

Versatile senior/staff software engineer with 15+ years of experience building scalable backend systems, cloud infrastructure, data/ML pipelines, and rich user interfaces. Expert in simplifying, driving technical vision, architecture reviews, and mentoring engineers. Proven track record in interviewing and developing high-performance teams.

Technologies and Languages

- Languages: Java, Python, Ruby, Scala, Javascript, C/C++, R, Perl, Bash, SQL, HTML, CSS
- Technologies: AWS, Git, Linux, Docker, MySQL, React, Spring, Hibernate, Ruby on Rails, Flask, NumPy, pandas
- Other: Distributed systems, DevOps, IAC, CI/CD, technical leadership, mentorship & coaching

Work Experience

Owner/Principal	Skunkworks Solutions (personal LLC)	2022–Present
• Provided paid interview and career coaching services (career mentoring, resume advice, mock interviews, behavioral & technical interview prep) to 100s of clients through MentorCruise: mentorcruise.com/mentor/danford/ • Conducted paid technical consultations and code & architecture reviews for various clients • Provided hands-on development and consulting services to researchers at the Allen Institute for Brain Science (alleninstitute.org). Assisted in translating complex bio-informatics algorithms from R into Python, migrating on-prem code to a cloud environment, and parallelizing/optimizing large in-memory matrix operations.		
Principal Software Engineer AWS Productivity Apps	Amazon Web Services Seattle, WA	2021–2022
• Led technical R&D for a new greenfield SaaS initiative which ultimately launched as AWS AppFabric • Helped bootstrap the development team, growing it from 3 engineers to 30+, seeding the engineering culture, and advising leadership and product management on technical direction in the early product stages • As an Amazon Bar Raiser since 2014, facilitated over 1,000+ interviews (SDEs and many other roles) – planned and assigned competencies, interviewed the candidate, and then facilitated the hiring decision.		
Principal Software Engineer AWS WorkMail	Amazon Web Services The Hague, Netherlands	2019–2021
• Developed features hands-on in several areas of the WorkMail product, primarily with a team owning external mail protocols (IMAP, SMTP, EWS, ActiveSync, etc.) • Advised managers, VPs, and WorkMail's GM on technical strategy and execution • Coordinated with stakeholders in Seattle on projects spanning multiple organizations and business units • Facilitated hundreds of interviews as an Amazon Bar Raiser across the EU		
Principal Software Engineer Amazon Publishing	Amazon Seattle, WA	2017–2019
• Advised directors and VPs on technical strategy for APub's tech team of ~25 across 4 teams • Embedded in mission-critical and speculative initiatives, including building and launching a new real-time author sales reporting application, and bootstrapping the development team that launched Kindle Vela		
Sr. Software Engineer Amazon Publishing	Amazon Seattle, WA	2013–2017
• Led the initial development and launch of APub.com, Amazon Publishing's author-facing web portal • Built and launched internal data pipelines and ML models for APub's acquisition and marketing teams. • Developed internal tools for contract/rights management, royalties, and downstream accounting integrations.		

- Launched Kindle Scout, a crowd-sourced book publishing and discovery platform. Built an automated submission workflow, public campaign pages, backend editorial tools, and an author campaign metrics dashboard.

Software Engineer	Amazon Web Services	2009–2013
Infrastructure Automation	Seattle, WA	

- Developed bare-metal server management software for Amazon & AWS datacenters. Internal tools and APIs for provisioning or rebooting servers, connecting to remote consoles (e.g. IPMI, ILO), hardware diagnostics tools, Linux system bootstrapping scripts, large-scale workflow automation, etc.
- Supported a diverse customer base, including internal service owners (engineers managing fleets for Amazon retail and AWS), datacenter technicians, and procurement/planning analysts.

Jr Software Developer	CreateSpace	2007–2009
	San Luis Obispo, CA	

- Developed and maintained in-house video authoring and encoding software, web-based management tools, and customer-facing web applications.

Education

- **B.Sc. Computer Engineering** *cum laude*, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA **2009**

Other

- Co-host and producer of *Bytes In Balance*, a podcast about software development: bytesinbalance.com (since 2024)