Student Spotlight:
Savannah Augustine, HVAC Queen | College of Engineering

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Meet Savannah, a mechanical engineering major from Farmington, Utah! Savannah graduates in May and is excited to start her dream job in designing HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, and refrigeration systems. “I know it sounds really boring,” she said of HVAC, “but it is a huge part of the mechanical engineering field and is actually very fascinating.”

Savannah Augustine is a mechanical engineering student with a passion for HVAC. She has accepted a job with an HVAC firm in Salt Lake City.

Q: When did you know you wanted to study engineering? 
A: I was probably a freshman in high school. I was good at math and science, so engineering made sense. I also took some drafting classes and found that I enjoyed that. I had no clue what I wanted to do with my engineering degree until I got an internship the summer after my freshman year of college.

Q: Are you involved in any clubs/student organization? 
A: I am the secretary and treasurer for USU’s student chapter of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers! I joined because I knew that I wanted to go into the HVAC&R field, and this gave me a chance to network with more professionals in the field and learn more about it! I’ve also been part of the Society of Women Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and E Council.

Q: Have you done any internships? 
A: Yes! I’ve done internships with HHI Corporation, Dennis Group, LogixPower, and USU Facilities HVAC department! My favorite internship has been with Dennis Group! I interned with them for two summers (2018 and 2019). I worked as an intern for their mechanical team, which does HVAC, plumbing, refrigeration, and fire protection system design for food manufacturing plants. I also did drafting and learned the basics of design work for HVAC. Through this internship, I found that I have a passion for HVAC&R — something I never would’ve considered otherwise — and can now make a career out of it!

Q: Do you have a project that you’re really excited about? 
A: My senior design project! My team is participating in ASHRAE’s 2021 Design Competition in the Integrated Sustainable Building Design category. It is a LOT of work, but it has been so exciting learning more about how to design HVAC&R.

Savannah is active in USU’s student chapter of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

Q: What are your hobbies? 
A: Archery, reading, and hanging with my cat. I also want to learn to make bread and knit!

Q: Favorite band? 
A: Black Veil Brides

Q: What is the best thing you’ve watched/read/listened to in the past month? 
A: I’ve really enjoyed watching “WandaVision” with my husband!

Q: What’s your favorite place you’ve ever visited? 
A: I haven’t been a lot of places. But I did like Portland when I visited for a SWE conference. My husband and I have plans to go to Scotland, and I’m super excited for that!

Q: Who inspires you? 
A: I am inspired by a woman named Pam Duffy. I met her at an ASHRAE conference in 2020 (pre-COVID); she’s a woman in HVAC and everything I want to be when I grow up.
Savannah and her husband at the Idaho Potato Museum.

Q: What is the most exciting thing you will do in 2021?
A: Graduate! And start my job as a mechanical engineer at Dennis Group in Salt Lake City.

Q: What topic do you wish more people would learn about?
A: HVAC! I know it sounds really boring, which is why so many people don’t talk about it while we are here in college. But it is a huge part of the mechanical engineering field and is actually very fascinating. I think if more students knew how interesting the design work for it is, they would more strongly consider making it a career!

Q: Any advice for younger students?
A: Get involved. Choose a club or two to join; if you end up not liking it, it’s okay to stop participating. But clubs are such a good way to make friends and get practical experience! Also, be open to any internship that comes your way! If I hadn’t taken a chance on Dennis Group, I might not have found my passion for HVAC&R.

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