

INTERVIEWS OF CSF SPISE GRADUATES

Interviewee: **Liam Neath**
SPISE Class: **2012**
Home Country: **Jamaica**
University: **Stanford University - Class of 2018**
Major: **Electrical Engineering/Computer Science**
Date: **26 April 2018**



Question 1. How would you describe your SPISE experience?

It was great. I was exposed to lots of material in Engineering field.
I had a great time with SPISE and my colleagues, and appreciated the holistic approach to Science and Engineering and also appreciated how advanced SPISE was.

Question 2. How did it impact you personally and academically?

Personally, I ended up becoming a more open person. Before SPISE I was very shy. Academically it helped me to decide my direction in life as to whether to pursue Medicine or Engineering. SPISE shifted my focus.

Question 3. What life lessons did you take away from SPISE?

Steady, dedicated work always triumphs talent. I learnt to tackle problems better.

Question 4. Did SPISE help to develop your networking across the region?

Definitely. My roommate at Stanford also attended SPISE and SPISE helped me to maintain relationships.

Question 5. How did SPISE contribute to your mental preparation for your university/college experience?

It allowed me to be more mature and comfortable discussing topics that I was weak in. Before SPISE, my classes were easy but being exposed to the advanced material was humbling and made me more comfortable discussing new topics.

Question 6. How did SPISE impact your career goals and choice of major at university?

It shifted my focus from Medical school to an Electrical Engineering major. My choice of major came from the physics and math courses that I did at SPISE.

Question 7. What are your plans/career goals after you graduate from university/college?

I will be taking a year off to work full time at a genetics company called Twenty-three and Me and will be on the software engineering team working on infrastructure and the genetic platform. After this I will be applying to Grad School in Computer Science.

Question 8. How do your near-term plans fit into your long-term goals?

In developing the industry experience that I will need as a software engineer, I see myself completing a PhD in the future in Machine Learning and the exposure to the statistical models that drive the platform is a good experience to have.

Question 9. What kind of impact do you want to make in your field of choice?

I want to move Machine Learning away from novel applications and apply it to problems that are faced by average persons in developing nations.

Question 10. What advice would you give to a student uncertain about the STEM disciplines?

Take classes that expand your horizon. Use your time to discover new topics that you were not exposed to in high school.

Question 11. How can STEM subjects be more widely encouraged in the Caribbean?

They can be further encouraged in schools by providing resources for after-school use of these subjects in a more practical manner, like an Engineering club, where it can be an enjoyable experience.

Question 12. If you could change one thing about SPISE, what would it be?

In my time at SPISE, I would have added a Computer Programming course which I understand has since been added.

Question 13. Would you recommend SPISE to a younger you?

Yes. When I first learnt of SPISE, I did not want to go but now, if I could, I would go again.

Question 14. How far do you see Science and Technology being advanced in your country in 10 years?

Medical Science has become very active recently with laws around medical marijuana becoming more relaxed. I can see growth and development of a strong pharmaceutical industry in Jamaica.