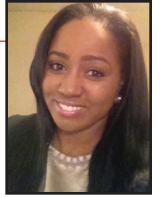




Profile: Kerisha Burke

Risk Analyst, Reporting and Position Control
Phillips 66, Commercial Organization, Houston, Texas



Howard University, Mathematics Major and Economics Minor

EARLY INFLUENCES

What sparked your interest in mathematics? When did you know that you would use math as a path to your career?

While growing up, mathematics was my favorite course because I always felt productive while solving math problems. I enjoyed mathematics because it was fun, challenging, and competitive. Each math lesson was like a new puzzle which made math homework extremely fun as I explored different methods to solve problems quickly and accurately.

Was there a pivotal moment/experience/influential person that led you in this direction? Any memorable courses or experiences that made a difference in directing you to your career? Any obstacles you needed to overcome?

There are many people, such as my family members, teachers, professors, and mentors, that have encouraged me to hone my mathematical skill set.

One notable obstacle that I had to overcome occurred while taking my first college calculus course. Before attending college, I had completed the required math courses to graduate from high school by the tenth grade and I decided to pursue finance and business courses instead of continuing to take AP math courses. When I applied to college, I decided that I wanted to study mathematics. When I took my first college calculus course, I realized that I needed to bridge the gap that was created due to my decision not to take math courses for over two years while I was in high school. By working hard, being resilient, and practicing, I was able to quickly overcome that obstacle and become an excellent mathematics student.

CAREER/CAREER PATH

Describe your current position and briefly, the path you took to get there.

I was recruited at Howard University's Career Fair to work in the Commercial Organization at Phillips 66, an energy manufacturing and logistics company. I am currently in my second rotation of the New Hire Training Program at Phillips 66. My current position is an analyst in the Commercial Risk Group. In order to provide risk assessment for the portfolio that I analyze, my tasks are extremely detailed and results oriented.

What is a typical day at work for you? Please list your job responsibilities. What are you responsible for?

I am responsible for the risk assessment of the (physical) portfolio for the WC Heavy Products that are traded in the Commercial organization. My daily tasks entail data analysis, exposure assessment, as well as reporting the positions and profit/losses to various internal groups. While these tasks vary based on the business cycle, they are executed to report and track the risks that are associated with the physical trading of fuel oil products on the West Coast.

What do you like best and least about your profession? What is the stress level associated with this type of position?

My favorite part about my profession is that I work in a collaborative, diverse, and fast-paced environment with traders and various finance-related roles.

How many hours per day or week do you typically work? Do you have flexibility that allows a good life/work balance?

I work approximately eight and a half hours per day and I have the option to take one day off each month. I enjoy a great work/life balance by going to the complimentary on-site gym, free on-site fitness classes, and being involved in many inter-company networking groups.

CAREER EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR FIELD/POSITION

What career expectations should students have about your field/position?

By working in a fast paced, collaborative environment, you'll have the opportunity to use your skill set as well as develop new skills that will be useful throughout your career. Working in the energy industry is an exciting experience because there are so many external factors that have a direct impact on daily business decisions.

How/why are applied mathematics and/or computational science important to your industry? How are they used?

Within the industry, it is important to have strong logical, quantitative, analytical, and technical skills. These are the core skills that are developed while studying applied mathematics and are used to complete daily tasks on the job. These skills are used for data analysis, reporting, and quick decision making.

Where do you see the future of math in industry or in your particular career?

Mathematics is essential to many roles in my career. Having a strong math background has enabled me to work with large data sets, explain trends, use technical tools for analysis, create data analysis tools, and to streamline processes.

ADVICE

If you could advise someone currently pursuing the same degree or profession, what would you say? What are some steps you would recommend to students, or to those in their early careers, that perhaps you wish you had taken earlier? Are there things you would have done differently?

It has only been one year since graduation; my only advice would be to do a variety of REUs or internships so that you are well-rounded when you begin your career.

Any specific supplementary skills or training you can name that a person pursuing this profession should acquire?

In addition to having strong quantitative skills, I would recommend having a strong background in Microsoft Excel and VBA.

SALARY

For 2015, can you speculate about the salary range of starting, mid-level and/or senior positions in your specific field?

We receive a competitive salary.

Where can people find out more about your profession?

For more information about my profession, you can go to the website for P66.

<<http://www.phillips66.com/EN/careers/Pages/index.aspx> >