

Kristy Sturgess is a 2015 graduate of Freedom Area High School where she was a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish Club. She was Captain of the Girls Softball Team and was Drum Major for the Freedom "Big Red" Marching Band during her junior and senior years. Kristy played in the orchestra for the school plays and was named to both the Regional and Honors Bands. She graduated with a 4.0 GPA.

Kristy graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering and a Minor in Chemistry. While at Pitt, she served as the Business Manager for the Pitt ChemECar from 2015-2019. Kristy was Chair of AIChE (American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Pitt Chapter) from 2017-2018 and was Vice-President of the AIChE in 2018-2019. She was a volunteer for Arrival Survival (moving freshmen on campus) in 2016.

During her time at Pitt, Kristy was hired as a co-op field engineer at Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania. During her three rotations, she worked alongside field engineers to develop, plan, and follow-through with gas line projects for betterment, replacement, and new business needs. She managed projects with a net worth of ~\$800,000.

Kristy obtained a position at the Naval Nuclear Laboratory as a Manufacturing Engineer after graduation from Pitt. This role provides engineering direction and oversight for manufacturing and delivery of nuclear reactor core components. She resolves product issues while balancing cost, schedule, technical requirements, and quality of product. Kristy must communicate frequently with the vendor and review discrepant products to determine a path of resolution; this includes reviewing manufacturing documents and drawings to ensure contract requirements are being satisfied.

Along with her day-to-day role at NNL, she also is the secretary of Bettis WiN (Women in Nuclear) which is a group that organizes outreach events, speakers, and social events. In addition to WiN, Kristy has participated in the Apprentice Program which is an organization that allows newer engineers to work on projects outside of their day-to-day work. In 2021, she worked in a group of 3 employees to research and create an assessment of the cooling towers at the Bettis site. Their analysis created a risk management plan for each cooling system along with recommendations for future fixes. After completing her Apprentice Project in 2021, Kristy volunteered to be on the Apprentice Staff to help other employees pursuing their Apprentice Projects. This includes speaking with department managers to have their staff submit project ideas and also promoting the program to colleagues.

Kristy enjoyed the small class size and one-on-one time with teachers while at Freedom. She felt that every teacher cared about how she was doing and they helped set her up for her future. Specifically, Dr. Wargo and Mr. Saludis who pushed Kristy to realize her true potential. Without their guidance, Kristy's not sure if she would have pursued a degree in Chemical Engineering.

"Parents should enroll their children at Freedom for a wonderful learning experience. The guidance and care of the teachers I had is remarkable; to this day, I still keep in touch with former educators," says Kristy. "The close-knit community of Freedom is something that I will forever remember and cherish."