

STEM SPOTLIGHT

David Sutton

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Q: How did you select your college major & what was the biggest influence in your selection of major/career?

A: I have always had a fascination with buildings and roadways. As a child, I can recall building small cities with legos and

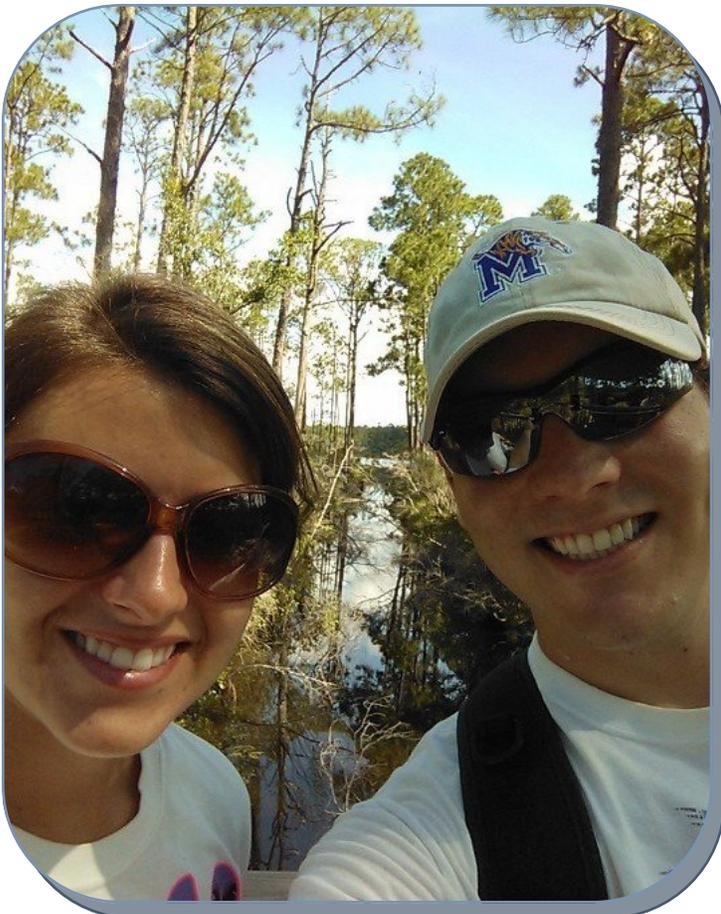
dreaming of being an architect or an engineer.

Ultimately my decision to become a civil engineer came from a trip to Purdue University to visit my

brother, where I had the opportunity to talk to a few of his friends who were engineering students. I told them about my interests, and they informed me that civil engineering would be something worth considering. After graduating high school, I enrolled and graduated from University of Memphis with a Civil Engineering degree and have not looked back.

Q: If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college, what would it be?

A: I would have focused on taking advanced math and programming courses. Math is one of those subjects where having more will only help later in life, and programming is a skill that every engineer should have in his or her toolbox. The ability to recognize a repetitive task and be able to write a simple program to execute it can save an engineer countless hours.



David and his wife, Jessica, visiting a State Park

Q: What is your favorite aspect of your job?

A: The fact that every day brings its own unique challenges.

Q: How do you make a positive impact on society/our community?

A: As a Civil Engineer, the number one priority you have is the public's safety. Therefore, every design we make is with the public's safety in mind.

Q: What's the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your professional career?

A: The most interesting thing I have done or designed would have to be designing the drainage for New Canada Road. New Canada Road is a new roadway that goes through existing neighborhoods, which caused many drainage challenges and required unique solutions.



David preparing to play paintball

Q: What makes you get up each morning excited about your profession?

A: I get up each morning knowing that every design I make will directly affect individuals. Therefore, I make it a goal of mine to learn something new every day that directly relates to my profession and will ultimately make me a better engineer.

Q: What advice would you like to share with K-12 students who are considering your profession?

A: Do not be scared if you hear people say things like: *Don't do it! Say good-bye to your social life. Hope you're good with math!* Ask any engineer, or anyone for that matter, and these may be the first sentences out of their mouth. But if you ask an engineer what else they would do, they would still choose engineering. My advice for students interested in engineering is to become familiar with the various types of engineering and find the one that best suites you.