

Jane Lacy

Engineering/Business Development Professional

I graduated from The University of Akron in 1996 with a BS in Chemical Engineering, and in 2007 with an MBA in Strategic Marketing



What led you to a career in the field of Engineering?

In high school I was really good in math and science, especially chemistry. When I decided to go in to engineering, many influences pointed towards Mechanical Engineering. However, since I loved chemistry, I chose Chemical Engineering as my field of study.

Why did you decide to serve on the IDEAs Advisory Council?

I am a product of the early IDEAs Program when it was called MRP or the Minority Retention Program. I feel that the program gave me the support that I needed as an underrepresented student. Available to me were a study hall, key class study sessions, peer support, and potential scholarship money. All I had to do was put in the work. As an Alumnus, I felt that it was important to give back to this great program. I want to offer any and all support that I can to IDEAs.

What are some of the factors that have contributed to your success?

I feel that accepting constructive feedback is one element of my success. There are those people who genuinely care about your career path so you should be open to listening to what they have to tell you and utilizing that feedback. Also learning from tough times has contributed to my success. Not everything will be perfect or easy in your professional journey. You have to understand that and learn from what is presented to you along the way.

What advice would you give to underrepresented engineering students/young professionals?

If you feel that you can do this deep down, do not allow negativity to cloud your judgement derail your plans. It may take longer than you wanted and you will have to buckle down, but keep on moving!

What advice would you give to you underrepresented students who would like to choose engineering as a major?

Engineering will be a serious challenge! Just know that your study habits will more than likely have to change from what worked for you in high school. You will have to study harder and more for those tests. The amount of work will be more. Just find what study techniques work best for you and ride it out (with tweaks to the process) throughout your time in college. Don't give up! It's a challenge but you can do it!

Anything else you would like to add about your work, interests, and family?

Work/family balance is important to me. I enjoy traveling with my husband and friends. I enjoy it so much, that I am also a Certified Travel Agent. That opens the door for me to travel more. When I am not traveling, I really enjoy fitness including weight training, Zumba, and extreme cardio. Lastly, I love dogs especially my two beagle mixes that meet me at the door each time I come home.