

Jeremy Johnson



Photonics/life philosophy: “For your life to be successful, you need to be able to react to your environment. In that sense, we’re kind of like light because we have to react and find a way to get where we’re going.”

–Jeremy Johnson, July 30, 2009

Jeremy Johnson loves a puzzle. The best part of his job is, as he puts it, “solving a good problem. When we solve a problem at work, it makes me feel so rewarded.” Jeremy is a design engineer at Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications, where he designs the next generation of cell phones. But how did he get there from a photonics degree?

Jeremy started at a four-year university but soon realized that it didn’t fit him just right. He heard about the very popular laser electro-optics technology program at Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) from a friend. From the moment he enrolled, he enjoyed the challenges the degree presented. He liked one class in particular. “There was a class called Electronic Troubleshooting,” recalls Jeremy. “It inspired me to pursue an engineering degree at North Carolina State University. It was a really challenging class in which the professor would put out circuit boards with certain faults in them. Our goal was to find out what parts were bad. Once we figured out what’s wrong with the first configuration, we went to the next configuration, and so on. Once we finished all the configurations, we were done with the lab. I really enjoyed it. My lab partner and I finished the class well ahead of everyone else, maybe several weeks before the end of the course.”

As a result of Jeremy’s fascination with troubleshooting, he went on from CCCC to earn a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from NC State. “Now I play a leading role in the engineering team at Sony Ericsson,” he says. “It’s as fast-paced as I want it to be. I could sit back and do one level of work, but I like to stay busy. My team solved a couple of problems today and it really makes me feel good.”

Jeremy’s associate degree is serving him well. “In the cell phone industry, we look at optics as a peripheral device,” he explains, “but I do deal with optical components like displays and cameras. I use

the basic troubleshooting I learned at CCCC every day. One key to being a good engineer, whether you're an optical, electronics, or mechanical engineer, is knowing how to troubleshoot. You have to know how to follow processes and troubleshoot systems.”

Jeremy's love for solving puzzles has shaped itself into a career that interests him greatly. He loves to go to work every day, to work on the giant jigsaw puzzle that is designing new mobile communications devices.

Jeremy Johnson earned an associate in applied science degree in laser electro-optics technology from Central Carolina Community College and a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from North Carolina State University. He lives in Fuquay Varina, North Carolina, with his wife, Caryn, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Ava. Jeremy likes to mountain bike, play Frisbee golf, and watch his little girls grow up.