

My Computer Journey

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I did not realize how old I was until I was asked to reflect on this question. Growing up without a computer, my journey began in college where I fell in love with every computer I met.

At Brooklyn Poly (now NYU Tandon School of Engineering), I was fortunate that my engineering school not only had what was what was current, but also gave me the opportunity to touch history. How efficient it was to do my homework on the train to Brooklyn, shuffling punched cards in their final order so that I could turn them into the IBM Mainframe when I arrived. But nothing was as fascinating as programming in assembly language by flipping the levers of the PDP-11!

My graduate school years at Carnegie Mellon gave my love for soldering an opportunity to build a bit-slice microprocessor. But true love bloomed when my master's thesis introduced me to the world of fault-tolerant avionics systems and the triple modular redundancy that kept airplanes flying!

Post doctorate, I rose to the ranks of Trace Queen at IBM Research—owner and caretaker of refrigerator-sized systems that housed address traces, shared with many, that fed my research on improving performance of commercial systems.

A lifetime—and 11 patents in automatic language translation—later, I turned in my desktop and focused my fearless research skills into founding the only Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Texas and the Southwest United States.

Today, my favorite computer fits in the palm of my hand. My smartphone is My Everything—my communication tool, my to-do list, my document editor, my alarm clock, exercise tracker, and diary. It is my Google savvy research assistant and my social media connec-

tion. It has replaced my fancy digital camera; complete with photo editor, it is fast enough to capture a hummingbird in mid-flight. And when creativity descends in new unexpected works, My Everything is a breath away ready to record new songs, project ideas, and outlines for new musicals!

MY SMARTPHONE IS MY EVERYTHING—MY COMMUNICATION TOOL, MY TO-DO LIST, MY DOCUMENT EDITOR, MY ALARM CLOCK, EXERCISE TRACKER, AND DIARY.

From a childhood without, I feel blessed to have engaged with a history of computers, and end up with a love that streamlines my life—so I can go through the world without missing a beat.



ANN MARIE G. (TEKINA-EIRÚ)

MAYNARD is a proud blood descendant of the Tainos of Borikén (Puerto Rico). She is the Founding Executive & Artistic Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center (501C3), since 1997, the only center in the Southwest. She is a researcher of history and culture, playwright, choreographer, songwriter, performer and teacher of traditional music and dance. Maynard is an innovator (11 technology patents) holding a Ph.D. degree in electrical and computer engineering from Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA. Contact her at amg@prfdance.org.