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## **Blog Post: Consider Engineering Q&A with Carrie Enos, UMPPF President**

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## Consider Engineering Q&A with Carrie Enos, UMPPF President

Alumni Questionnaire, Industry, Industry Professional Questionnaire



**Q: How long have you been involved with UMPPF and what do you do there?**

**A:** I attended Consider Engineering as a high school junior in 1994 and then applied for a Foundation full tuition scholarship to study Chemical Engineering. Now I'm the President of the Foundation, and I'm genuinely happy to go to work every day!

I assist our volunteers who serve on our many committees, help donors to make sure their donation goes to support the programs they're interested in (like scholarships or Consider Engineering), and I work with companies to make sure that we are preparing our students to serve the needs of industry.

The part of my job that makes me feel like I'm making the most difference is helping our scholarship recipients navigate a successful college experience and graduate into full time jobs with little to no college debt.

**Q: What is Consider Engineering? How would you describe it to someone who has never heard about it before?**

**A:** Consider Engineering is fun, challenging, and exhausting! When you arrive on Sunday and meet the other 35 students in your session, you can't possibly imagine how you're

going to feel saying goodbye on Wednesday.

For just a few days you live in a college dorm with a roommate, stay up way too late, talk with other students who share your interests, tour different engineering departments, conduct experiments, and get a taste for what engineers do every day by touring a manufacturing facility.

Through the competitions and late-night talks with our current scholarship recipients who stay in the dorms with you, Consider Engineering can really help you decide your future—it's why I became a Chemical Engineer! Not to mention, you make lifelong friends. I'm still friends with people I went to Consider Engineering with.

**Q: Do you have any unforgettable Consider Engineering moments?**

**A:** There are many, but my favorite is when one group of students basically refused to leave after our closing luncheon. They had really bonded over the course of the program and they extended their time by building a massive cardboard slide down the hill and racing each other over and over. That is the typical Consider Engineering experience—it is so much fun that you don't want to go home!

**Q: What would you say to a student who may think they're "not right" for the program?**

**A:** You should apply anyway! We have students tell us all the time that they didn't think they were a good fit for engineering but that coming to Consider Engineering showed them it's what they really want to do. Some students realize that engineering really isn't for them after attending, and that's okay too. It's great to be able to figure out if you like engineering and what type might be right for you in just four days rather than four years of college.

**Q: What is your favorite part about Consider Engineering?**

**A:** The students are completely amazing. They're leaders in all areas of high school life—academics, athletics, the arts—and we get to spend time getting to know them. Although the program is meaningful and educational, it's absolutely the people that make it great.

**Q: What do you hope students gain from the experience of attending Consider Engineering?**

**A:** I hope they leave feeling that we shared the best of us with them. That we cared to show them the best experience we could in order to help them figure out if they can see themselves as an engineer, what kind of engineer they might want to be, and if UMaine seems right for them. Jen and I spend months preparing for these three weeks because we love helping these students.

**Q: Are there any applications that have stood out as especially creative or impressive that you'd like to share?**

**A:** It's immediately obvious which students really want to attend and learn something, and which ones do not. I would advise students to do a little research, put some time into their essay, and definitely use spellcheck! If you build rockets in the garage in your spare time, that's cool, and we want to know about it!

**Q: Do you have any advice for high school students who are interested in continuing STEM education after graduation?**

**A:** STEM fields, in particular engineering, tend to be incredibly versatile and great jumping-off points for whatever you decide you want your life to look like in the future. I would encourage any college student to get involved on campus in whatever activities are meaningful to you—music, the Honors College, or sports. STEM fields are academically rigorous, so you have to carve out the time to make sure that you nourish your heart and soul with other things that make you happy.

**Q: What's one important thing people should know when considering attending the program?**

**A:** We just ask that you come with an open mind, a great attitude, and a willingness to participate. We don't intend to convince you that engineering is right for you, but we want to provide you with tools and experiences so that you can make the decision for yourself.

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