



Graduate Engineering Profiles in Achievement

► Master of Civil and Environmental Engineering



Sophia Blanc

Freehold, New Jersey
BS, Rutgers University

Why are you pursuing a graduate degree in engineering?

I'm pursuing a graduate degree in engineering to better focus my undergraduate experiences towards my goal of helping society in the face of climate change.

Why did you choose Rutgers School of Engineering for graduate school?

I found a wonderful mentor at Rutgers during my undergraduate studies, and she offered to be my advisor for my graduate research. Knowing that she will continue to support me and help me grow gave me confidence in my abilities to succeed here. Rutgers also gave me the opportunity to participate in an interdisciplinary fellowship program with other engineers, as well as climate scientists, social scientists, and policy makers to work on issues of Coastal Climate Risk and Resiliency (C2R2) in New Jersey. This opportunity connects me with professionals doing the work I wish to do, and so it really felt like the opportunity of a lifetime.

Is there a professor who has made an impact on your studies?

Dr. Nicole Fahrenfeld has been my strongest support throughout my time at Rutgers. She encourages me to stretch beyond my comfort zone, and teaches me how to be a better engineer for science and society. She is a grounding resource, always ready to help me make sense of my issues, and put things into perspective.

Are you involved in any research projects?

I am actively involved in research pertaining to drinking water quality in New Jersey. More specifically, I'm trying to understand more about certain microbes that can make their homes in drinking water systems and make people sick.

Have you had an internship while at Rutgers?

I had two internships at Rutgers, both during my undergraduate studies. I interned at Langan Engineering and Environmental Services as an environmental intern and at Bechtel Corporation as a civil field engineering intern. During my graduate studies, I am part of a fellowship, which requires my full-time commitment to research.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I am interested in pursuing a life of public service. Specifically, I am considering moving towards the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, or perhaps the US EPA.

How would you describe the Rutgers Engineering community?

Rutgers Engineering is a collaborative community full of individuals that are committed to working hard and being part of society's solutions.

"New Jersey has always been a great place for higher education. No other state has as many PhDs per square mile, and our research universities have produced a staggering range of discoveries. At Rutgers alone, in recent years, these innovations include advancements in fighting cancer, an underwater drone to assist the Coast Guard, a smart city testbed for self-driving cars, and global forecasting for hurricanes."

Christopher J. Molloy, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Rutgers University-New Brunswick

- #1 Public University in New Jersey
- Ranked #22 among public universities
- Faculty members are at the top of their fields, delivering excellence in the classroom and to the greater good through research.
- A dynamic campus environment engages a richly diverse student body.
- Rutgers is currently advancing the world's first saliva test for COVID-19 and has also established a COVID-19 Center to coordinate the university's many research, public health and outreach efforts to fight the pandemic.

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