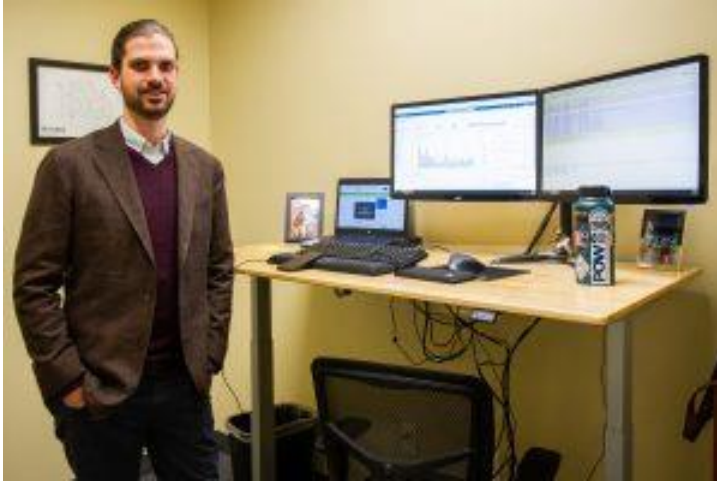




## Cybersecurity expert at iV4 began working in field at 16

By: [Nicole Sheldon](#) December 13, 2019



At 26, Caleb Freitas already has a firm footing in his career, which he began just a month after graduating high school.

In his junior year of high school, Freitas began taking vocational training through Eastern Monroe Community Center.

"I took computer networking courses and had a very good teacher and mentor there who trained me and helped me get my networking certification, CCNA, and gain experience in that world," says Freitas. "I was also fortunate because at 16 years old I was able to work for the company my father was working

for to provide IT services, as well as one of his friends who owned a small business."

Having a job at 16 isn't unusual, but building the foundation of your career that early is an anomaly. Freitas graduated from Penfield High School in 2011 and within a month he landed a full-time job at Sutherland Global Services. He says that without his vocational training and hands-on experience working in IT, this opportunity wouldn't have been possible.

"The manager knew she was taking a chance on me," acknowledges Freitas. "I knew I didn't want to go to college but that I wanted to get a job, so I was getting certifications and finding ways to grab experience, and the manager was impressed by my ambition. I think that's a bigger thing in the IT field—not just a person's experience or what they know but what they want to learn and ways they want to grow."

After two and a half years building his knowledge and skill-set as an IT specialist at an enterprise company for a team of roughly 5,000 people, Freitas switched gears and joined SIGMA Marketing Insights as a systems administrator. At the time SIGMA had about 80 employees but a large data center to support its clients. Unlike most small businesses that have two or three servers, SIGMA had 250 servers that required IT support. "Moving to SIGMA allowed me to jump into that deskside knowledge and fixing tickets that came in like helping end users with their computers to fixing servers, storage and databases," says Freitas. "We were very security forward-thinking at that company, which only helped when I came to iV4 because I already had a lot of that skill set and knowledge."

Nearly five years ago Freitas joined the iV4 team as a level II engineer. According to Freitas, in the IT field, level I engineers work in the help center, level II is deskside support and level III is server support and network infrastructure support.

"Engineer in the IT field is a little different than a traditional engineer," explains Freitas. "I think IT as a whole is a more vocational field. The great thing about IT being vocationally based is that there are a lot of resources

online and certifications you can get, as well as groups in Rochester where you can go learn about things and add valuable skills to your resume without necessarily pursuing a two or four-year degree.”

Freitas, a Rochester resident, considers himself a lifelong learner, and already has approximately 15 certifications under his belt. He is always seeking ways to develop his skills further and give himself an edge professionally.

After a year as an engineer at iV4, Freitas was promoted to senior engineer, then to data center consultant and now his current role as senior consultant and cybersecurity team lead. Before joining iV4, Freitas assumed that the only way for him to continue progressing in the field was to switch companies. He praises iV4 for being nurturing of his learning path and consistently providing avenues for growth over the past few years.

“At iV4, it’s an environment where I can say, ‘I want to start doing this tomorrow,’ and leadership and my direct reports will keep that in mind and make it happen,” he says.

As senior consultant and leader of the cybersecurity team, Freitas is responsible for managing and leading the incidence response team. If a company or government organization like the FBI or the U.S. Secret Service has a hacker, they call iV4 and Freitas and his team works on the investigation and recovery portions of the incident response process. Essentially, he gets businesses back online and their data safe and secure again.

In the interim, Freitas’ professional focus is on building his skills as a team lead. In three months there have been three new hires to his group, so he is lasered in on learning how to effectively manage a team and identify where his team’s skills are, how to effectively use everyone and how to help them grow.

Over the next year or so, he plans to study more on regulatory compliance and auditing functions as that’s becoming more prevalent for companies in the area in the IT field.

Recently married, Freitas jokes that he doesn’t know what to do with his spare time now that there’s no longer a wedding and honeymoon to plan. He does, however, enjoy mountain biking in the summer and skiing and snowboarding in the winter.

For other young professionals looking to find their footing in their career, Freitas stresses staying ambitious and to always speak up when it comes to new things you’d like to try. Volunteering to help on projects or issues that may not directly involve you is a great way to show your initiative to your superiors.

Freitas says that he loves being immersed in a field that is growing more and more relevant every day.

“It’s cool to be in a job where whenever you turn on the news on any given week you hear something about IT security, so it’s more relevant than ever and it’s being talked about everywhere from small companies to world news and politics,” he says. “It can be hard to disconnect sometimes, but it’s great to be part of a relevant and growing field.”

He adds that it’s fascinating to work with companies that are facing data security threats from places like Russia and North Korea and that it’s rewarding to return these businesses’ information to safety.

“This field comes with its set of stresses, but it keeps you on your toes,” says Freitas. “It’s definitely a job where you never stop learning, and it happens to be a lot of fun.”

[Nsheldon@bridgetowermedia.com](mailto:Nsheldon@bridgetowermedia.com) / (585) 363-7031

*Fast Start is a biweekly RBJ feature that profiles Rochester area young professionals and entrepreneurs.*