Telecommunications Systems Management Alumni Spotlight

Name: **Forrest Carver**

MSU Degree: B.S., Telecommunications Systems Management
Minor: Spanish

Home Town: Milburn, KY
Current Town: Waldenbuch, Germany

Current Job: IT Specialist
Department of Defense

Current Job Description:
Forrest's first position with the Department of Defense was at the Missile Defense Agency, where he was responsible for the internal information security audit team. Forrest and a fellow TSM graduate, Andrew Chiles, oversaw contractors conducting over sixty audits a year on Information Systems worldwide. Currently, Forrest has been assigned to the Special Operations Command Africa. His team is responsible for making sure the Information Systems both at the headquarters as well as at other locations is secure. Doing so entails Department of Defense Certification/Accreditation paperwork, regular vulnerability scan, patching, configuration, etc. In addition, they confirm that all staff members are regularly trained on Security, and that any projects include security requirements.

Previous Jobs held (since graduation):

- Cyber Security Analyst, Dynetics Inc.

Family & Personal:
Forrest has been married to his wife, Samantha, for seven years. They have a dog named Rufio and a baby boy named Matthias Blake Carver born January 30th, 2013.

TSM Q & A:

1. **What did you do for your internship and how did it benefit you?**
   Adtran, Inc.
   Working at Adtran was a key point in my career development. To quote the guy who did my technical interview, "You know a lot about routing and switching, but you would fail the CCNA". Working for 3 months at Adtran took me from that place, to a solid understanding of routing and switching functionality. I also got my CCNA while employed there. Although I don't primarily work in that environment anymore, understanding the technical functions of networks has been critical to my work in Information Security.Also, doing an internship that also enabled me to get a certification opened the door to other job offers, including my first job at Dynetics.

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY
Telecommunications Systems Management

2. **Since graduation, what is the most exciting thing you have been able to experience in your work?**
   Wow, that's a tough question! Going to Hawaii 5 times in a year, the 2011 Japanese tsunami hitting the Island where I was working, getting to take a tour of a Boeing 747 that's armed with a LASER! Or, now living in Germany managing Information Security for Special Operations. It's all been awesome!

3. **What class(es) were the most beneficial to your career so far?**
   So…believe it or not, all of them. As an technical Information Security professional, all Mr. Spencer's Security Courses, plus the technical foundation courses like Dr. Weatherly's Network Hardware course, Ms. Combs' Network Operating Systems (AD, DNS, DHCP), and of course Protocol Analysis! As a project manager, the Accounting (yes, Accounting!) and Finance courses, and Mr. Rice's Systems Analysis and Design. And, of course, as a Government security manager, I've written a LOT of policies (thanks for the practice Dr. Bowman!)

4. **What activities outside your classwork were most valuable to your career?**
   Honestly, any activity that builds social skills and provides leadership opportunities. I did this in several ways, but one of the best was ATSM, including being an officer for 3 years and President my senior year. It gives you a chance to interact with peers, take leadership roles, and learn things not necessarily taught in the classroom. To be successful in the workplace, good Tech skills aren't enough. You need to understand how to work well with others, and how to lead. If you're motivated and responsible, willing to take on challenges and succeed, managers notice that and you will be rewarded more quickly than people who sit in their offices and only do the minimum. ATSM gave me the opportunity to learn those skills. Plus, it was a lot of fun!

5. **What is one piece of advice that you would give to current or future TSM students?**
   The one thing I have heard from every employer so far, boils down to this "Wow, how do you know all that?". TSM was, and still is, probably the most well-rounded program for Information Systems that I, or anyone I've worked with, has heard of. TSM teaches you everything: Networking, Operating Systems, Programming, Security, Management. Take every bit of it seriously! Take ADVANTAGE of the fact that TSM gives you the chance to learn more about more than any other program I've come across. People are continually amazed that our graduates just don't know "about" IT, they can hit the ground running and be valuable from Day 1. BUT, you get out what you put in. So, take your courses, your internship, ATSM, all of it, seriously. It will pay dividends in your career. Also, form relationships with your professors. Why? 1) They have a WEALTH of knowledge. You can learn a lot from them that you don't cover in class. 2) They have EXPERIENCE. TSM professors have worked real jobs, not just talked about IT in grad school. 3) They are a RESOURCE. You're going to need advice, recommendations, etc down the line. Professors don't just give those to anyone. Show them that you're responsible; let them see your work ethic, and your desire to learn.

For more information on Murray State University's Telecommunication Systems Management Program visit us on the web at www.murraystate.edu/tsm, on Twitter at @MurraystateTSM or on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/MurrayStateTSM or call us at 270.809.3987