

Katelin Barone ('17) is working to make her mark on the Transportation Engineering world

Katelin Barone was born and raised in Clark, NJ. Her mother worked for Delta Airlines and then became a stay-at-home mom and childcare provider. Her dad worked as a Production Supervisor for the Phillips 66 refinery in Linden, NJ. Now they are both enjoying retirement. Katelin also has two older brothers. One is a back-end web designer, and the other worked for Apple and is now back in school pursuing a computer science degree.



Katelin completed her Rowan Civil and Environmental Engineering degree in 2017. She went right to work for the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the next six years, starting as an Engineer Trainee. She worked her way up to Principal Engineer within the Mobility Engineering Unit and led a team of three engineers. Her team worked on adaptive traffic signals on state highways. They would monitor and identify corridors that needed new signal timings to reduce congestion and implement a roll-out plan to accomplish their goal. She also worked on projects pertaining to connected and autonomous vehicles, i.e., cars that are connected to each other and the Cloud. This is part of the effort to develop self-driving cars. The last project she led during her time at the NJDOT was an adaptive signal project for Rt 70 and Rt 38 in Cherry Hill, NJ.

In 2023, Katelin left NJDOT for the private sector. She is now a Project Engineer in the Highway and Traffic group at French and Parrello Associates, in Newark, NJ. Though she enjoyed her time working in the public sector, Katelin wanted to get experience on the contractor side. Her work at the NJDOT was fairly specific in scope, and now Katelin gets to work on a wider variety of transportation-based projects, ranging from designing plans in AutoCAD to roadway construction inspection.

Katelin enjoys staying active and loves to travel, so much so that she originally wanted a job that included travel. However, once she started working, she decided she preferred to keep her travel separate from work.

I chose Rowan after I came to an open house and loved the overall vibe of the campus. I felt like it would be easy to succeed at Rowan, and that I could manage the transition from high school and living at home. Learning about all the activities available throughout the week and on the weekends gave me a good feeling. I also liked that Rowan was a mid-sized university. It was small enough that you knew everyone in your major and could get across campus in about fifteen minutes; but big enough to offer amazing accreditations and all the tools necessary to achieve your goals. Rowan turned out to be the perfect choice for me!

I was always drawn to math and science growing up, both in and out of the classroom. My dad encouraged me to pursue my interests and suggested engineering as a good fit. He has a keen interest in these subjects as well, as he essentially did chemical engineering at the refinery where he worked for over forty years. I wasn't sure if I wanted to pursue Mechanical Engineering or Civil and Environmental Engineering, so I applied to both, and got accepted into

Rowan's Civil and Environmental Engineering program. After completing my first year, I knew that CEE was the right path for me.

My favorite projects at Rowan were in the Engineering Clinics.¹ I enjoyed the sophomore year bottle rocket project and making and testing wind turbines. Then, for my junior and senior year clinics, I got to work on the concrete canoe² team, which was a blast! We presented our project to other colleges, and then competed by climbing into and rowing our canoe in a lake! The great thing about Rowan's engineering program is that you get a taste of every different aspect of civil engineering, and then you can get more specialized in your class choices your senior year. I really enjoyed my transportation class junior year, which led me to take a couple more transportation-based classes my senior year, and ultimately led me to my career choice.

I participated in Club Swimming and Club Softball at Rowan, as well as intramural volleyball. Those were a great way for me to stay active and take my mind off school for a bit, and to make friends outside of Engineering. I absolutely loved my time at Rowan, and I was fortunate to make some very close friends. Rowan led me to my career and taught me the skills which enabled me to switch careers when I felt it was appropriate. Leading up to graduation, I was very confident in my ability to succeed at my new job with the NJDOT. I used the knowledge I gained at Rowan to keep learning on my own, allowing me to take on my current job, and feel self-assured for any future opportunities that come my way!

Based on an Interview with Jess W. Everett on 2024-3-8

1. 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 society and fundamental engineering skills. Sophomore Clinics merge communication coursework with an engineering design experience and are team taught by engineering, writing arts, and rhetoric faculty. Junior and Senior Clinics have students work in teams on research or design projects, usually externally funded.

2. The American Society of Civil Engineers sponsors regional and national competitions in which college students design, make, and race canoes made of concrete.