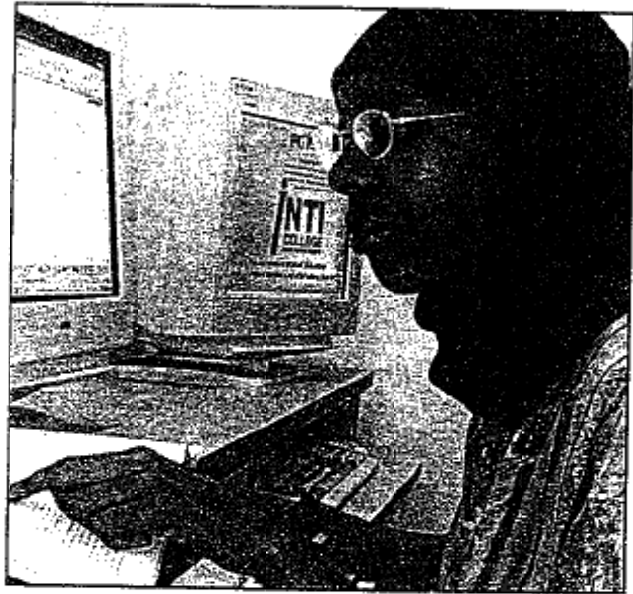


Foreign Student

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Fatima finds her calling



Fatima loves working at her computer

IT is not being someone brainy that prompted Nigerian student Fatima Abu Bakar to pursue a three-year Computer Science degree course at Inti College in Subang Jaya.

Rather, it was her fascination with computers.

"Being 24 years old, I am one of the older students in a class of more than 30 computer enthusiasts. I've always thought that Computer Science is either a very popular subject or an inevitable choice, or both.

"But during this third and final year, I began to question the reasons why I chose this particular science... final-year blues, perhaps?"

Initially, when she showed unshakable interest in computers, Fatima received numerous "warnings" from friends back home.

"They thought I had to be brainy or at least gifted in math, but I happen to be neither. In fact, I have an intense dislike for

manipulating numbers," she confesses.

For Fatima, her interest in computers grew as she learned more about the possibilities it presents and its capabilities.

"So that's how I ended up here, trying my best to learn and love my chosen field, as I take on such challenging subjects as Computer Networks and Commercial Programming Database Administration, both which are essential in this information age. As for Project Management, it leaves me with the certain feeling that management and luck are closely related!"

Of all the subjects she has taken, the one that captured Fatima's vivid imagination the most was Artificial Intelligence.

"The thought of machines that think and act like humans is exciting, even frightening, which is why my career of choice would definitely have to involve AI."

However, for Fatima, it was not choosing Computer Science as her

course that required adjustment, it was her first taste of Malaysian sweet and sour *makan*.

"My introduction to Inti College in Subang Jaya made me revise my notions of what a campus should look like."

Her expectation of the campus was one that would be sprawled over a large area with lots of open spaces, and that the grounds of academia would be sprinkled with hallowed halls of learning with massive pillars and wide portals.

"Imagine my surprise when what I was greeted with was a small city campus with the college departments interspersed with the neighbourhood shops and eating places of every variety," she said.

"But that has turned out to be a pleasant surprise after all, and besides, I found the students, lecturers and administrative staff to be all very friendly to this lonely foreigner, so that fitting in happened fast and easily. I love the close-knit feeling of the campus.