

Phelan: Learning IT in the Navy

In high school, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do yet, but when I joined the US Navy, one of the options for job was an information systems technician. Information technology and the Navy can be pretty exciting. You get to be very resourceful if you're out on a deployment in the desert. Perhaps, you have to use the tools that you have at hand to get the job done. So I remember being in a server room in a tent with the sand blowing in and we'd occasionally have to take out the servers and then reverse the vacuum and blow the dust and sand out of the server to make sure that they kept working. So obviously I can't go into too much specifics and details but in the Navy, one of my favorite technology moments was when the command came down that we needed to do this thing and I had to write a program to actually do it. And I've never written a program before. And I was like, okay, I mean, I'll try. And so I did the research, I did the learning, I figured it out, I wrote the program it ran, and it did the thing that I wanted it to do. And I was so satisfied. That was an amazing experience. I made this thing from nothing and it actually performed the action that I wanted it to, which was pretty cool.

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