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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

KPBSD Inspiration, Dean Carignan, Kenai Central High School, Class of 1987

“I know that I’m in a good place in my career because I am excited to come to work each day and, on the drive home, my mind is spinning about all the interesting and exciting topics I addressed throughout the day. Moreover, I feel I am working on technologies that, implemented in the right way, can have a massive positive impact for humankind. And I am lucky to work for a company with strong values that shares my desire to use technology as a force for good.” –Dean Carignan, Director of Program Management for Artificial Intelligence Research, Microsoft Corporation; Kenai Central High School, Class of 1987



“Approach learning as a life-long endeavor. The world is changing incredibly fast and skills that are relevant one day can become obsolete the next. Think deeply about the contexts in which you learn most effectively and in which you most enjoy the learning process. And then seek out those learning contexts wherever possible. Develop the habit of lifelong learning now while in school and it will serve you well throughout your entire life.”
 –Dean Carignan,
 Kenai Central High School, Class of 1987

DEAN CARIGNAN



**KENAI CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL #GraduateInspiration
 CLASS OF 1987**



When he graduated from Kenai Central High School in 1987, do you think Dean imagined he would one day be the Director of Program Management for Artificial Intelligence Research at Microsoft Corporation? Oh, the places you’ll go! #AKlearns

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.
 ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
 RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

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In his current role, Carignan is responsible for planning and orchestrating Microsoft's long-term strategy in the field of Artificial Intelligence. He has worked on a variety of teams including Xbox, Windows, Surface, and Bing for the past 14 years at Microsoft, and served in a variety of functional areas including marketing, product management, business operations, and strategy. Prior to Microsoft, Dean worked at the consulting firm McKinsey and Company, and before that with The World Bank. He holds a Bachelor of Science in International Relations from Georgetown University, and a Masters of Business Administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Life-long learning

“Approach learning as a life-long endeavor—the world is changing incredibly fast and skills that are relevant one day can become obsolete the next,” explains this director of program management for artificial intelligence research. “The best way to ensure long-term work security is to develop solid learning capabilities that enable you to expand your skills and knowledge over a lifetime. Do not think of learning as drudgery but as one of the greatest joys humans can experience. Think deeply about the contexts in which you learn most effectively and in which you most enjoy the learning process. Then seek out those learning contexts wherever possible. Develop the habit of lifelong learning now while in school and it will serve you well throughout your entire life.”

My 6th grade teacher #LifeSkills

Dorothy Besch was his 6th grade teacher, and Dean remembers, “She ran an incredible classroom that combined academic learning, life skills, and just plain fun. I recall looking forward to school every day and being amazed at how much I learned. One unique exercise was a ‘pretend’ social gathering in which Mrs. Besch coached us on how to mingle and make ‘small talk.’ This was not part of any formal curriculum but it delivered skills I’ve used almost every day in my adult life!”

AI, podcasts, productivity

“I work on Artificial Intelligence, and I worry about the ability of intelligent machines to replace humans in many important jobs. To help address this concern, I serve on a special task force at Microsoft that looks for ways to ensure that Artificial Intelligence is designed and deployed in ways that augment humans and make them more productive rather than replace them. In addition, I am a slow reader and for many years feared this would prevent me from consuming the large volume of industry news and information that is necessary to stay current in the technology field. Thankfully, industry podcasts have enabled me to acquire virtually all of the needed information audibly. I am even able to listen to my podcasts at double the normal playback speed so I get twice the amount of information in a given listening session.”

A life-long learner, innovator, and family man living in Kirkland, Washington, Dean adds, “My church supports a homeless shelter for families and I volunteer at the facility whenever possible. My participation has slowed down a bit, though, with the birth this year of our second son! I hope to re-engage with the shelter in the near future.”

Inspiration

His father, Richard Carignan, deeply influenced his entire perspective on life, education, and work. “A former educator and instructional leader in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, he taught me many effective learning techniques and—more important—demonstrated a true personal love of learning which I have sought to emulate in my life and career,” said Dean. “I’m indebted to him.”

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