

Cornell Engineering

My name is Nicolette and I am a Cornell Civil Engineer. For the longest time I wanted to study architecture. But when I was in 11th grade in high school I took an aptitude test and civil engineering was one of the things that popped up so I looked into it. I was like this is like architecture but with math, this is perfect.

I've definitely always been interested in the construction industry though. I interned in site engineering with Tetra Tech architects and engineers. Site engineering is just civil engineering everything outside of the building. So like grading, utilities, doing like the parking lots, storm water. I think my favorite part was making the demolition plans. Well you have to tell the contractor what it is that they're removing and what parts of the site they need to protect. So you have to put that together in the construction documents in a way that makes it like explicitly clear exactly what they're responsible for.

I'm also involved with the Student Assembly infrastructure fund committee, which allocates up to \$100,000 to student propose campus based infrastructure projects. We solicit project applications from students around campus and then we review them and work with the Cornell administration to like see how viable all the projects are and decide which ones to fund and then work with the administration to implement the project.

So in the past we've allocated funding, to like more outlets and Duffield lighting on the slope. We've contributed funds to Schwartz centers Plaza renovation. I'm definitely most proud of putting lighting on the slope. Because when I was living on West Campus it was so hazardous to walk down at night because you couldn't see where the path ended in the grass began. Yeah, so I'm really happy that we managed to put through the funding for the project. Because we did meet some resistance like people concerned about light pollution. And then it's surprisingly expensive. So we managed to convince the administration to fund it in part.

It definitely gave me a lot of insight into where the funding for projects comes from and then just some of like the bureaucratic processes that have to occur for these projects to move forward. Looking back I wish my seventeen year old self would have known that even though Cornell is very large and can seem intimidating, but it's large enough that you can really find a group of people that you click with and like organizations that you're interested in.