Megan Montgomery is second woman engineering valedictorian in 15 years

Published in Utah State Engineer – Oct. 2, 2017 – Civil Engineering alumna Megan Montgomery never thought she’d be a valedictorian. She hadn’t even considered a degree in engineering.

Growing up in Mount Vernon, Wash., Montgomery thought her love of the ocean would lead to a degree in marine biology. But her experience charting courses on her father’s sailboat and checking his calculations in the woodshop revealed her technical know-how. Engineering was a natural fit.

CEE Department Head Dr. Paul Barr says Montgomery isn’t one to self-promote or make excuses about the hard work that comes with earning an engineering degree. At age 14, her father died, and serious health problems during her sophomore year nearly forced her to quit school.

“Life didn’t always go well for Megan,” said Barr. “But she persevered.”

Montgomery is quick to credit others with her success, and she says working hard at good grades isn’t the most important part of the college experience.

“I know my dad would be proud of me, but he’d also be a little disappointed,” she said. “He would have told me I spent too much time focusing on grades and not enough time having fun, making friends and developing hobbies.
“For those like me, take a moment now and commit to living in the journey.”

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