

Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Working from Home during COVID-19) – Part 6

October 9, 2020 – November 20, 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 24 to June 5) about the keynote talks, starting the YouTube videos and also completing the Spring Semester and starting the Summer Semester. The third segment of Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 3 discussed mainly the continuation of my work and some details of my summer class and taking care of health. Part 4 discussed about the end of the summer session, start of the Fall classes and some other activities. This is the fifth segment of Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Part 5). Part 6 will discuss the key events between October 9 and November 20, 2020. This is the last entry for this year. My next entry will be on January 1, 2021 and from then onwards I will be posting entries on April 1, July 1 and October 1, 2021. I am hoping that by October 1, 2021 we will all be vaccinated and getting ready for in-person work and meetings.

Today is November 20, 2020 and we have been staying home for over eight months and looks like we will continue to work from home for most of next year. COVID-19 infections and deaths have sky rocketed and expect to go even higher over the next few weeks. The only light at the end of the tunnel is that we will be getting some effective vaccines soon. Even though we are getting used to working from home, it is still frustrating as we cannot see our loved ones. Still we need to have hope and do the best we can during these tough times.

Work is continuing to go well and I am very pleased with the way my new course on Big Data Security and Privacy has progressed. Today was the last day of class and the students have their programming project and exam #2 to work on during the next two weeks. I am planning to turn in the grades on Friday December 11.

I am continuing to give keynote presentations and participating in panels. In particular I have given three keynote presentations in late October and early November. They are: IEEE Intelligent Data Science Technologies and Applications (IDSTA), Smartblock 2020, and then today at SDPS Workshop in Smart Cities. I was also honored to give the opening address at the iMentor Workshop at ACM CCS conference. I talked about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Here are the links to my talks.

[**Intelligent Data Science Technologies and Applications \(IDSTA\), 2020 Keynote Address, October 2020 - YouTube**](#)

[**Bhavani SmartBlock 2020 Keynote Address - YouTube**](#)

[**Featured address at SDPS Conference Workshop on Smart Systems, 2020 - YouTube**](#)

[**Bhavani ACM CCS iMentor 2020 - YouTube**](#)

I have also received a lot of prominence with D Magazine – the flagship magazine that serves the DFW area consisting of around 7.6M people (the fourth largest metroplex in the US). I was informed by the D CEO of the D Magazine that I am one of 46 finalists for innovation awards. The category I am in is in cyber security and I am one of four finalists in this category. The results will be announced in January 2021. There was also a feature article about me in D CEO's Roots section about my roots. Finally, I am so honored to have been selected as one of 500 most influential business leaders in North Texas for 2021. These announcements came in November 2020. So, it ends a year of a lot of accolades – feature articles by both ACM and IEEE Computer Society in July 2020 and September 2020, a podcast on STEM in September 2020 and now the recognition in DFW, and many more. Here are the links to the D Magazine articles.

<https://www.dmagazine.com/business-economy/2020/12/d-ceo-releases-the-2021-edition-of-the-dallas-500/>

[My Roots: Bhavani Thuraingham - D Magazine](#)

<https://www.dmagazine.com/business-economy/2020/11/now-available-d-ceos-november-2020-digital-edition/>

<https://www.dmagazine.com/business-economy/2020/10/finalists-announced-the-innovation-awards-2021/>

What I am most pleased about is my focus on health. I am eating a lot of vegetables and fish around 3 times a week and chicken around twice a week. Completely cut out sugar and carbs in my diet except for daily all bran and switched to skim milk. The end result not only have I lost a little weight but more importantly I feel my health is improving (touch wood). A few days a week when the weather is sunny, I drive to the university and take a long walk. Only aspect I meditated to improve is workout on my exercise bike daily. I do meditate almost daily and that helps me to focus. I want to be there for my grandchildren.

I am looking forward to the Thanksgiving break – just my husband and me in Dallas. Imagine this is the second time in Dallas for Thanksgiving even though it is the 17th Thanksgiving since I moved to Dallas in October 2004. Spent nine of those in London and six in NYC. We will Facetime with our son and his family. The same plans for the Xmas break. Although I am planning to wrap up the first draft of our book on Secure Data Science during the Xmas break.

I over-committed to too many events while working from home during COVID – 17 keynote and featured addresses and 11 panels and many more. Some of them are in India and Europe and so I have to wake up very early or stay till very late to give these talks. It has interfered with my sleep a bit and so I have made a resolution not to commit to more than one event every quarter.

Hope that we are all safe and well and will post Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 7 on January 1, 2021. After that I will post every 3 months (instead of 6 weeks since we are going to be home much longer than I thought we would be back on March 13, 2020) and so the posts will be on April 1, July 1 and October 1 of 2021. Let's continue to hope we get those vaccines soon so that we can all meet at least once during 2021. As I tell my students we must never give up regardless of what happens now or in the future.