

## Transcript

### Why did you choose to study STEM subjects?

#### Rashid

I have chosen to study the STEM subject computer science because I have always had a strong passion for technology, as well as a love for creating and building. Studying computer science has educated me in the history of computers, from the very first phones and computers that were the size of an entire room to the handheld devices that we have now.

I have also learned different coding languages and how to work using team software. This allows me to create and build different projects, bringing my creative side to life.

#### Najiya

My journey into the mathematical sciences was not just about cultivating my passion for numbers but also about challenging the stereotypical images of who is expected to excel in these fields. STEM is often perceived as a domain reserved for a certain type of person, typically not someone who looks like me.

However, my experiences and achievements assert that STEM needs diverse voices to foster innovative solutions and comprehensive understandings.

#### Jill Shaw

Originally, I studied psychology and musicology, and I had planned to be a music therapist. But that original plan didn't work out, so I moved over to study for an MSc in computing and started working as a computer programmer.

And that was over 25 years ago. I've worked in the technology industry ever since. I think the programming aspect worked really well for me because I love solving problems and working on solutions. Moving into technology management later in my career also worked well, as I could combine problem-solving with my communication and leadership skills.

#### Dhouha Kbaier

I've always been fascinated by how technology can solve complex problems and make a real difference in people's lives. My interest in STEM was inspired by its ability to blend creativity, logic, and innovation. It's really exciting to take on challenges that others might think are impossible and find solutions that make an impact.

#### Andrew

I've always been interested in STEM since I was a child. I was one of those kids fascinated by dinosaurs and space, and I've always been drawn to nerdy sci-fi things like *Star Trek*. So I always knew I wanted to do something in STEM. At various points in my childhood, I wanted to be a vet, an astrophysicist, a chemist.

But as I got older, I became more and more interested in the theoretical side of things, and maths became the obvious path for me. There was also a slightly less positive reason why I was drawn to maths. As a young gay man, I saw the abstract world of mathematics as a way of escaping the messiness of real life. In some sense, it felt like a way to protect myself from a world that didn't seem accepting of people like me.

The theorems and equations seemed much less judgmental than real people. But as I've grown older and gained more confidence in myself, I've wanted to share my knowledge with others and bring that knowledge into the world. Now, I see STEM as a way of connecting people and sharing understanding, rather than just an individual exercise done in isolation.