



Melanie Penaflor
STEM Ambassador
Civil Engineering

Q: How did you select your college major or certification program?

A: Well, I knew I really loved math and working in a group with others so I figured engineering would be a good place to start! I researched all the distinct types of engineering and decided that Civil Engineering was what stood out to me the most.

Q: What was the biggest influence in your selection of major/career?

A: The biggest influence would probably be my love for math and my sister telling me I should do engineering!

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: Probably retake physics because I didn't have the best teacher, since she was chosen so last minute due to some circumstances, so that subject has always been pretty difficult for me.

Q: What is your favorite aspect of your major?

A: My favorite aspect is knowing that a difference is being made and it is making people's lives better even though they may not notice.





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

A: Well, civil engineering is literally making life better and easier for civilians!! Areas such as transportation, environmental, and structural are just some few examples. Everyone likes having fresh, clean water and being safe and secure in a building. Also having a road to drive on to get places is needed too!

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

A: It would definitely be getting to be a counselor for incoming freshman through a program called Frosh Camp at the University of Memphis. I not only get to interact with new students, but I also get to talk about my love for Civil Engineering and maybe even inspire them to choose a STEM major!

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

A: Well, the Civil Engineering department at the University of Memphis feels like family to me, so I always enjoy going to my classes and seeing all my friends and even my professors! They want you to succeed, so seeing their passion for what they teach makes me excited to learn more about what I can do with my major.

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

A: If you are even slightly interested, do your research! There are many branches that stem from Civil Engineering, so you aren't just constricted to doing one thing. If you're a senior in high school, ask what the engineering department is like if you are on a college tour. Many colleges also have tours specifically to tour their engineering department, so that's definitely a great option!