

Sloan Career Cornerstone Center

Profiles of Engineering Students



Sarah Bergagnini

**Engineering Student
California State University Northridge
Northridge, CA**

Education in Progress:

Senior, BS Electrical Engineering, BS Medical Technology, and Minor in Chemistry, California State University

Advice to Students:

"Just work hard and do not get into the mind set that something is hard. You can do anything that you really try to do."

Interview:

▶ **Q: When did you know you wanted to become an Engineer?**

▶ **Berganini:** Senior year of High School. I knew I liked computers and wanted to go into a field that worked with them. Once in college I fell into Electrical Engineering because I liked my introduction circuits class.

▶ **Q: What is your college experience like in terms of the amount of time you find you need to study each day?**

▶ **Berganini:** Each day you will probably study about 2.5 hours a day. Most of the work is lab reports.

▶ **Q: Are you incorporating any work experiences while you are a student? (include both internships/co-ops and any other jobs you may be holding while in school)**

▶ **Berganini:** While in school I worked the entire time. For the first few years I worked as an office manager and then my senior year I did the honors Co-op and worked for an engineering firm.

▶ **Q: How did you prepare for your college experience?**

▶ **Berganini:** I prepared for college by studying hard in high school and taking a lot of AP classes.

▶ Q: Did/do you have a mentor that has helped guide you thus far? (If so, describe the impact of this person on your education and career plans)

▶ Berganini: No

▶ Q: Is there a specialty area you have focused on in engineering? If so, what is it, and how did you decide on this specialty? Also, at what point in your college experience did you decide?

▶ Berganini: My specialty is electrical engineering. I decided I liked electrical engineering after taking my first circuit's course after my freshman year.

▶ Q: Is it hard to balance your engineering studies with other college activities (entertainment, travel, having fun)?

▶ Berganini: Engineering is a very intensive major and there are times that I do not have time to go out with friends. However, it is not all bad most of the projects are done with a group so you are not sitting by yourself missing what everyone else is doing. Also, groups like fraternities/ sororities that require a lot of your time will make it harder to get good grades in engineering.

▶ Q: Do you find yourself studying more in a team situation or alone? Do you have a preference?

▶ Berganini: Most of the time you study as a team, but there are times where you have to do things yourself.

▶ Q: What's the hardest thing you have found about your college experience working toward a degree in engineering?

▶ Berganini: The hardest thing about working on an engineering degree is taking on too many activities at one time (i.e. work, school, professional societies and personal life)

▶ Q: What's the most rewarding aspect about working toward a degree in engineering?

▶ Berganini: The most rewarding aspect is the friends you make working in a team. When you help others with their projects they will be there for you helping on yours.

▶ Q: Do you think you'll continue studying engineering, or do you think you'll switch to another area? Why?

▶ Berganini: I will continue studying engineering in graduate school.

▶ Q: Do you have any idea what sort of industry or work you'd like to do when you graduate? If so, how did you find out about this industry or field?

▶ Berganini: Not really. I would be fine with pretty much anything.

▶ Q: Do you think you'll want to pursue additional degrees after you complete the one you are working on? Why or why not?

▶ Berganini: Yes! I would work on my master's degree in electrical engineering.

▶ Q: Did you think that school will prepare you for the way the work gets done in the real world?

▶ Berganini: A little bit. In school you learn the basics and how to work with all kinds of people.

- ▶ Q: How many engineering schools did you apply to? How many accepted you?
- ▶ Berganini: For undergraduate one and accepted by one. For Graduate school two and accepted by two.

- ▶ Q: Did you have a "first choice?" Were you accepted into your "first choice?"
- ▶ Berganini: Yes and Yes

- ▶ Q: How did you decide which college/university to go to?
- ▶ Berganini: For undergraduate I only chose one place. For graduate I have not decided where to go yet. Each school has it pros and cons.

- ▶ Q: What should high school students be doing to prepare themselves to take on the work that engineering students do?
- ▶ Berganini: Study really hard and work hard in school. Try to do well in math and science classes because a good math background is essential to succeeding in engineering.