

To talk about my personal life and early education background, I will start from my childhood. As a child born in the Kurdish area of Iran, from early days, I felt the bitterness of the discrimination. In every attempt for a progressive step in my life, there was a stop sign in front of me as a Kurd. So from the beginning, I have always trained myself as a hard-worker to stand tall despite all difficulties. Moving from elementary to high school was a turning point of my life. In that period, as a result of my good academic results and perfect score on the qualifying exam, I was admitted as an exceptional talent to NODET high schools (which are highly competitive national high schools). The curriculum in these high schools gave me the opportunity to study advanced mathematics, which has always been my passion. Alongside with my studies, I also became interested in the computer science and algorithms; I was working hard with my two teammates on designing a simple AI for participation in national 2D soccer simulation league, in which we ranked first in the west area of Iran and ranked 5th in the national competition. This experience gave me the confidence that I needed to work hard for the university entrance exam. As a result of my great performance in the national entrance exam with ranking of 57, I entered university as an exceptional talent. As I was from a small city with relatively limited educational opportunities in computer science, I thought that I cannot compete with big-city students in computer sciences, I choose the Electrical Engineering major at the University of Tehran which was the closest field to my passion.

I have always had the passion to sought practical aspects of my studies. Fortunately, despite the simplicity of subjects in the first two years of bachelor studies, this passion and hard-working helped me to gain my professors' attention. As a result, when I was only a second year undergraduate student, based on my programming background, I managed to start research on digital design and formal verification methods under supervision of Prof. Navabi. Joining with graduate students in Prof. Navabi's group and working with them helped me to expand my knowledge in digital systems field. Although it was a fascinating experience for me, it was not totally fulfilling for my passion. Consequently, to expand my experience in other aspects of computer engineering, I started working with other research groups as well. Overall, I was given the chance to work with graduate students in four research laboratories. These different, but yet connected, research topics, including both successful and disastrous projects, aided me to try, fail, and gain experience throughout my bachelor. The result of my effort and my professors' trust, is several publications in domestic and international conferences and journals and a couple of CAD software tools developed in University of Tehran. In addition, I have been TA of different professors in several courses due to my top grades in advanced digital courses, and the recommendations provided by the professors that I had been working with. These experiences and achievements are listed in my CV in more details. In addition to research experiences, I participated in several industrial R&D project as part time employee for two years which has also helped me with my communicational skills. Overall, these valuable achievements helped me to enter the graduate school at UW madison as computer engineer.

During first semester of my graduate studies at UW madison, I was struggling with the new environment and complications of US educational system. Through my studies and more experience I gain while interacting with researchers in this new university, I decided that I need to change my field of study. Personally I have always sought to have more practical aspects in my studies and computer architecture in its current form was not fulfilling at all. So, I decided to redirect my field of study towards data science. At first, I was looking for novel field that can satisfy my passion to walk in between science and life. During this period, I was lucky to meet

with Prof. A. Assadi, one of the researchers in data science field. He introduced me to the new field and through his guidance and support, I decided to work and study in this new field. Although it needed so much courage to refuse all the RA funding chances in Computer Architecture and work in two jobs each semester without a faculty support in my own department, I made my decision without hesitation. Based on my experience, I knew that success can be achieved through hard working in the path of my dream and I was confident that I will finish what I have started, as I always do. Consequently, I took data science related courses and studied hard to get myself a strong theoretical background in this field. It worth mentioning that the positive feedback from my professors helped me to continue this path despite all challenges. I started as TA - of applied linear algebra course - working with Prof. Assadi, and now, I am going to start working on “a study on novel clustering and associated data visualization methods in order to achieve personalized therapies for Autistic children” under his supervision which helps me to improve my research abilities in the field even further.

I hope this letter has shown my personal and educational background even further to help you notice my qualifications and the long way of effort and hard-working that I have passed to be in my current position.

Best regards,
Ehsan Qasemi