

Girls & Science **2017**

Meet Our Role Models

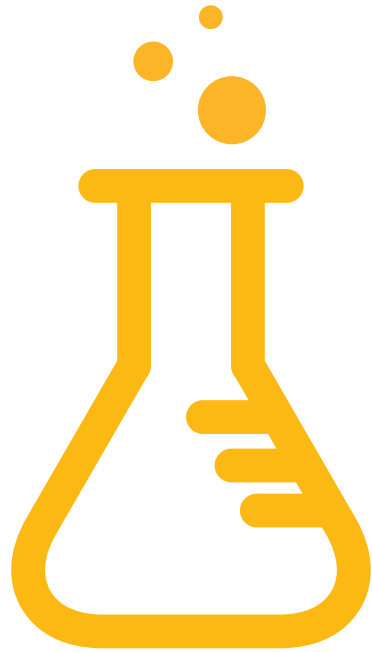


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part of



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Girls & Science **2017**

Meet Our Role Models

MWH, now part of Stantec, is proud to sponsor the third annual Girls & Science event. We believe inspiring young people in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields is essential, not only for our company's growth, but the communities in which our employees live.

We have dedicated ourselves to encouraging women of all ages to be an active part of the engineering workforce. We welcome you to meet our local role models who are paving the way for future generations of STEM leaders.



Girls & Science **2017**



Amanda Adams

Career Discipline:

Geological Engineering

Alma Mater:

Colorado School of Mines

Favorite Color: Broncos blue and orange!

Hometown: Westminster, CO

Why I Chose My Career:

Earth science and geology were always my favorite subjects in school. I loved going up to the mountains to find rocks and fossils. Identifying the different rock types like sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic was one of my favorite things to do. I love that I get to use geology in my job every day now!

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

My dad is an engineer also, and I never would have thought that I wanted to be an engineer too. But engineering is all about using math and science to solve problems and make the world a better place! I don't think my 5 year old self would believe that this is actually my job, but I love doing it!.

My Best Day on the Job:

Traveling to our project site in Arequipa, Peru was an amazing experience because I got to meet the project team in person and see firsthand the tailing dam that we were designing and constructing. My job has sent me around the world to Alaska, Canada, South America and India to have some amazing experiences!

My Favorite Hobbies:

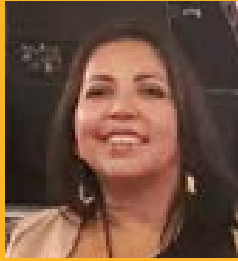
Reading a good book, cooking tasty food, snowboarding, golfing and playing at the park with my daughter.



On the job!



Me and my daughter.



Carmen Benedo Sanchez

Yo hablo español.

Career Discipline:

Civil Engineering

Education/Alma Mater:

BSc Civil Engineering, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú

Favorite Color: Burgundy

Hometown: Lima, Peru

Why I Chose My Career:

Since my childhood I have had a great interest in natural disasters (earthquakes and flooding problems we had in Peru while I was living there) and at school I was first-rate at math classes and really liked solving problems. All these together influenced my decision to choose civil engineering.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Never stop learning and always be yourself.

My Best Day on the Job:

1. One of several.... We were visiting a dam project site in the Andes of Peru for inspection. It was a very remote area so we were provided horses to ride to access the site. It was a heavy rainy day so we ended up walking next to the horses instead of riding them. We accomplished our goal and came back completely soaked and exhausted after a full day expedition.....After all, life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass....
2. A day where I have to deal with a challenging project and I come up with an innovative solution.

My Favorite Hobbies:

- I love to travel and to learn about different cultures, and languages
- I love music... the best therapy...
- I practice yoga. Gives me a sense of tranquility and serenity and enables me to focus on the most important things.
- I love to read a new good book...while enjoying my own grinded and brewed coffee...



Sampling sediments in a river, NJ.



Meeting with old friends, Lima-Peru.



At an ASCE Conference.



*Visiting a project in Peru.
(FYI...above 14,000 ft. elev.).*



Parnaz Boodagh

Career Discipline:

Civil Engineer

Education/Alma Mater:

BS University of Tabriz

MSc, PhD University of Colorado Boulder

Favorite Color: Green

Hometown: Tabriz, East Azarbaijan Iran

Why I Chose My Career:

Infrastructures (e.g. dams, bridges) are aging and many of them were built at the time with limited engineering technology. Among them embankment dams are of the most sensitive structures to environmental multi-hazard such as flooding and earthquake. Problems in the foundations and issues in design arising from poor understanding of soil behavior, make lots of losses in serviceability of structures and their lifetime leading to waste of resources. Increasing population and urban expansion in addition to need for safe and reliable infrastructures and the leading role that the geotechnical science plays in this regard motivated me to look for solutions to help people live safely.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

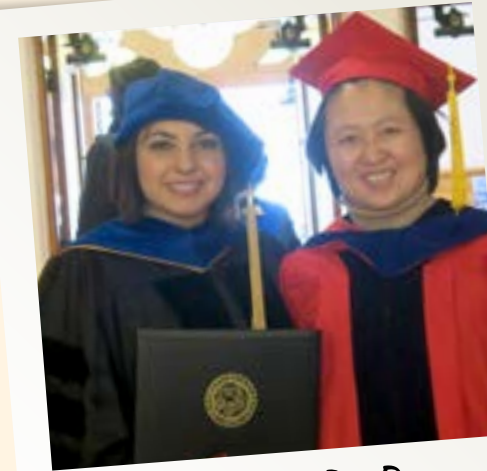
I love math and solving problems. My dad is a physician with strong math skills, who always encouraged me to pursue a career in math when seeing my passion to learn and explore math problems. Taking the path in engineering via school and work, I have had the opportunity to learn and practice math and problem solving in different areas.

My Best Day on the Job:

being helpful and delivering a task on time, seeing happy faces.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Swimming, painting.



Earning my P.h.D.



Taken at my alma mater, CU Boulder.



Panorama of Tabriz.



Daniela Castañeda

Yo hablo español.

Career Discipline:

Environmental Engineer

Alma Mater:

University of Colorado at Boulder

Favorite Color: Teal

Hometown: Cuernavaca, Mexico

Why I Chose My Career:

My passion for the environment led me to dedicate my career to help the planet.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Never stop being curious and never stop learning!

My Best Day on the Job:

Testing new technologies in a laboratory.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Being a mom, learning foreign languages, painting, and yoga!



Being a mom!



Hiding out in Venice.



Christine Cory

Career Discipline:

Structural Engineer

Alma Mater:

Northwestern University and UCLA

Favorite Color: Yellow

Hometown: Palo Alto, California

Why I Chose My Career:

I have always enjoyed building and understanding how and why something is built. I like being able to physically see the output of my efforts in the form of useful structures, it leaves my mark on the world. I also know that public infrastructure in this country is in desperate need of repair and a new approach to water consumption and treatment needs to be implemented to ensure enough water is available to us in the future. I like that I can contribute to this effort in a meaningful way that I find interesting and engaging.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Enjoy it!! You're never more free than when you are a kid. Play, run, fall, pick yourself up and learn as much as you can. Don't be afraid to love school and subjects/activities your friends might not like. Own your individuality! ☺ And girls, don't be afraid to be "bossy"!

My Best Day on the Job:

A day that I finally understand a concept that I've been trying to learn or understand. The moment when things "click," I've always loved that.

My Favorite Hobbies:

I love to travel and explore new places and cultures, especially different architecture. When I'm home, I enjoy cooking and reading novels.



Snowboarding.



On the job!



Melanie Davis

Career Discipline:

Geotechnical Engineering, Mining

Education/Alma Mater:

B.S. in Civil Engineering, Drexel University, Pennsylvania

M.S. in Civil Engineering, Colorado State University, Colorado

Favorite Color: Forest Green

Hometown: Chambersburg, PA

Why I Chose My Career:

I enjoyed math and science when I was younger and engineering was a good fit for these skills. I chose civil engineering because it was diverse and had a lot of options for helping others. I have focused most of my career on mining projects because they have interesting challenges.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Have fun!

My Best Day on the Job:

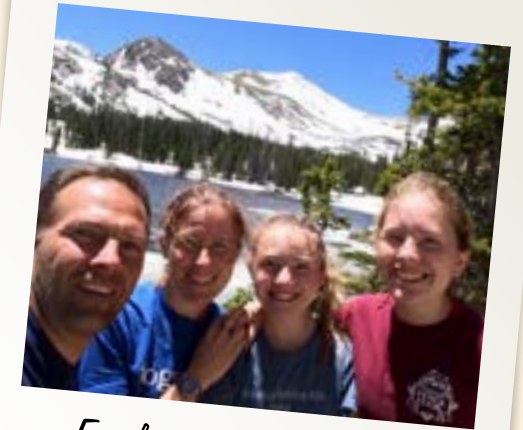
Traveling to mine sites in different countries and meeting with clients and mining staff.

My Favorite Hobbies:

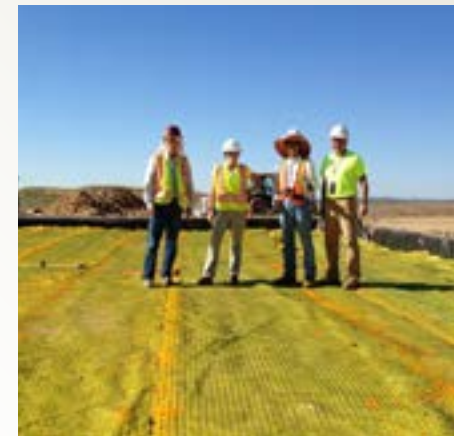
Spending time with my family, as well as running, hiking, and backpacking.



At a mine site in Canada.



Family hiking in Colorado!



At a mine site in the U.S.



Sarah Gardner

Career Discipline:

Environmental Science

Education/Alma Mater:

B.A. Geography, University of Colorado – Boulder

B.A. Environmental Studies, University of Colorado – Boulder

Favorite Color: Blue

Hometown: Littleton, CO

Why I Chose My Career:

Environmental science is a diverse career field that keeps me exploring the outdoors, and improving the environment we live in

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Try everything at least once, and keep asking questions.

My Best Day on the Job:

Hiking around and collecting environmental samples along the way.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Skiing, traveling, scuba diving and any activity with my dog.



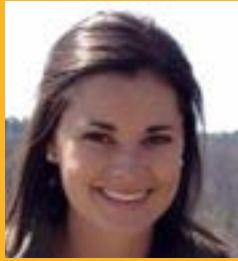
Skiing in Steamboat.



My favorite job site in New Mexico.



Camping with my dog, Marls!



Nicole Hansley

Career Discipline:

Environmental Engineering

Alma Mater:

The Ohio State University

Favorite Color: Black

Hometown: Highlands Ranch, CO

Why I Chose My Career:

I took an AP environmental science class in high school and the course material struck a chord with me. We learned about the threats of exponential population growth, ageing infrastructure, and depleting resources and I remember being filled with anxiety over how our planet would possibly sustain us in the future. I also really enjoyed math and knew I would need a challenging job to keep me interested. I combined my new found passion for sustainability with knack for the sciences and applied to major in environmental engineering.

As I moved through my college coursework, I realized that beyond my interest in sustainability, I really had a heart for water. I believe access to clean drinking water is a human right and in countries that are outgrowing their resources, proper sanitation is the first thing to go.

I have always been attracted to the idea of helping people by being a doctor... but I hate blood. As an environmental engineer I get to play a role in arguably the greatest effort to protect public health without ever having to step foot in a hospital.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Being a nerd gets cooler and cooler as you grow up. There is a good chance you will get made fun of for being a nerd all the way through college but your accusers are more than likely just envious. And as soon as you enter the workforce, the game changes. People respect and look up those who work hard, listen well, and are always seeking to expand their knowledge.

My Best Day on the Job:

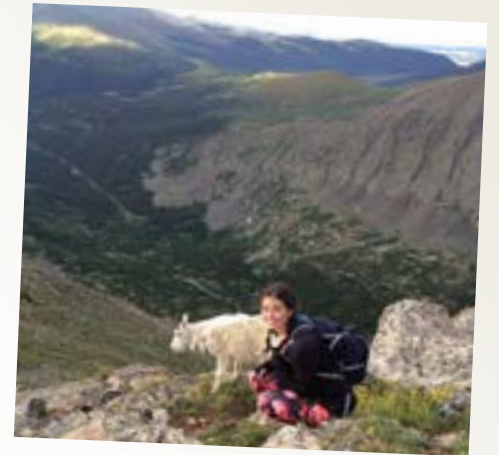
I spent an entire week driving over 1,000 miles visiting four different projects along the Ohio River. I was able to visit a part of the country I would never have seen otherwise.

My Favorite Hobbies:

I love to hike and run and get outside for any kind of physical activity!



Working.



Hiking.



Christin Kapatayes

Career Discipline:

Civil Engineer

Education/Alma Mater:

BS in Civil Engineering, University of Colorado at Boulder

Favorite Color: Green

Hometown: Broomfield, Colorado

Why I Chose My Career:

I have always been fascinated with our ability as humans to build the world around us and make a positive impact on humankind through sustainable practices. As a child, I always wanted to be an archeologist and have the opportunity to study ancient civilizations and the structural complexities of the cities they built. But as I grew older, I realized I wanted to be part of the force building and bettering our world today! I turned to Civil Engineering during my first year of college. Through the inspiration of one of my professors, I realized that my passion was working in a water related field and made my focus water management and the design of water related infrastructure.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Make your dream life and career the ultimate goal and take the initiative to pursue it! There isn't one way or a right way to make it happen!

My Best Day on the Job:

I spent the past two summers working up on a mine clean up in the Cascade Mountains of Washington state. I grew and learned so much as an engineer by being on the front lines of a construction project, while also having the opportunity to spend it in a beautiful part of the country!

My Favorite Hobbies:

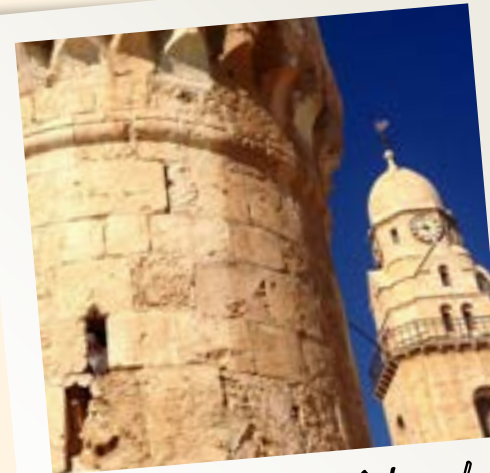
Exploring different parts of the world, photography, learning new languages, hiking, and yoga.



Mine restoration near Lake Chelan, WA.



Vacation in Kyoto, Japan.



Wandering the streets of Jerusalem!



Hiking in Boulder.



Nicole Lang

Career Discipline:

Communications, Hydropower & Dams

Education/Alma Mater:

BA in Political Science and PR/Advertising, Loyola University of Chicago
MA in Global Communications, American University of Paris

Favorite Color: Blue

Hometown: Monticello, MN

Why I Chose My Career:

I love taking complex ideas and distilling them into easy to understand messages for the public. Every day I get to talk to people about the importance of renewable energy – I am proud of that.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Know what you like and pursue that, your career path does not need to be linear. All the side adventures along the way make for great stories.

My Best Day on the Job:

I spent an entire week driving over 1,000 miles visiting four different projects along the Ohio River. I was able to visit a part of the country I would never have seen otherwise.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Hosting dinner parties, reading, attending concerts and planning my next vacation!



Visiting my old stomping ground in Chicago!



Project site in the Andes of Peru.



Vacation in Cartagena, Colombia.



Visiting the Panama Canal.



Bethany Lucente

Career Discipline:

Geology/Hydrogeology

Alma Mater:

Colorado State University

Favorite Color: Red

Hometown: Champion, PA

Why I Chose My Career:

I wanted to be a geologist because I love the outdoors and I love science. I became an environmental consultant because I wanted to protect the water that we play in and drink, the air we breathe and I wanted to keep the natural places in their current state so that we can continue to enjoy nature and the natural world.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Stay young and have fun. Life is short and there are a lot of difficult times in your life, so enjoy the fun ones and keep those memories in the front of your brain. Find something you enjoy and that makes you happy and stick with it.

My Best Day on the Job:**My Favorite Hobbies:**

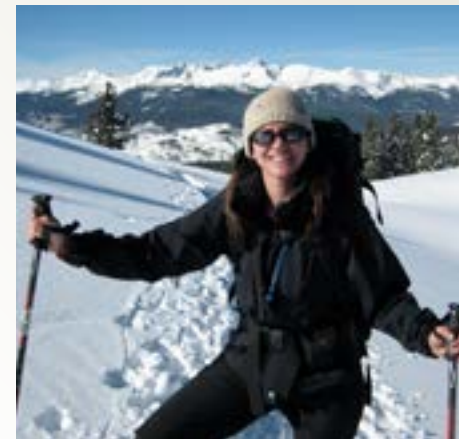
Getting outside when I can, skiing, hiking, biking, rafting. Traveling to different countries and experiencing different cultures.



Christmas.



Rafting.



Hiking.



Traveling.



Michelle Peters

Career Discipline:

Water/Wastewater Treatment

Alma Mater:

University of California, Berkeley (Undergrad)
Colorado School of Mines (Masters)

Favorite Color: Blue

Hometown: Chino Hills, CA

Why I Chose My Career:

I decided to major in civil engineering because I wanted to make a difference in the world that I could see and was concrete (figuratively, but also literally). When I was in college, I was drawn towards my classes in environmental engineering, which fit in well with my love of the outdoors. After participating in a senior design class centered around wastewater treatment, I decided to pursue a career in the field of municipal water and wastewater treatment. Looking back, when I was a child, I used to watch the instruction video for operating and maintaining the pool vacuum and filter system for my family's swimming pool on repeat - that probably sparked a lifelong interest in water treatment.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

1. Don't take turning on the tap and having clean water come out, or flushing the toilet for granted. There are lots of people and unseen infrastructure, like treatment plants, underground pipes, and pump stations, involved in making that happen. 2. Just because something seems difficult and you don't feel immediately successful, doesn't mean that you can't do it. Doing difficult things helps you learn what you can do.

My Best Day on the Job:

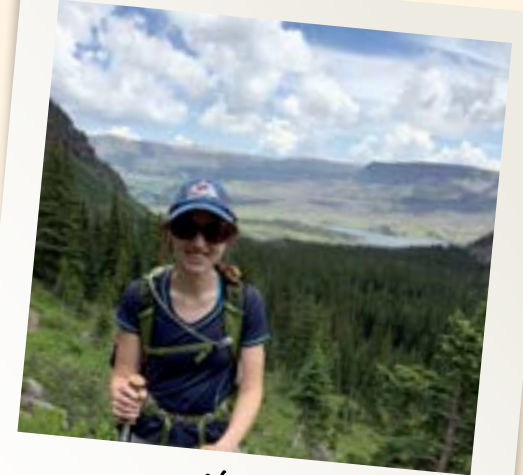
My best days on the job are when I can apply what I've learned in a book to the real world. I really enjoy when I get the opportunity to go to a water or wastewater treatment plant and figure out how to answer a question the operations staff has about how the plant is operating, or how to design new process systems so that they will work well together with the processes that are already existing.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Hiking, backpacking, trail running, snowboarding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, camping, reading, watching sports.



Backpacking.



Hiking.



Hanging out in Prague.



Carrie Randolph Loar

Career Discipline:

Engineering Geologist

Education/Alma Mater:

MS, Applied Geosciences, San Francisco State University
BS, Geology, University of California at Santa Cruz

Favorite Color: Purple

Hometown: Fresno, CA

Why I Chose My Career:

I have always loved science and the fact that while working in this field, we are continually learning new things about the world around us. Every project is different and I have to use the pieces of information I can gather to try to piece it all together. It's a very dynamic and creative at the same time.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

What my dad used to say all the time.....life is short, you need to do what makes you happy and it's always good to learn new things. You spend a lot of your life at work, so you really need to follow your heart and do what you like.

My Best Day on the Job:

My best day on the job was when I was in southeast Alaska, at a remote location where we were mapping and there were brown bears (grizzly) trying to catch salmon in the stream we were working at. Everything around me was taking my breath away, and it was amazing to me that this was my job and I wasn't on vacation!

My Favorite Hobbies:

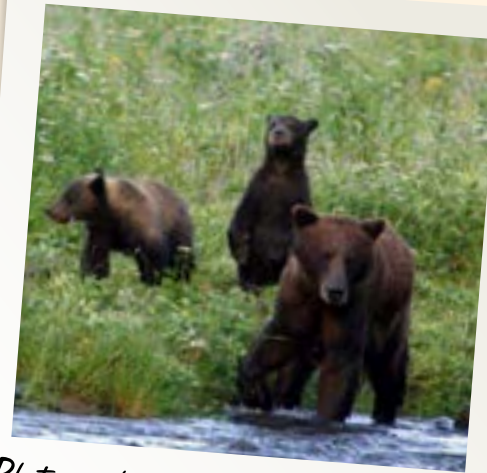
Hiking, cycling and photography.



Visiting Machu Picchu.



I love spending time outdoors.



Photographed on one of my many hikes.



Spending time outdoors with my family.



Katy Vandenberg

Career Discipline:

Mechanical Engineering

Education/Alma Mater:

BS in Mechanical Engineering from Cornell University

MS in Engineering Systems Management from Texas A&M University

Favorite Color: Green

Hometown: Arlington, TX

Why I Chose My Career:

I wanted to do something for a living that made the world a better place.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Math is still fun even when you grow up, except Non-Euclidean Geometry – don't ever take Non-Euclidean Geometry.

My Best Day on the Job:

When I saw one of my designs for a water recycling plant constructed and delivering recycled water to the community.

My Favorite Hobbies:

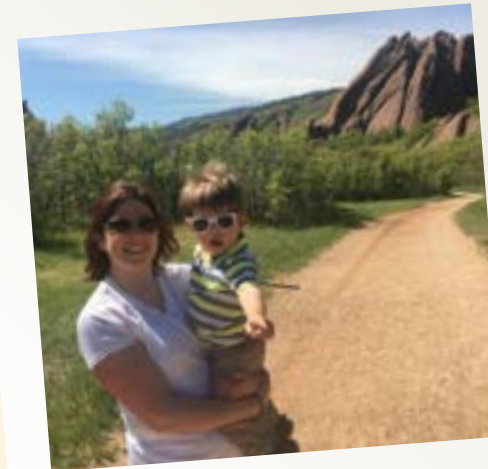
Spending time with friends and family, camping, and "adventuring" with my son (because toddlers don't hike).



Camping with women engineers.



Being a wife and mom.



Adventuring with my son.



Jennifer Van Vleet

Career Discipline:

Marketing and Communications

Alma Mater:

Gonzaga University – Undergrad; Whitworth College – Graduate

Favorite Color: Purple

Hometown: Denver, CO

Why I Chose My Career:

I enjoy connecting with people and their emotions and I feel that marketing and communications deals with this all the time. I was a big fan of the sciences in school, and although I didn't seek to work at an engineering firm to start with I am happy that I have been able to work for one and feed my passion for science.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Stay hopeful and happy always. Be true to yourself and don't let others tell you what you can and can't do ... decide for yourself.

My Best Day on the Job:

The day I was in Panama and was able to go into the old control building for the Canal Locks and see all the history of the canal. That day we walked across the locks for the new and old canal all in one day. It was really cool.

My Favorite Hobbies:

Soccer, Travel, Crafts, Skiing, Hiking



Volunteering at Girls & Science.



Visiting the Panama Canal.



Playing soccer in Peru.



Traveling to Iran.



Christine Weber

Career Discipline:

Geotechnical Engineer

Alma Mater:

Texas A&M University

Favorite Color: Green

Hometown: El Paso, TX

Why I Chose My Career:

I love science and math, and I love that every project is different with respect to the soils at the site. It means I learn new things on every project I work on. And guess what – I LOVE to learn.

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

When I was a little girl, I hated getting dirty. Now I work with soils, and in the field, there is no way not to get covered in dirt from head to toe. And I love it! I would tell my younger self, “Hang in there. Dirt’s not so bad. You will love it one day.”

My Favorite Hobbies:

I absolutely love to travel, particularly international travel. I’ve visited Israel, Spain, Italy, France, Greece, England, Scotland, Germany, Denmark, New Zealand, and Turkey, and I can’t wait for my next vacation. In my everyday downtime, I read, crochet, and I am learning to play the guitar. In the summers, I go for hikes, long walks along the river, and camping. I enjoy skiing in the winters.



Project site.



Hiking fun!



Olivia Williams

Career Discipline:

Environmental Science, Environmental Management Systems (EMS)

Education/Alma Mater:

Master of Science, Geosciences – Mississippi State University, MS
Bachelor of Arts, Social Science – Chapman University, CA

Favorite Color: Sage Green

Hometown: Troy, OH

Why I Chose My Career:

: Even as a child, I viewed the world as a whole, seeing things from a “planet view”. The books I read were based in science and as I grew up, helping the world with environmental and social issues became key areas of interest. As a young adult, I was lucky enough to land an internship where I was exposed to various computer systems and able to create a dual career path where I began implementing software applications to support all aspects of environmental data management and compliance.

I think when you can honestly say you love your job, you know you’ve made the right career decisions. I love both the science and the technical aspects of what I do--- regulations and software are continuously changing and working with people who care about clean water, clean air and sustainability is incredibly rewarding. We are all caretakers for our planet!

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

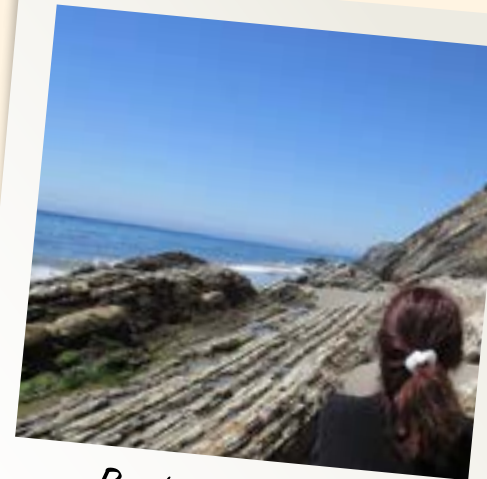
Probably to enjoy things more, be less serious! I was an avid reader at a very young age and I actually worried about world events often. There’s no harm in having---and being---a bit more fun along the way---especially during childhood. In fact, it’s something I’ve encouraged in both of my sons. Enjoy being a child!

My Best Day on the Job:

I’ve had many cool, awesome days, in different places and in different aspects, but the most MEMORABLE “best day” would be the time spent in Thule, Greenland in support of air emissions data. Greenland is BEAUTIFUL.

My Favorite Hobbies:

READING, traveling (Antarctica would be very cool!), knitting (a new skill!), baking (cupcakes!) and of course, spending time with family and pets! I wish I had more time for hiking and rock hunting!



Beaches of California.



More adventures!



Traveling!



Visiting Germany.



Samantha Willmann

Career Discipline:

Geotechnical Engineering

Education/Alma Mater:

M.S. Civil – Geotechnical Engineering, Colorado School of Mines

B.S. Civil and Environmental Engineering, Trine University

Favorite Color: Orange

Hometown: Anderson, IN

Why I Chose My Career:

It amazes me how so many steps within my life have ultimately guided me to the career I currently have. I learned I loved hands-on work through my junior high woodworking class. As a more practical person and one that loved my math and science classes in high school, I started researching engineering. Through a girls in engineering summer camp, I learned how interested I was in civil engineering. During my undergraduate courses, I learned I was most enthusiastic about my geotechnical engineering courses. After working at my first entry level engineering job, I knew I was meant to be a geotechnical engineer and moved to Colorado to obtain a graduate degree focusing on geotechnical engineering. As a geotechnical engineer, I am able to support the development of our world's infrastructure and protection of its public. I also get the chance to explore the outdoors as part of my job, which is awesome!

What I Would Tell My 5-year-old Self:

Don't be afraid to try new things, you never know what you will love doing.

My Best Day on the Job:

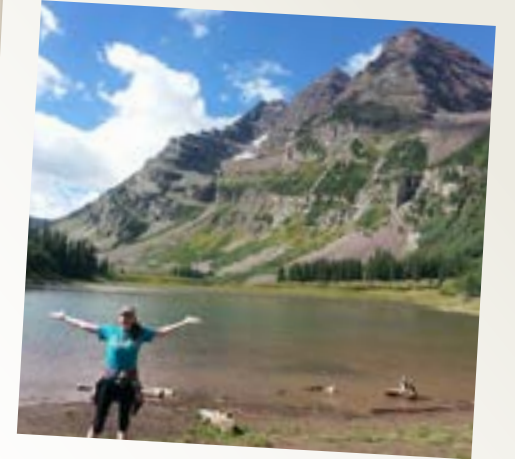
I am thankful for my job and love what I get to do every day. The best days are when I get to escape the office for a site visit. I get to be outdoors while seeing the project site first hand to aid in my office responsibilities.

My Favorite Hobbies:

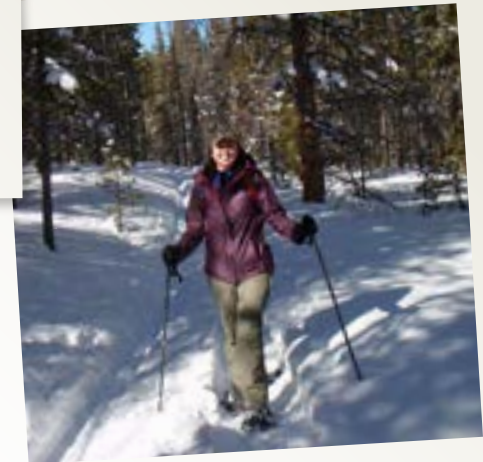
I love the outdoors and spending time with those I love! You can often find me hiking, cooking for others, on the tennis court, or playing my clarinet.



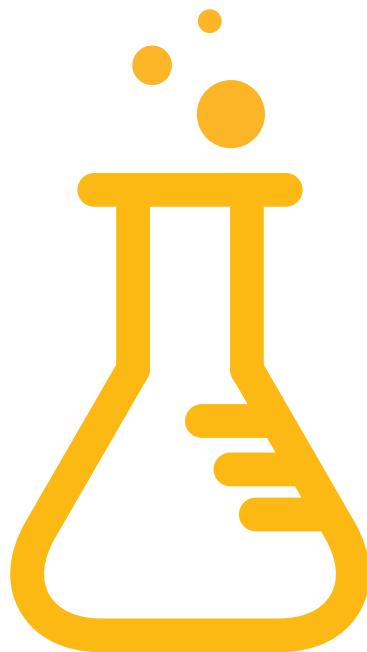
Family!



Maroon Bells.



Snow day.



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