



Ashley Francis Dennie is an Operations Research Systems Analyst at the Center for Army Analysis. She wrote us a couple of years after graduating with a math major:

I am doing great! I am the busiest I think I have ever been in my life, but it gives me a good sense of accomplishment. Career-wise, I feel really lucky to have found this agency straight out of college. They have offered a lot of perks including high promotion potential, paying off my remaining undergraduate college loans from Roanoke College, and funding my night classes at George Mason University for a Master of Science degree in Computational Science. This is a really great agency and if there are any Roanoke College math majors that are interested in doing operations research for the Army, I'd love to let them know about any job openings we have (once the DoD hiring freeze ends!).

The job itself is very rewarding. I have grown professionally and learned a lot of new mathematical/statistical methods through my involvement in analytical studies and attendance to technical and professional development classes offered by the Army. The most recent class I attended was Data Mining with R, where I learned a lot of new tricks in R to do the same type of analysis that I did at Roanoke, like statistical data exploration and regression analysis.

Being an Operations Research Systems Analyst is definitely challenging in that each study we take on is unique and requires a lot of critical thought in order to develop a methodology to solve it in a time-efficient (and correct!) way. We also have to brief our leaders and various military operations research forums about the results of the study. I think this last part has been the most challenging part for me since I have never been a fan of standing up and talking in front of people, but our leadership helps make us feel ready and prepared for these briefings.

Casey Gearheart (Casey Turner now) is also working with an Army agency and to prove a what small world it is-- I went to an Army conference at the SAS Institute in NC last year and who did I sit down right next to? Casey! I could not believe it! It felt like a little Roanoke reunion!