

Nicole (Aszman) Parker ('12) remembers the Steel Bridge Engineering Clinic

Nicole Parker grew up in Millstone Township, NJ. Her father worked for Colgate Palmolive as a chemist and project manager. Her mother is a homemaker. Nicole's brother is a Rowan Alum and is a Captain in the Marine Corp who flies C130.

Nicole graduated from Rowan Civil and Environmental Engineering in 2012. She had an internship while at Rowan that turned into a full-time position with South Jersey Gas. She worked there from 2012 to 2020. She started as a staff engineer in System Planning where she oversaw a hydraulic model of gas pipes used to help make decisions for field work and emergency response. By 2020 Nicole was a Strategic Project Administrator Lead, overseeing the injection of renewable natural gas into the pipe system, e.g., methane from landfills or cattle farms.



Since 2020, Nicole is Supervisor of Gas Distribution System Planning for DTE in Detroit, Michigan. There is a much bigger shift from summertime to wintertime gas consumption, compared to South Jersey. The design temperature for natural gas systems in New Jersey is ~ 2°F. It is negative 12 to negative 20°F depending on the region in Michigan!

Nicole is happily married and raising a son who is very interested in wrestling. She got to build her dream house recently.

I moved to Detroit for family reasons. I never thought I'd move out of state; I love New Jersey! It was a great move from a career standpoint. DTE is approximately ten times bigger than SJG. I live in a suburb of Detroit that is a lot like South Jersey. Small town USA. It is nice to be near Canada. Very outdoorsy. But colder!

I chose Rowan because of my scholarship, the feel of the campus, and the distance from home-- not too close or too far. I liked the small town feel of Rowan and the proximity to Philly, only ~20 miles away. I wanted a small program as well. I chose Civil & Environmental Engineering because I had a great industrial arts program in High School. We did Architectural and CAD design. I liked structures.

I was heavily involved in the Gay-Straight alliance at Rowan for 3 years. I was also a resident advisor for 3 years. I was the College of Engineering representative in the Student Government Association for one year. I enjoyed all the student clubs. There was a sense of belonging on campus. When I walked into Rowan Hall I knew the professors, I knew my classmates. We hung out together. It felt like a community. I was not a number in class.

I really enjoyed the student Steel Bridge¹ Engineering Clinic². I learned to weld. That was awesome. It was nice to have a project that included design, build, test, fail, redesign, rebuild. My structural analysis class with Professor Riddell was great. Professor Mehta's CEE Materials class was the hardest I ever took, but I remember it. Struggling to understand class topics is

frustrating, but often you end up learning it better. At Rowan, I learned how to think like an engineer, to solve problems, think through things, work with people, and communicate.

I loved Rowan. Rowan was great. I wouldn't have been so involved if I didn't love my time there.

Based on an Interview with Jess W. Everett on 2024-2-12

1. The American Society of Civil Engineers sponsors regional and national competitions in which college students design, fabricate, construct in front of judges, and test steel bridges that “span approximately 20 feet and to carry 2,500 pounds according to the competition rules.”

2. Engineering Clinic is a hallmark of Rowan University. Students take a Clinic class each semester, eight total. Many are interdisciplinary. All are hands-on. First-year Clinics focus on engineering's place in