



Samidha Anand has been selected by the Women's Engineering Society as one of the Top 50 Women in Engineering in 2021 as part of the annual Engineering Heroes (WE50) awards.

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Northumbria engineering graduate named as one of the top 50 women in the industry

Engineering may be a sector where women remain under-represented, but a Northumbria University graduate has been named in a list of the top 50 trailblazing females driving change and making an impact.

Samidha Anand has been selected by the [Women's Engineering Society](#) as one of the Top 50 Women in Engineering in 2021 as part of the annual

[Engineering Heroes \(WE50\) awards.](#)

The event aims to showcase the diverse, rewarding and varied career options engineering offers with Samidha's work as Engineering Manager for Caterpillar in the UK helping to put her firmly in the frame.

Samidha, who joined Northumbria as an [international student](#) from India in 2007 and completed an MSc in Mechanical Engineering, has immersed herself in helping others take an interest in STEM, not least by overseeing work experience for young people through her role as Apprentice Manager.

She is also a Caterpillar in the UK ambassador for the Society of Women Engineers and a member in the company's employee resource group for their internal women's initiative network.

Samidha acknowledges that she works in a male-dominated environment but has never seen it as a barrier.

"As a child, I was always keen to know how things work," she said.

"I've always loved maths, science and computing and spent a lot of time writing codes and drawing shapes."

But it wasn't until she'd completed the Indian equivalent of A-levels in high school that Samidha really began to consider her career options.

She added: "It was true then and I think, in many ways is still true now, there wasn't much awareness of the job routes available from studying engineering.

"But I decided on Mechanical Engineering and sat an exam to get a place at engineering college in India."

Conversations with a friend about furthering her studies in the UK led Samidha to make contact with Northumbria, and she was supported with the visa application process for her move to Newcastle.

From designing the components and assessing the strength of materials to

3D printing and rapid prototyping skills, Samidha says the knowledge she picked up on her Master's Degree course was vital to her kick-starting her career in the UK.

“So many of the basics from the modules on my course, I still use every day in my work,” she explained.

“I was lucky enough to be given details of a contact at Caterpillar by one of the tutors on my course and I applied for most of the jobs advertised on their website as my studies were coming to an end.”

By August 2008, Samidha had relocated to Peterborough to take up her first role with the international organisation and she has continued to climb the ranks ever since.

And more women seem to be following her lead, with a recent [report](#) by [UCAS and Richard Nelson LLP law firm](#) suggesting that the number of female applicants for engineering courses has almost doubled in the past 10 years.

Samidha said: “It’s an honour to have this recognition and I do everything I can to raise awareness of the range of opportunities studying engineering or any STEM subject can bring.”

[Professor Laurent Dala](#), Head of Department for [Mechanical and Construction Engineering](#), said: “It’s so important to get the message out that engineering offers lots of rewarding and exciting career paths for women, as well as men.

“I hope by sharing her story and successes from her career journey to date, Samidha helps to inspire other young women to consider an engineering career in the future.”

Elizabeth Donnelly, CEO of the Women's Engineering Society, said: “The impact of engineering is as diverse as the people it benefits, which is why inclusivity is so important.

“The women represented in this year's WE50 are a testament to the fact that the more diverse the minds and voices of engineers are, the greater their influence will be.

“We are delighted to celebrate the trailblazing women whose work and advocacy are changing the shape of engineering in the UK.”

Academic staff within the Engineering and Environment Faculty at Northumbria also have an impressive track record of outstanding achievement in STEM subject areas.

[Professor Becky Strachan](#), who is Deputy Faculty Pro Vice Chancellor, has recently been awarded one of the highest memberships possible within the world’s largest technical and professional society.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) elevated Professor Strachan to the elite Senior Member level in recognition of her professional achievements and expertise in digital technologies and education.

Only 10 per cent of IEEE’s 400,000 members globally manage to achieve Senior Member status.

“Receiving this recognition is a proud moment,” said Professor Strachan.

“I believe it is important that women actively collaborate and contribute to their sector including through professional organisations such as IEEE.

“These international collaborations and networks provide a great opportunity to share ideas, research and educational practice with colleagues around the globe supporting our own academic development and those of our students.”

With over 30,000 students, Northumbria is one of the largest universities in the country, offering courses on either a full-time, part-time or distance learning basis. Find out more about study options and courses at northumbria.ac.uk

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