



Spotlight on Women in Geothermal USA

Jaclyn Urbank, North America Geothermal Power Market Lead, Jacobs

An Engineer's Journey in Geothermal

As a professional engineer her technical background has made Jaclyn Urbank a knowledgeable leader who now leads the North America geothermal team at Jacobs.

Journey to Jacobs

Growing up, Urbank had a love for chemistry and math. When deciding what major to pursue in college, her chemistry teacher encouraged her to pursue chemical engineering, which was advice she took to heart and ultimately graduated from UC San Diego with a Chemical Engineering degree.

After graduating in 2009 during the recession, Urbank initially explored opportunities in pharmaceuticals but quickly realized her true calling lay in the dynamic field of geothermal after being exposed to it by her father. She started as a junior mechanical engineer where she was mentored by industry veterans like Dr. Bill Harvey and Kevin Wallace. It was here she discovered her love for the unique challenges of geothermal projects.



"Every single project is different," Urbank explains, "The chemistry is different, the resource is different. It keeps you on your toes because you have to engineer every project creatively." Over the course of 11 years, Urbank progressed to a project engineer, obtained her Professional Engineering certification in mechanical engineering, and honed her skills in hydraulic calculations, equipment sizing, and process design. She worked on projects in Turkey and the USA, and also had the opportunity to visit Costa Rica and Italy for geothermal projects she worked on.

Two and a half years ago, Urbank was recruited by Jacobs to help establish their geothermal team in North America.

Generational Geothermal

Jaclyn Urbank's first exposure to geothermal energy began at a young age when her parents, Karl Urbank and Cyd Miller, brought her to a construction site for the West Ford Flat geothermal power plant in The Geysers when she was just six months old. Her dad, now retired, was the project engineer tasked with bringing the plant from conceptual design to fully commissioned. Her dad encouraged her to find her own path, however after Jaclyn graduated, she attended the Geothermal Rising Conference to build her network and the rest is history.

"Find your confidence. Believe in your education and don't be afraid to say you don't know something – you can always figure it out."

A New Venture

At Jacobs, Jaclyn has been given the opportunity to take on a more substantial role to create and then grow Jacobs' geothermal business in North America. The role responsibilities includes business development, marketing, sales managing a team of engineers, and project management. "I see to business development and marketing for our geothermal surface facilities group, but I also manage most of our engineering projects," she explains, describing her multifaceted role.

Throughout her career, Urbank's technical expertise and ability to build strong relationships with clients have been key to her success. She emphasizes the importance of maintaining a strong technical foundation, even in a leadership position, as it helps build trust and rapport with clients.

"I'm a big believer that the best project managers are people who have a technical background," Urbank says. "They can really earn clients' trust by being able to speak about engineering or geoscience."

Urbank has also been actively involved in Geothermal Rising (GR), serving on the board of directors, and helping to shape the future of the growing geothermal community. She emphasizes the importance of getting involved in industry organizations, as it has been a valuable learning experience for her and has helped her feel even more connected to the geothermal industry.

Overall, Urbank's journey is a testament to the wealth of opportunities available in the geothermal industry, and her passion, technical expertise, and leadership skills make her an inspiring role model for those looking to follow in her footsteps.

Work-Life Balance



Jaclyn enjoys an active lifestyle, pursuing hobbies like paddle boarding, hiking, and snowboarding. She is also a passionate dog owner, often taking her two canine companions, Sonoma and Zeus, on outdoor adventures.

Advice for Young Geothermal Professionals

Urbank's advice to all young professionals looking to enter the geothermal industry, is, "Find your confidence. Believe in your education and don't be afraid to say you don't know something – you can always figure it out."

To engineers, she recommends getting a Professional Engineering (PE) certification. Promotions and bonuses can accompany the certification, but it also helps convey your credibility.

To students, she encourages attending conferences to get familiar with the industry and the players.



Authors of Spotlight on Women in Geothermal USA

Please send your suggestions for future editions of Spotlight on Women in Geothermal directly to the authors.



Elizabeth Cambre

North America BDM New Energies
– Geothermal, Vallourec

WING USA Chapter Committee
Member

Elizabeth.Cambre@vallourec.com



Lauren Lopez

Global BDM – Energy Transition,
NOV

WING USA Chapter Committee
Member

Lauren.Lopez2@nov.com



Analiese Andersen

Geothermal BDM – MicroSeismic
Inc.

WING USA Chapter Committee
Member

AAndersen@microseismic.com