



Sara Itani

Sage Class Year: 2004

College and Grad Year: MIT, 2012

Major/Minor: Computer Science/Mechanical Engineering

Current Internship: Microsoft this past summer and the next

Hobbies: Snowboarding, Robotics, Basketball, Chess, Tea, Mousetraps, Scuba Diving, Sailing, Technology, Graphic Design

Career Goals: I eventually want to found my own company (I have a lot of ideas I'd like to see actualized.)

Latest Feather in Your Cap: I managed to score a one-on-one meeting with one of my idols, Steve Ballmer – CEO of Microsoft. I also have written proof from him that I'll be Microsoft's next CEO! Oh yeah, and now we're Facebook friends 😊

Biggest Challenge in College: Being OK with doing poorly once in a while. It's hard to come out of a test – which you studied all weekend for – feeling absolutely miserable while most of your friends are talking about how easy it is. But it happens. Just chill out, it's all part of the learning process.

The Transition from Sage to High School and College: The transitions weren't too difficult because Sage, like my high school, BU Academy, encouraged my various quirks and motivated me to do well.

Skills Sage Helped You Develop the Most:

- While I can't point out one particular "skill." I went to Sage for eight years, and I'm happy with the way I turned out at the very end. I guess Sage taught me how to be awesome? And humble too. Awesome and humble ;)
- Also, I got really, REALLY good at building forts, which inevitably sparked my interest in mechanical engineering. Too bad Sage banned forts when Ms. Windsor crawled into the fort (exceeding the design's height limits) and was hit on the head with a twig!

Fondest Sage Memory: At some point, people started selling/trading their souls for various items. I sold my soul for Altoids, gum, lots of stuff (if you've read *Harry Potter*, you can figure out how I managed to sell my soul multiple times.) The teachers even started to get in on it. It was awesome! Best part was when Sage made a rule officially banning soul trading.

Words of Advice to Sage 8th Graders Preparing for the Next Step:

- Be happy with who you are; learn to laugh and poke fun at yourself.
- Be honest and don't beat around the bush: nobody likes a sycophant.
- I've worked in three research labs thus far, and I've gone into every one knowing close to nothing about the field of study, yet I've been published in several major journals (including *Nature*, *IEEE*.) Moral of the story: Don't be afraid to jump into something even if you have absolutely no experience and no clue how to accomplish your goal. Seriously – never be afraid to fail, and never tell yourself you can't do something. Just go for it. If you fail: no harm done. At least you learned something. If you succeed: way to go, that's awesome!

Shout-outs: **Ms. Vaughan** for teaching me the "is, am, are, was, were, be, being, been" dance, and how to avoid being "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." **Ms. Rudolph** for fueling my passion for technology and *Futurama*. **Ms. Fournier** for taking me aside to privately tutor me when the material we were learning wasn't challenging enough – I love math and science because of you. **Ms. Martin** for encouraging my art! **Ms. Krikelis** for your patience at the sleepovers. **Ms. Tanner** for listening to me. And of course, the entire **Class of 2004** for being awesome friends.