
College of Computing and Engineering News Archive

2017

Robert B. Batie Jr., Ph.D.

Nova Southeastern University

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Recommended Citation

Nova Southeastern University, "Robert B. Batie Jr., Ph.D." (2017). *College of Computing and Engineering News Archive*. 10.

https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cce_news_archive/10

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Robert Batie, Jr., Ph.D.

It's a safe bet to say that Robert B. Batie Jr., Ph.D., has seen a thing or two. Given his 22 years in the U.S. Army, it's pretty clear to understand why.

That's because in those 2+ decades he traveled to 33 foreign countries, 41 of the 50 states and visited every continent aside from Antarctica and Australia. And it was his chosen occupation while serving in the U.S. Army – Signal Corp as a Communications Security (COMSEC) Maintenance Chief – that led him to where he is today.

"It's much sexier now, but I've been involved for more than 30 years in cybersecurity," Dr. Batie said. "It's funny, looking at all that travel, I got to study on three different continents".

And to say he's experienced a vast assortment of technological advancements over the years would be an understatement.

"When I started, I earned my AA degree on a Commodore 64; then I earned my Bachelor's via the old Prodigy Internet service using a Tandy TL; then got my Master's using my very first laptop; and finally, I earned my Ph.D. on a new Mac."

Today, Dr. Batie works for The Raytheon Company. While he cannot divulge the specifics of what his job entails, he's quick to say he loves what he does and wouldn't be where he is without Nova Southeastern University. When you ask him why he chose NSU over other colleges or universities that offered similar programs, two things jump to mind.

"Well, I live in Florida so for me, the fact NSU is in Florida was a big sell," Dr. Batie said. "I love the campus [in Davie], it's beautiful – and NSU has outstanding online resources available to students as well. There's support – really, everything you need to be successful."

He said the other reason he chose NSU was really the most important one of all.

"More importantly, I felt the program was really geared toward the working professional, and that's huge."

Dr. Batie said that he knew he needed to get his advanced degree due to the work he was involved with. He was working with a number of colleges and universities, setting up projects and helping with research.

"Because of that association, I needed a Ph.D. to get into and stay close to those circles," he said.

Dr. Batie said that he investigated other programs but was shocked when they suggested he quit his job to become a full-time student. That simply was not an option for him – nor is it an option for the vast majority of students in NSU's College of Engineering and Computing.

"You know, they really understand that we have lives," Dr. Batie said. "The faculty and staff at NSU are pros, they are caring people."

One such individual he singled out was Dr. Yair Levy, a professor in NSU's College of Computing and Engineering.

"He really opened my eyes – my experiences with him have really stuck with me," Dr. Batie said. "He nailed it for me; he motivated me to work, to do what it takes to get where I wanted to be. He helped me keep going when I was ready to give up – he pulled me back in and got me going."

Along with his "job," Dr. Batie also works as a mentor, speaking with young adults about technology and how to stay safe in the virtual world. He also wants them to get excited about engineering as a career – and shares his love and passion hoping to inspire the next generation.

He credits NSU's program – and Dr. Levy specifically – for helping him achieve and exceed his professional goals. And when asked what advice he would give to those looking to follow in his footsteps, he said it's quite simple:

"I get asked this all the time, and I simply tell them what NSU did for me," he said. "[NSU] are pros, caring – they have great resources and they are there to support you if and when you need it."

What I learned is that you have to keep the long-term goal of completing your dissertation in front of you. ABD (All But Dissertation) was not an option for me. I learned I had to do something everyday toward reaching my goal.

Coursework, is what it is. Coursework is priming the pump for the real work of completing the dissertation. When you have finished the course work and working on your dissertation you are away from campus and it is easy to get side tracked. Attending the NSU Dissertation workshops was also a big help. That is where my Dissertation Chair was extremely valuable, pulling me back in from the wilderness of distractions, encouraging me to finish.

