



Sportswriter extraordinaire and pasta enthusiast

Nikhil Varanasi
Manufacturing Engineering intern

Written by Morgan Bruns

When I asked Nikhil Varanasi to tell me about himself, he told me about three interests that describe him almost entirely—biomedical engineering, cooking, and sports. When he isn't interning, he is either cooking (usually pasta) or indulging in something sports related.

Nikhil knew that he wanted to find a career that involved medical devices ever since he was a child. When he was younger, he suffered from health complications that required many checkups at the hospital. He was particularly intrigued by the machines used to take scans of the brain. Years later, when it was time for him to choose a major in college, he chose biomedical engineering at Purdue University, so he could make devices similar to the ones that helped him. Now, he is doing just that during his internship as a manufacturing engineering intern at Cook in the Test Method Validation department.

Like mom used to make

Something that can make a house feel like a home is home-cooked meals. Luckily, for Nikhil, his mom was amazing at cooking. She specialized in making Indian food, a constant in their meal rotation. He knew his mom was a talented chef, but he didn't know that her cooking would be inspirational. He didn't realize the hard work and dedication that she put in until he was living on his own and working every day too.

"It's pretty inspirational," he said, "My mom would come home from work around 5 or 6 every day and she would still whip up a meal."

In addition to being a good cook, she was also a great teacher. Because of his mom, Nikhil learned how to cook many dishes, and is even known among his friends for his pasta. He eats nearly two boxes of pasta per week. His

favorite pasta dish to make was inspired by Olive Garden. Eggplant Parmigiana was his go-to order when dining at the Italian American cuisine chain restaurant. Like many other people who come across a dish they enjoy at a restaurant, he learned how to make it at home.

Sports fanatic

Growing up, parents tend to register their children for a variety of extracurriculars, hoping that one might stick. For Nikhil, sports did. Whether he is coaching a basketball team, watching a game on TV, playing a pick-up game with friends, or writing about the Chicago Bulls, it's clear that sports are an important part of Nikhil's life.

Nikhil describes himself as a sports fanatic and immerses himself in them in every way possible. He started his first sport, soccer, in kindergarten, and he played until third grade. During that time, he also discovered karate, which he stuck with for 13 years. He even earned a third-degree black belt. In middle school, he added basketball to the list of sports he could play. Once he got to high school, he made the transition from player to coach when he began coaching a district basketball team.

Nikhil comes to Cook from the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois, which means he is right around the corner from the United Center, where the Chicago Bulls basketball team plays. He remembers going to the Bulls' basketball games with his dad as one of the best experiences of his life.

Although he only plays sports recreationally since going to college, Nikhil found other ways to exercise his passion. In the summer of 2020, he began writing for On Tap Sports Net. On Tap Sports Net is an online platform that uses articles, podcasts, and videos to provide its audience with updates on Chicago sports news. Nikhil's

niche was writing articles about the Chicago Bulls. He enjoyed writing for On Tap Sports Net because they allowed him the freedom to express his own ideas. Because of this, he has articles that range from specific players and their season performance to off-season discussions about how the team could improve through trades or free agency.

In the future, Nikhil hopes to bring his love of sports into his career. Because of his experience at Cook, he learned about devices in the healthcare industry, which is knowledge that can help him in any biomedical engineering field.

"I would love to find a company that works with athletic programs or teams and supplies medical products or performance products that help athletes. I think that would be something like interesting to go into," he said.