OVERVIEW The mission of the WiE People Series is to inform and inspire current female students in the University of Oklahoma (OU) Gallogly and Mewbourne colleges through the elucidation of the diversity of opportunity related to positively impacting society through academic and professional pursuits. This WiE Series edition highlights Kate Holland, a professional/or practicing engineer, and features her personal journey.

MOTIVATION Kate loved to design and build things in the shop with her family when she was younger. Throughout high school, she was both interested in and excelled in math and science. Her family set up a meeting for her to just go talk to members of the engineering department at the University of Kansas to see if that could be a potential career for her. Kate chose engineering so that she would be able to make a wide impact on people, innovate new solutions, and have a greater impact on the world.

DEVELOPMENT Kate graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2015. She began working at Halliburton in Duncan, Oklahoma immediately following graduation, and then she moved to the field camp in El Reno, Oklahoma in 2016. Kate says, “working full time brings a whole new skill set that you can’t learn in academia, including soft skills and business knowledge”.

IMPACT Day to day, Kate’s job directly impacts Halliburton customers’ success, her crew’s success, and related cash flows. Kate says, “the indirect impact of working in the oil and gas sector is amazing. You’re able to help power the world. Whether it’s just gas in a car, or providing energy to a hospital, everything you see has somehow been impacted by a petroleum product. We are far downstream from all of the products, but we get to have a part in all of the new technologies, developments, and treatments that are changing the world”.

INSIGHT Kate shares that, “finding good mentors are a game changer. I had two professors that were my two advisors, both academically and personally. They helped me choose which classes to take, but also both played large roles in me ultimately working full time at Halliburton. When I started full time, I was assigned a mentor at work. Ultimately though, I choose who to follow and I still talk through problems and career development with the people I chose as mentors when I first started at Halliburton.

Find your tribe and hold them close. Making early connections with your coworkers is so important. Everyone is going through the same things at the same times, and having a work family to help get you through these new adventures can make you a stronger individual.

Ultimately, you have to be your own champion. Speak up for yourself, stand up when you need to, and always make your voice be heard. You’re going to be the only person with your best interest as your first priority.”

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.” – Colin Powell