Allison M.

**Cyber Security Analyst**

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Many people in my life expect me to go into the medical field. It’s what most people with my IQ would do. Whether it’s a chiropractor, an orthodontist, or a surgeon, everybody seems to think I want to get a PHD and earn lots of money. Which is somewhat true; it would be nice, but it’s not exactly sensible for me. I don’t want to waste my life away by going to college for something I wouldn’t enjoy pursuing.

Something I would enjoy; however, is some career in STEM. Math has been my comfort subject for a while. There’s just something about sitting down and solving a hard math problem which always brings a smile to my face. Ever since 2nd grade I’ve been obsessed with it, if you could call it that. This brings me to my main realization: I’d like to become a cyber security analyst.

Yes, I know the job is very specific considering I’m only a freshman in high school. My career choice could still easily change. For all I know I could become a tattoo artist. Okay, probably not that drastic of a change, but still my dream career could be swayed in a different direction. But as of right now, a cyber security analyst seems like a perfect job. What sounds better than monitoring a company’s hardware and networks and protecting it from cybercriminals? Actually a lot of things, but just because it doesn’t sound fun to other 14-year-old girls, it does to me.

Why? First of all, the job requires a strong math background as well as programming and statistical analysis skills. Not only does the job use skills I enjoy and am great at, it’ll be a huge need in the future. With society becoming more technology-reliant, companies are doing the same. Which is why cyber security analyst demand has gone up quite a bit in recent years. In fact, the job is suspected to grow 33% in job opportunities throughout the current decade. There are about 16,300 job openings projected on average per year. Work as a cyber security analyst would also pay handsomely. The median pay in 2020 was about $103,590 per year, which is much higher than the median living wage in the US: $67,690. Some of the top paid experts make as much as $380,000 a year. The job only requires a bachelor's degree in cybersecurity, though some prefer to get higher education like a master’s.

As a cyber security analyst you could also find exciting career prospects. Private companies, the military, and all levels of government require security specialists. Even though the job might be quite uneventful at times, you could live an exciting, successful life with this job. All of these factors have drawn me to the career, not only would it provide financial stability, but I’d be happy doing it. I’d love nothing more than to sit at a computer everyday and put my math, analytical, and problem solving skills to use.

But, my dream job can easily change in the near future, I have a feeling it might. Nothing in life is set in stone and I have plenty of time before I graduate high school. Whatever I end up doing as a career later on in life, I want to enjoy. It doesn’t matter if the job has amazing pay or great benefits, all that matters is I’m happy with the career I’ve chosen. And I’m going to try my best to find the perfect career for me.