

Nicole Saulnier

Part of the Carnegie Mellon Family



Ever since her parents, both Carnegie Mellon graduates, took her to spring carnival as a little girl, Nicole Saulnier always knew our school was her first choice. Now, a graduate student in ECE, she earned her Integrated M.S./B.S. (IMB) degree last year and was one of the first winners of the ATK-Nick G. Vlahakis Scholarship (along with ECE junior Nicholas Rubi). She has been president of her sorority, a performer with the Kiltie Band and the Dancers' Symposium, as well as a member of many honor societies. Although she is always on the move, she still finds time to give department tours and reach out to children to spark an interest in engineering, through programs such as Society for Women Engineers (SWE) events and National Engineers Week. Read about her scholarship, activities, and Pittsburgh pride:

Pittsburgh **[Pride]**

I am from Pittsburgh originally, which makes this award all the more special. Mr. Vlahakis also grew up in Pittsburgh and it is nice that he wants to help other people who have lived here.

Choosing **[ECE]**

In high school I liked science and math, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to major in in college. My older cousin was an engineer and he showed me what he studied in school and it seemed like fun, so I decided to apply to the ECE Department.

Part of the **[CMU Family]**

A lot of my family has attended CMU. My parents both went to school here and used to bring me over for carnival every year. I'm not really sure why, but ever since I was little and I have been coming here, I knew it was where I would end up. It was always a comfortable place to be. There are a lot of talented faculty at the university who have been very helpful over the past four years I have spent here.

Real-World **[Work]**

Last summer I worked for my dad, who is a cost estimator. I learned a lot about construction, civil engineering, and architecture. It was definitely something new for me, but it was interesting.



(L-R) Nicole Saulnier, Nick Vlahakis (EVP and CEO of ATK), T.E. (Ed) Schlesinger (ECE Dept. Head), and Nicholas Rubi.



Nicole (back row, center) toured the Wearable Computing Lab with prospective students.

The summer before last I worked for ATK Thiokol in Promontory, Utah. It was a wonderful experience and one of the best summers of my life. CMU definitely prepared me for real-world work. The internship went smoothly and I was able to accomplish all of the tasks I was assigned.

[TA] Time

I was a TA for 18-220 [Fundamentals of Electrical Engineering], taught by Tom Sullivan.

Campus **[Leadership]**

- Served as sorority President for Kappa Alpha Theta (other positions have been VP of Administration and Risk Manager) and member of the Rho Lambda National Sorority Leadership Recognition Society.
- Performs in the Kiltie Band and the Dancers' Symposium.
- Assists with Society for Women Engineers (SWE) events.
- Belongs to the following honor societies: Eta Kappa Nu Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society (HKN), Phi Sigma Iota International Foreign Language Honor Society, and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

[Giving] Back

I really enjoy being part of such a great department with wonderful faculty. For me the most rewarding parts of the past four years were those times when I could give back to the department by giving tours or reaching out to children to spark an interest in engineering.

Nicole graduated from the ECE Integrated M.S./B.S. (IMB) degree program. Qualifying undergraduates have the opportunity to receive an M.S. Degree in ECE by taking an additional 96 units (nominally eight 12 unit courses) of course work at Carnegie Mellon. The degrees may be awarded simultaneously or sequentially depending on the progress and preference of the student. The primary purpose of the IMB degree is to provide students with superior breadth and depth of technical material, which will better prepare them for careers in industry. For more information on the IMB degree, please visit www.ece.cmu.edu.



Kyle Anderson

Studying Abroad Opens Doors to a Co-op

After ECE senior Kyle Anderson studied abroad for a year in Switzerland, learning French opened doors for him to apply for a co-op in Quebec. Find out how he is honing his ECE skills while learning a new language and culture and making friends from around the world:

[Hometown]

I'm from Everett, Washington, which is about 30 miles north of Seattle.

From **[Switzerland] to [Canada]**

I spent a year abroad last year in Lausanne, Switzerland where I was studying at the EPFL (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne). My classes were in French. It was this study abroad opportunity that opened the door for me to participate in the co-op position that I found. I work in a research group at the Université de Sherbrooke in Sherbrooke, Quebec in Canada and have gotten a lot of programming practice. The work I do is in English, but 99% of my correspondence with colleagues and my bosses is in French.

[Great Reasons] to Co-op and Intern

It has helped me a lot in determining what aspects of ECE I like and would like to continue working on. My co-op has also given me a very practical perspective of what goes on in the workplace. For anyone interested in continuing work in ECE, I think that internships should be mandatory. They allow you to see if you really like the work on a daily basis, and also get a feel of what different aspects of the work you like. This can be very valuable knowledge when you are selecting your courses, too.

[Perks] of Studying Abroad

I really enjoyed learning a new language and culture. I now have friends from all over the world and I really hope to see some of them again when I travel in the future. It was also interesting for me to see how different the teaching methods in Switzerland are from Carnegie Mellon. The school in Switzerland was as tough as CMU, but the work was distributed in a very different fashion.

I would recommend studying abroad to anyone that wants to learn a new language or experience a new culture; there is no more efficient and enjoyable way than spending a lot of time abroad. It was also a nice change of pace.

The **[Best] Part**

In Switzerland the best parts were all the friends I made around the world and learning French. In Sherbrooke, the people I work with are great and it is a very encouraging environment.

The **[Application] Process**

I knew that I wanted to do a co-op near Montreal, so I found a Canadian job search site, sent emails with my resume attached, made phone calls, and crossed my fingers. For Switzerland, I just had to fill out a form that said I wanted to study abroad and get a letter of recommendation.

Deciding **[Where] to Go**

For my co-op, I wanted to continue my French and I have some friends from Quebec that I met in Switzerland, and I thought it would also be cool to be able to spend more time with them.

For my year abroad, I had a choice between Mexico and Switzerland (the only two places where the ECE Dept. will accept credit) and I did not speak French or Spanish. I really wanted to do a year abroad, and I had been to Europe once before.

[Living and Traveling] Abroad

I live in a small two-person apartment which is about a 10-minute walk to the university, with someone whom I did not know beforehand. So far I have traveled to Quebec City and Montreal. I have friends in both cities that I met in Switzerland.

In Switzerland I was in a student residence with other Swiss and international students. Throughout the year I traveled all over Switzerland, made a 10-day trip to Italy, spent Christmas and New Year's in Germany, went to Paris twice, spent a week in Ireland, and nearly 2 weeks in Sweden.

Do You Get **[Credit] for a Co-op or Study Abroad?**

No credit for my co-op, but I am paid. In Switzerland, the credit transferred as pass/fail, so it did not affect my QPA.

Student **[Organizations]**

I am in HKN [the Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society] in the ECE department and I was on the golf team freshman year.

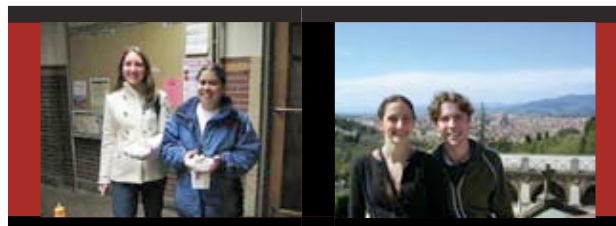
On Finding **[Opportunities] Abroad**

If you're really interested in finding something, concentrate all your efforts on it and you will find something. They're out there waiting for you to go find them!

Looking **[Forward]**

As far as the future is concerned, I'll be back at CMU to finish my last semester in the Spring of 2006 and I'll enroll in a Master's program in the Fall of 2006. Once I have my Master's, I'll decide whether to search for a job or continue my studies toward a Ph.D.

Kyle participated in the ECE Undergraduate Cooperative Education Program. This program invites students to gain valuable experience in employment that relates directly to their major and career goals. At the same time, it provides employers with opportunities to evaluate students as potential full-time employees, while having them complete meaningful projects. Participation in this program is voluntary, and obtaining a cooperative education assignment is competitive. For more information on the co-op program, please visit www.ece.cmu.edu.



Nicole (left) enjoying ice cream with a friend at an IEEE ice cream social.

Kyle and a friend stand in front of the city of Florence.



Kyle in the vineyards next to Lausanne, overlooking Lake Geneva.



Kyle with two friends at Montmerency Falls, outside of Quebec City.

ECE Students

Have you:

- Won an **award, fellowship, or scholarship?**
- Appeared in the **news?**
- Led an **activity** on or off campus?

Please see **Susan** in Rm. 1108, or email her at sfarring@ece.cmu.edu