



Denise Kwan

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Real-life Programmers

This series lets developers share their journey as a way to inspire others. Get to know Denise:

Initial goal

Was just starting high school when my sister was finishing, and I saw her looking at colleges and majors and realized I didn't know what I wanted to do. My parents suggested I look into IT.

Her journey

When I took computer science classes at high school, I thought they were super fun. Applied for college in the UC system, and my mom was excited that I got into UC Berkeley. At the beginning of my senior year at Berkeley, I started looking into jobs and noticed many tech companies were doing college programs. I went to a bunch of them and got accepted to a bunch of them, but I chose to go to Cisco because I felt the most welcome.

How stars aligned for success

1. First Computer Science courses were easy for me, so in my second year of college, I watched them online.
2. There have been a lot of moments where guys will try to compete with me. But those moments just make me want to push harder.
3. One of the main reasons I chose Cisco was because of the people I interviewed with. As a female, my big thing was whether they would judge me.

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Favorite part of the job



Doing developer support lets me interact with the whole Cisco community. They're appreciative of my help, and it's fulfilling.



Is programming in your future?

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Advice for others

- Road to being a programmer is not easy. You can spend hours identifying a problem and it could be a semicolon.
- There will be bumps along the way, but ultimately you are changing other people's lives by building applications!