

Alici Edwards



Alici Edwards (they/them) is a senior undergraduate Computer Science and Mathematics double major with a minor in Anthropology. I was connected to Alici through Michelle Tran and had an absolute blast interviewing them. If you see Alici on campus or on Zoom, be sure to give them a shout hello, ask about their tattoos, or about any of their many outdoor activities!

You're graduating soon! Do you know your plans post-CU?

Alici recently accepted a job at Teach for America (TFA) and will be moving to Alabama to teach math at a middle or high school. They have always wanted to teach, recalling their passion starting pretty early, helping out in elementary schooler classrooms as a middle schooler, and growing through tutoring and TA/CAing math and CS classes as a student at CU. One of the things Alici is excited about working for TFA is being able to be serve in an under-resourced community, and it will be their first time (that they can remember) living outside of Boulder.

What is your path to CU Boulder?

Alici was born in Boulder, moved to Brazil as a toddler, and moved back to Boulder when they were three. Their mom worked at CU for a long time during their childhood, which helped make CU an especially affordable option compared to other schools, especially with our great Engineering College. As a freshman at CU, they started as an Electrical Engineering major and quickly switched into Computer Science and Math, which are the majors they will graduate with this semester, in addition to an Anthropology minor.

What about what you do makes you most excited?

The biggest thing that excites Alici about teaching is seeing a concept “click” with someone. They can recall a time in elementary school where they helped their now-roommate their times tables. It was beautiful in Alici's eyes to see their friend move beyond the mentality of “I'm not cut out for math; I can't

do it” to the moment where they realized that math wasn’t some impossible task for them and that they were capable. Alici astutely noted a perceived gap that is prominent in STEM fields that only pre-disposed folks can work in STEM, which is absolutely not true, and wants to work to close that gap and make STEM accessible for more people.

Who is someone that has helped you in some way? How?

In high school, Alici had a world history and psychology/anthropology teacher who has significantly inspired their passion for teaching. *“I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, but she was the first teacher where I was like, ‘I want to teach like she does.’”* This teacher is one of the influential reasons Alici has their anthropology minor. When Alici accepted their position at TFA, this teacher was one of the first people they told. Alici noted, *“I look up to her the way I hope my students will look up to me.”*

If you could have an alternative career, what would it be?

“Honestly, I would love to live in a little cabin in the woods... go off the grid and live off the land.”

Tell me about your tattoo!

Alici has not one, but five tattoos. On camera, I first saw one on their forearm of a Yarrow plant, which is native to Colorado. There are chemicals in the leaves that can essentially stop bleeding. Growing up, they went to a summer camp every year that taught wilderness survival skills, learning about medicinal herbs and what is and is not safe to eat in the Rocky Mountains, how to build shelters, and the like. They have plans for a full sleeve of medicinal herbs in the future! Their *favorite* tattoo has three ravens and is based on a Brothers Grimm fairytale.

What are some of your hobbies?

It depends on the time of year. In the summer, Alici spends a lot of time outdoors, often rafting, off-roading, and hiking. In the winter, Alici spends more of their time playing video games and reading, with some occasional snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.

What are three improbable facts about you?

Alici speaks Portuguese, there are currently seven fairytale-related books in their room (between their anthropology classes and personal reading), and they have broken a bone by tripping three different times. What’s extra incredible about that last fact is that is the only way Alici has broken a bone!

Icebreaker suggestions

If you see Alici around, be sure to ask them about their trip rafting the Grand Canyon! Author’s note: In this interview, I learned that the Grand Canyon has Class X (ten) rapids, which I didn’t even know existed!

Want to see someone featured in the Neural Network? Email jefi8453@colorado.edu to suggest yourself or a friend