35 years. Boeing allowed me to work with Aircraft as a programmer and customer champion. For At IBM Consulting, I own our technical solution supporting Aircraft Maintenance and work primarily on projects at United, Delta, and American Airlines. Boeing and IBM have allowed me to travel worldwide, supporting airline technical solutions. I have also done projects in Australia, Japan, Spain, Korea, the UK, and China. It would be great to share my experiences and career choices.

Jared Strand

Hi, I'm Jared! I am an Advisory Software Engineer at IBM Cloud and I work on the Billing Infrastructure Critical Services team. I develop software that helps enable and support our customers to manage and pay for their cloud services usage and contracts within IBM Cloud.

I started my career working for Cisco on the Core Network Operating Systems team writing code that would run inside almost 30 different Cisco products, I then moved on to the SD-WAN team where I got to work on many user management and authentication systems, following Cisco, I joined IBM Research working on an internal startup team developing the core cloud services to support a new product to help sequence and process DNA and medical data for bioinformatics researchers. I graduated from Washington State University with my bachelor's degree in computer science and mathematics with a focus on Systems and Networking. I helped found and run many clubs and organizations within WSU Engineering that helped propel me academically and expose me to many new challenges and opportunities including Cougs in Space, Linux Users Group, Computer Security Group, many hackathons, business competitions, and events. Along the way many mentors helped me progress and achieve my goals that helped me network and find my place in Silicon Valley where I am working today. I would love to give back and make an impact through the WSU mentorship program.

Jay Jubran

Jay Jubran is currently leading the product team for IBM Cloud IaaS (compute, network, and storage) and responsible for delivering differentiated solutions to help enterprise clients with their cloud journey. Prior to IBM, Jay held several leadership roles in enterprise IT and startups with focus on industry solutions for education, telco, and government. He joined IBM in 2015 as Director of Cloud Strategy to drive global partnerships like VMware and SAP. At IBM Cloud, Jay served in different leadership roles across business development, offering management and engineering. Most recently, he incubated the workload engineering team focused on developing repeatable cloud solutions to improve client business value through automation.

He earned his master's and PhD in Engineering Mechanics from Washington State University with focus on Finite Element Analysis and published six papers on advanced analytical techniques in material science.

Jay currently lives with his wife in Allen, Texas and has two kids attending colleges in NY and Texas, twitter: @jjubran

Kavita Shah

Hi, I'm Kavita! I started my IBM career fresh out of WSU (Tri-Cities campus) in 1999 as a Software Developer for the Storage Protect Software Product. Then after, I worked on many different products in IBM, both in software and hardware, and spent 10+ years of my work experience leading a variety of GUI development teams.

In 2017, I switched gears and moved into the Client-Care organization as a Storage Hardware Technical Advisor to our customers. In this post-sales role, I provided customers with technical guidance and advise on our products to ensure they are successful in their implementation of our products. This was

an eye-opening (and humbling) experience for me, as it gave me the opportunity to see how customers interfaced with the products that I had helped develop all these years!

In June 2020, I accepted the role of Team Lead to help build a brand-new team with a similar vision for Software. This team had a specific focus on software in IBM's Modern Data Protection portfolio. Being the Team lead of this new team was a very rewarding experience, as it gave me the opportunity to "come in on the ground floor" and help build and the program. In June 2022, I took on the additional role of the Manager for this team.

I am passionate about mentoring and am happy to talk to anyone who can benefit from my 24+ years of experience in the industry, especially young women and girls.

Logan Block

Hi all! My name is Logan Block. I am an Application Developer at IBM where I develop full stack applications and automation solutions. My career started at IBM seven years ago as a Sales Support Specialist for the US Federal market of IBM. Shortly after starting at IBM, I dove more into programming and development work—working with Visual Basic for Applications, Blue Prism, and Python. After a couple years in sales support, I was given the opportunity to move positions to my current role where I get to develop solutions for internal users. I graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN with a degree in International Business so much of my programming knowledge is self-taught with lots of unofficial and official mentors helping guide me along the way. I am excited to be a part of this amazing IBM and WSU mentor partnership!

Manny Sauer

GO COUGS! I'm Manny, I support the Global IBM Paid Media team. I help lead a Data Integrity team to make sure all the marketing data from every platform and vendor across the globe is ingested and flowing without errors. I graduated with a degree in Marketing from WSU in 2017. I have worked in email marketing, media planning, ad operations, and campaign optimization for paid search, paid social, and programmatic advertising. To me, marketing is generally split up into two types of people: analytical/numbers oriented people and theoretical/creative people. I would align as more of an analytical person. If you are also into numbers and want to learn more about the digital side of marketing, I'd be happy to guide your career and even help you build a great resume.

Sam Jankovich

Sr. Executive Media, Entertainment & High Tech
SaaS Execution – Salesforce Ecosystem – Sales Strategy and Design

CRO thinking, executed across an organization, accelerates profitable revenue growth, and creates a dynamic selling culture within every function of a company's services.

West coast-based senior executive, experienced with pre-IPO private equity-backed companies and over 30 years leading global technology sales, channels, marketing, consulting, services, operations, and

financial teams. Background in managing customer-facing field organizations up to 1500 staff in software, SaaS, and consulting services firms. Proven leader in delivering revenue and transformation plans that create demand and integrating organization-wide departments to maximize customer's value perception of the company's offerings.

Tom Bishop

My name is Tom Bishop. I'm a Senior Managing Consultant at IBM in our Federal Finance and Supply Chain Transformation practice. I am a U.S. Marine Corps veteran with more than 35 years of experience in the Aerospace & Defense industry at companies like CDI, LCE, Boeing and SAP. I have filled various roles in logistics, customer training, engineering, and program management, and I feel this first-hand functional knowledge helps build long-term relationships and earning client trust. I am proud to have earned my MBA from WSU and I am eager to help give back through this IBM and WSU mentorship program.

Tyler Waite

Hi, I'm Tyler! I've been with IBM CIO since 2015. I have degrees in Cognitive Psychology, Human Factors, and Information Science. I recently completed my IBM Data Science Profession Level 1 Certification. I am currently part of a team that focuses on conducting IBM employee satisfaction surveys. In this role I have become proficient with survey tools such as Alchemer and using IBM's Cloud Pak for Data to create interactive dashboards to visualize the data I collect. I am passionate about finding ways to make complex data easier to understand and am looking forward to exchanging ideas through the WSU mentorship program with people who share my passion.