

My name is Kevin Benton Jr. I am originally from Wilson County, North Carolina. Currently, my classification is a junior at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. I am double majoring in computer science and mathematics.

Throughout my time in school I have always had an interest in computer science. My curiosity about the computer science field came from a class that I took in my junior year of high school. Thus, when the Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research (CERSER) at ECSU offered a chance to be in the program, it was an easy decision. This program gives me in-depth training in various software programs and programming languages during the fall semester such as Dreamweaver, Photoshop, C++, and Python. In the spring semester, these skills are applied to a research project.

The first research was in the spring of 2016. It was titled "Design and Installation of a Video Conference Solution at the Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research at Elizabeth City State University". This research project was presented at the Association of Computer/Information Sciences and Engineering Departments at Minority Institutions (ADMI) conference 2016 in Winston-Salem, NC. There were various speakers at the conference including ones from Intel and Yahoo. This conference gave me a chance to enhance my presentation skills.

During the summer of 2016, was the second research project. It was conducted during the ECSU Research Experience for Undergraduates. The title of this research is "A Continuing Study of the Water Quality in the Pasquotank Watershed in Northeastern North Carolina". This research project taught me various lessons and techniques. One of those lessons was that to double check for all equipment.

CERSER has also given me the chance to attend meetings a joint meeting with another university. This joint meeting was with the North Carolina State University Women in Engineering program as a part of the ECSU IEEE-Geographical Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) student chapter. When our group first arrived at North Carolina State University, we went to their geographical lab and learned how they are planning to apply their studies to the real world. Then after that, we went to a meeting where there was a speaker talking about GRSS. I learned many things from the speaker, for example how the researchers collect data from the drones they had used and compared it to data they had collected over the years.

During the spring of 2017, was the third research project. The title of the project was "Continuation of Analyzing Long-Term Drought Effects on Land Surface Temperature and Vegetation Using NOAA Satellite Data". During the time of working on the project, I was able to go to the ADMI conference in Virginia Beach, VA. At the conference were various presenters talking about their different professions, or how to get into graduate school, or the reason to go into graduate school. At this conference, I was also able to present some of my past research. The presentation helped me to more of a proficient presenter.

For my summer internship of 2017, I was able to go to the University of Michigan. This was all due to that fact of participating in the ADMI conference during the spring time because during the conference there was a representative from the Distributed Research

Experiences for Undergraduates (DREU). This representative helped push me in the direction to obtain the internship. The internship was with Professor Chad Jenkins from the University of Michigan. Professor Jenkins research field deals with how to use robotics in everyday life. Thus, I chose, along with another intern, to figure out ways to lower the amount of information blockage from processing the scene the robot is seeing. This was done by creating an in-house cluster. The reason for choosing this solution is that the cluster could be scalable to the needs of the lab at any time. Also at the internship, Professor Jenkins had scheduled all the interns to be a part of a program running on the campus that introduce the graduate school of the university, with also visiting different labs on the campus. This internship was astonishing because it showed me the life of a giant school with many research fields.

In the fall of 2017, I had got the opportunity to be a part of a group of students that would represent ECSU at the first annual historical black college and university, HBCU, IBM BlueHack hackathon. During the hackathon, there were up to 103 students that were all split into teams of 5. Once the teams got together they had to plan out a program that were needed to be presented to a group of workers from IBM. The teams only had around 30 hours of coding to complete the project, which meant that many people did not sleep over the two days of the hackathon. My team came up with a web based chat bot that would be substitute as a therapist. The chat bot would give an empathic response based on the way the user answered the questions the chat bot asked. Thanks to my time in CERSER and being in the computer science field at ECSU my team was able to place third in the even numbered groups.

My plan for success includes keeping a high-grade point average and seeking out research opportunities to obtain hands on use of my education. My goal is to graduate in the fall of 2018 and receive my Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and Mathematics. Once I obtain my degree, I plan on pursuing my Master's Degree in something that deals with both my majors with a future career goal of becoming a cognitive software developer, aka someone that works on artificial intelligence.