

## Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Working from Home during COVID-19) – Part 3

June 5, 2020 – July 17, 2020 (6 weeks)



This is a continuation of Dr. Bhavani's Diary series. Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Working from Home using COVID-19) – Part 1 was published on April 24, 2020 after working from home for six weeks. During the first part it was about getting used to working from home, establishing a routine/schedule, giving a keynote address at CyberW, starting the second half of the Spring semester and more importantly organizing the 2000-person virtual IEEE ICDE 2020 and also the WiDS Dallas Event. In the second part of Dr. Bhavani's diary I discussed my work during the next six weeks (April 25 to June 6) about the keynote talks, starting the YouTube videos and also completing the Spring Semester and starting the Summer Semester. The current segment is Dr. Bhavani's diary Part 3 where I discuss mainly the continuation of my work.

Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 2 states that while we have more or less gotten used to the daily routine of working from home, the number of COVID cases reached close to two million and around 110,000 deaths in the US. Well during the last six weeks we now have over four million cases and around 140,000 deaths. Furthermore, the number of cases is exploding in the sun belt, especially in Florida, Texas and California while it has improved (at least for now) in New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts. We have no idea what is going to happen and how long we have to live like this. At times I have gotten quite frustrated and then think about two years from now (not two months from now) and get motivated. That is, we have to do the best we can during this time so that as soon as things improve, we can forge ahead with our life and career. We are still hoping and praying for a vaccine soon but again we have no idea when we will get the vaccine.

So back to the past six weeks, what have I been doing during this time? I started my summer classes May 29 and it is still continuing. The last day will be July 31 and then the exams. My class is on "Analyzing and Securing Social Media" and I am really enjoying teaching this course. I have taught it since 2013 January and it is a very popular course. But because we are teaching virtually, I am taking extra time to prepare the lectures and students seem to enjoy the class. I also introduced new material in Social Media Governance and Fake News Detection.

I was invited to give many keynote and featured talks between August and December and so I have been writing papers and making videos for the conferences including ACM CODASPY (banquet address), IEEE Cloud (invited address) and keynote addresses at IEEE CSCloud, IEEE IRI, IEEE ICKG, ACM/IEEE BDCAT and Smartblock 2020. I still have to write papers and prepare video presentations for some conferences between October – December. So, this should keep me quite busy. I really enjoy making the videos and have taped I believe around six during this period. In addition to the videos of the keynote talks, I have also taped some motivational talks I gave late last year such as the one for Women in Communications Engineering and another for Women in Services Computing. I will be continuing to make videos as I enjoy it so much. Teaching my class and making the video also forces me to wear my professional clothes around one or two days a week and I believe that is important for one's sanity. Otherwise I will be in my

home clothes every day and that is not good for the mind. In addition, I had written in one of my motivational articles that I was planning not to color my hair during COVID to see how much it has grayed. But it became impossible to manage with the L'Oréal hair color spray as I had to use so much one time that it gave me a headache. So, I had to relent and colored my hair in June. So, I will never know the true state of the color of my hair. By the way here is the link to my YouTube channel (which I also mentioned in my previous segment).

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdkdO2DUNqpgGLmeJjiXujA?>

I also started writing our book on Secure Data Science and almost finished with Part II of the book. But I have many more parts to finish and hope to complete them by Fall. I have rough drafts of them and it's a matter of putting it altogether. Also wrote a few proposals and need to do more in the Fall. I was also quite pleased when ACM did a short feature article on me for CACM in the July 2020 issue and IEEE Computer Society did a long interview with me and will be posting it on their website in the Fall. I am looking forward to reading it. I also gave an interview to a journalist on Space systems security and will be doing a podcast in early August. I am looking forward to it. I am also thinking about starting my own video podcast and will plan for it over the next month. Lot of thought has to go into it.

June was also very special as we welcomed our new grandson in New York City. Its really hard not being able to visit him but we facetime with our son and his family almost every other day and by the time I wake up our daughter-in-law would have texted me a video-text of the family and my husband and I watch the videos late evening daily. So, I am grateful. My husband and I are in Dallas and go about our daily life and work. We also did a bit of decorating to our condo to cheer us up a bit (he has much better taste than me in decorating).

While on the whole the past six weeks have brought us joy and I have been quite productive, my studying has not gone as well – by studying I mean reading new research papers and progressing with my research. So, I have to focus on that for the next six weeks. More importantly, I have been very frustrated with my diet. I have been overeating and cannot afford to put on weight. I did quite well during the second set of six weeks staying at home but not good during the third set. So, eating right will be my major focus as that is also key to my research. If I feel good about myself, then I will be happy and if I am happy, my work goes very well. So, I am planning to cook lentils and spinach mixed together every day for me. Unfortunately I am not good at cooking (or for that matter sewing or painting, I did well in music and took piano lessons for 10 yrs. and did well in exams held by Trinity College and Royal Academy of Music London, mainly because that was an important attribute for a woman in addition to having a solid college STEM degree for good marriage prospects). My husband and I are also planning to take frequent walks. And, I need to get back to my meditation and working out at home. So, the main focus for the next six weeks is health and also research in addition to everything else I am doing.

Hope that we are all safe and well and will post Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 4 on August 28. Let's hope we have some encouraging news about the pandemic/vaccine at that time.