

Came for the community, stayed for the code

After 20 years of swinging a gavel as a licensed auctioneer, Jacqueline Young bravely picked up her laptop and filled out the application for Drupal Career Online so she could transform her lifestyle and pursue a passion. This began her official bid to become a full-on contributing member of the Drupal Community, which she had become acquainted with, and intrigued by, for several years as she accompanied her partner to Drupal events.



Tagging along to various Camps and Cons, Jacqui became drawn to the mobile lifestyle that a career in web development has to offer. She also felt connected to the community, explaining “I really love the Drupal Community; it is generous, kind and intelligent.” Her technical background helped fuel her aspirations as well, having mastered some fairly complicated auction software and acing a few computer science courses that built her background in coding, the command line and Git. She looked into Drupal Career Online, made sure she had the prerequisites, applied and was accepted to the Fall 2018 session.

From there, Jacqui’s outlook, abilities and attitude drove her along a relatively condensed path to her current position as Evolution & Support Engineer at [Interpersonal Frequency](#), a Drupal agency that prides itself on building easy-to-use digital experiences that empower public organizations and the citizens they serve. Working for Interpersonal Frequency is the first and only time she has worked for someone other than herself. “It’s kind of fun, she explains. “It’s fun to have access to other smart people.”

Her journey and rapid success is not typical, but then again, Jacqui is not ordinary either. She is fearless in taking on new things, knows how to communicate, and does it all with an amazing attitude. She also leverages every skill and experience she has, and can’t hide her sincere passion for Drupal and all that is good about the community. “I look at Drupal as getting paid to solve a puzzle,” she beams. “It’s important to be positive. “I think attitude is everything,” she continues.

Shortly after she graduated from Drupal Career Online, she gave a presentation at DrupalCamp Atlanta, and made such an impression that she was approached immediately after with an offer of an internship, which she

jumped on. She spent six months performing nothing but site audits, which gave her a great foundation for more technical tasks. She had planned to work as a developer for a few years, and then potentially move into managing people and projects. But for now, she is still really enjoying and focusing on becoming a better developer.

Composer is a favorite tool of Jacqui's as she loves to build microsites, and is now also going more into decoupled architecture as the agency's new direction. Even with all of her skill and experience built on her technical skills, Jacqui is convinced that much of her success, and most developers' success is because of their soft skills. "Communication is number one" she explains. And continues, "Listen well and repeat back." She also adds building relationships and using patience as main ingredients in performing any role successfully in tech.

She continues to enjoy and draw a lot of value from Drupal events. "You learn as much in the hallway, bars and parties as you do in presentations," she muses. Her DrupalCon Pittsburgh experience included some technical conversations, some great sessions, especially enjoying [Owen Bush's talk on how to contribute](#). She was even inspired by fellow alumni and members of the DrupalEasy Learning Community who gathered for a semi-official lunch; becoming encouraged to suggest hiring junior developers as a way to build a strong dev team.

When asked what she would share with people just getting into Drupal to support their career, Jacqui suggests "Find what you can give away, and give it away. Contribute to the project, go to meetups and be helpful; and opportunities will present themselves." She continues, " It is hard to do, (especially if you have no income) but you still should do it. I really think that's the way to get in the door." She believes that by going to local camps and sprints and not just meeting people but giving them help, new developers can learn and make a name for themselves.

When asked what she'd like to share about her journey to this new career, Jacqui reflects, "It has been a really good career for me. I love open source values and it is good for the world." She adds, DrupalEasy changed my life, you gave me an amazing launch." Drupal Career Online, it is clear, was a tool that Jacqui fully leveraged to build a life around her aspirations, and we are proud to have been a part of it.

More information about the upcoming Drupal Career Online session can be found at <https://www.drupaleasy.com/academy/dco/course-information>. To sign up for one of our no-cost Taste of Drupal information sessions, visit <https://www.drupaleasy.com/academy/dco/taste>.