

**Alumni Profile for Craig Haseler
Nysmith Class of 2005**



Craig with his fiancée

While I loved all of my classes at Nysmith, Computer class was always my favorite. I also did an after-school Programming Club, and learned how to program in the BASIC computer language. This would end up serving me really well when I got to high school, and eventually led me to my degree in Computer Science and my job working for the US Government managing their computer systems. My days in the Purple Pod computer lab, and then later in the (brand new!) Silver Wing lab served me very well.

After Nysmith, I went on to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. My time in the computer labs at Nysmith helped tremendously, as I immediately moved into their Accelerated Computer Science course, and took my Advanced Placement Computer Science Exam at the end of my Sophomore year. As a Junior and Senior, I took advanced courses in Artificial Intelligence and Parallel Computing. While my three younger brothers (who also attended Nysmith) would all eventually attend TJ, we all focused on different aspects of the "Technology" that the school had to offer.

Following my graduation from TJ, I began studying at George Mason University, where I continued to focus on Computer Science. I found some excellent internships in the area working for Sprint, the American Lung Association, and a small healthcare company called The Burgess Group. Since then, I have worked for several contractors in roles with increasing levels of responsibility at the US Department of Energy. These days I am a Senior Systems Administrator managing one of their large computer systems that helps the government decide when, where, and how to build things ranging from new power plants to nuclear storage facilities.

These days, I live in my own home out in Leesburg with my fiancé, who spends a few days a week substituting at Nysmith! Some of you may know her as Ms. Reynolds.

In addition to the strong academic foundation Nysmith gave me, the encouraging environment helped me discover my love of computers and programming outside of the standard elementary and middle school curriculum. After-school clubs and knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers meant I could explore well beyond what we covered in class. Being able to get that head start as far back as the 6th grade meant I was set on a great path all through high school and even college.

My advice to current Nysmith parents and students would be, don't stress about things. It's okay not to know where you're going to college (or high school!) in 7th grade. It's okay to explore new areas and decide what you're going to do later. Take advantage of the awesome teachers at Nysmith to ask all kinds of questions, and when it comes time to make the big decisions, you'll have all the information you need.

Favorite Nysmith...

Field trip: Camp Silver Beach, 6th grade

School play: Grease!

Place to hang out at Nysmith: The hallway at the entrance to the Silver Wing

Book you read for one of your classes: Hamlet in Mrs. Stephens' class

Classroom story involving one of your teachers: I got to go out for lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Stephens because I wrote the best scary story in the class for Halloween. I can't remember the details of the story, but it took place on a ship and ended up with the Captain's head being served for dinner!

After-school club: Computer Club with Mrs. Doyle

Memory: I was in 8th grade when the Silver Wing opened. I still remember our first day back - everything was so shiny and new! I remember it taking a few minutes for some of the teachers to realize they were supposed to write on the windows since they were whiteboards.