

A portrait of Lilly Chalupowski, a woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a red sleeveless top, smiling. She is standing in front of a window with a view of a building.

Meet Lilly Chalupowski!

Malware Research Lead,
GoSecure

Born and raised in Nova Scotia, Lilly Chalupowski graduated from Acadia University with a degree in Arts and Music. After years of struggling to find employment, Lilly put down the guitar and picked up a computer and taught herself valuable skills such as coding and programming. Through her self-teaching, Lilly rose up in the tech sector in Nova Scotia and is currently a Malware Research Lead at GoSecure.

When I was in high school, I was very interested in computers. I would play pranks on my classmates with library computers by running scripts that would cause their mouse and keyboard to do silly things. I still remember the old black and white screen Mac computers from my childhood - you had to press the reset button all the time, and everyone had a paperclip with them to reset the darn thing.

Growing up, I didn't know many people who worked in tech – but I guess video games helped get me into the IT field. But before I started my career in tech, I was looking around for other

opportunities - I went to university for computer science, but ended up dropping out after a year because I thought the field wasn't for me. Then, I enrolled in a music program. After graduating, I struggled to find the right job for 7-8 years and had a ton of student debt, so I decided to pick up computers again and try a career in tech .

I quickly realized that I enjoyed teaching myself about computers, as my university experience didn't provide time to practice what we'd learned. By doing it myself, I was able to learn everything I wanted at my own pace and felt like a self-made person. I need something to exercise my mind or I get bored, so if you're staying up at night trying to work out why something works or how it works – perhaps this industry might be right for you.

With technology, the ability to recognize and understand patterns is huge, as it can help you process an entangled code. As I mentioned earlier, I have a bachelor's degree in Arts and Music from Acadia, and I still play the guitar and a tiny bit of piano. Patterns in music, like technology are extremely important. I took four years of music theory and I was at the top of my class. If you play

guitar or piano you'll know the distances of your fingers, majors, minors, etc. – they are all patterns.

Step by step, I was trying to blaze my own path in the tech sector and get into contractual work. I was putting up videos and examples of my code on LinkedIn, with hopes that someone would see the value I could bring to a company. Finally, Travis Barlow, Vice President at GoSecure, saw what I was capable of and hired me. I started as an analyst and worked my way up the ladder at GoSecure.

Here at GoSecure, I get to look at the software that is made with malicious intent and tear it apart to see what makes it work, and find ways to stop it. I enjoy looking at malicious software, as you get to see how creative these bad guys can get. Another aspect of my job that I love is that the company gives us an opportunity to travel a lot, but, perhaps what I love the most about working at GoSecure is the wonderful people here.

"In the growing tech sector, we need people all the time and it doesn't matter who you are as long as you do a good job."

Currently, I am building a malware analysis department here at GoSecure, and that involves writing down procedures for taking apart different types of malicious programs and files. On top of that, I am using our current products to make detections and find solutions in order to attack those malicious behaviors, and find ways to automate it.

At GoSecure, we have a unique take on security, as there is a lot of human aspect to it. A lot of companies will just take care of machines and other technologies, but we actually take a lot of the workload off the company's IT departments and allow them to use our expertise to gain high-value alerts that they can act on.

If this is what you want to do, don't be afraid to fail while working on it. Writing and messing around with computer code isn't like operating on someone's brain – if you break something, you can reimage or recompile the program and don't have to worry about the consequences. Keep doing that, take advantage of the Internet and use that to help improve yourself and your skills.

There is a big misconception about women in tech. When I went into computer science, it was all men and I felt out of place. At GoSecure, we are actively hiring women who have good skills. In the growing tech sector, we need people all the time and it doesn't matter who you are as long as you do a good job.

About GoSecure

GoSecure Inc. was founded in 2002, and then merged with CounterTack Inc. in 2018. GoSecure is driving to become the global leader in Advanced Managed Detection & Response (MDR). The company combines different endpoint and network level threat hunting with services and technology that provide highly effective and preventative defense across an organization's entire attack surface. GoSecure offers medical, dental and vision benefits, employer retirement program, and a stimulating work environment with a culture of big ideas and winning.