

SPENCER COTTRELL

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Economics B.S. candidate at San José State University building data-driven decision tools at the intersection of finance, analytics, and applied AI. Designed cloud cost-optimization, tariff-classification, and macroeconomic forecasting systems using Python, SQL, and generative AI (IBM watsonx.ai) to turn large datasets into auditable business recommendations. Proficient in Excel, Python, R, and SQL with hands-on experience in high-volume, cross-functional operations.

EDUCATION

San José State University, San Jose, CA

Expected May 2028

Bachelor of Science in Economics

Relevant Coursework: Financial Economics, Econometrics, Statistics, Industrial Organization, Macroeconomic Analysis, Microeconomic Analysis

RELEVANT PROJECTS

Tariff Exposure Agent

2026 - Present

- Built a Python/LangGraph decision-support tool that classifies imports against ~4,000 pages of U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule rules and calculates duties, fees, effective tariff rates, and landed cost with source citations for each output.
- Separated AI-based classification from deterministic financial calculations using Python Decimal and 44 unit tests, improving auditability and reducing calculation risk in tariff and landed-cost analysis.
- Modeled tariff pass-through, margin absorption, and re-sourcing scenarios to compare profitability and sourcing decisions under changing trade policy.

CostProof

2026 - Present

- Built a three-layer (bronze/silver/gold) SQL pipeline that ingests FOCUS 1.2 cloud billing data, enforces schema conformance, and computes unit-economics metrics to support cost-allocation and budgeting decisions.
- Trained a Python ML classifier to flag wasteful cloud spend (0.644 ROC-AUC, 100% precision in the top 10 ranked alerts) and integrated IBM watsonx.ai (Granite) to turn ranked alerts into structured cost-optimization narratives with dollar impact and recommended actions.

EXPERIENCE

Technical Beta Tester, Sakana Fugu | Sakana AI

May 2026 - Jun 2026

- Tested Fugu through terminal and OpenAI-compatible API workflows on coding, research, and multi-step analysis; compared outputs for quality, consistency, reproducibility, and recovery when tasks failed.
- Built structured test cases around task decomposition, tool use, and model coordination to identify where longer agentic workflows worked, stalled, or produced unreliable results.
- Wrote structured feedback on edge cases, usability gaps, and recurring failure patterns, translating technical test results into actionable product requirements and recommendations for the Sakana AI team.

Brand Ambassador, Nintendo of America | San Francisco, CA

2025

- Worked in a flagship launch environment serving 5,000+ customers per day; exceeded daily KPI targets by matching customer needs to product features, resolving purchase objections, and supporting high-volume sales.
- Partnered with marketing and retail operations teams on regional activations and analyzed recurring customer feedback data to improve product positioning, promotional priorities, and sales strategy.

Warehouse & Logistics Associate, Best Buy | San Francisco Bay Area, CA

2024 - 2025

- Managed inventory across 500+ SKUs within a high-volume supply chain and logistics operation, coordinating receiving, staging, and sales-floor availability during peak demand while maintaining operational accuracy.
- Standardized receiving and staging workflows to reduce processing errors and improve inventory flow between warehouse and sales-floor teams.

LEADERSHIP & ACTIVITIES

Spartan Analytics Club - Member, San José State University | AI/ML Club - Member, San José State University

SKILLS

Finance & Analytics: Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A), financial modeling, business modeling, cost optimization, unit economics, operating expense analysis, commercial finance, accounting fundamentals, profitability analysis, forecasting, variance analysis, scenario analysis, sensitivity analysis, financial reporting

Technical: Microsoft Excel (PivotTables, XLOOKUP, Power Query), Python (pandas, NumPy), SQL, R, Microsoft PowerPoint, machine learning, LangGraph, TensorFlow, IBM watsonx.ai, Granite, Git/GitHub, FRED API, AI-assisted workflow automation

Business: KPI analysis, process improvement, requirements gathering, business transformation, stakeholder communication, cross-functional collaboration, presentation development, attention to detail, prioritization

Certifications: Professional RAG Certification - IBM; Machine Learning Specialization - DeepLearning.AI / Andrew Ng;

Building with the Claude API, MCP Advanced Topics, Claude 101 - Anthropic