



Darina Castillo

General Engineer

Site Manager

U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management

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JOB DESCRIPTION

AS A SITE MANAGER, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT AT SITES THAT WERE FORMERLY CONTAMINATED BY RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL. DAY TO DAY, I USE A VARIETY OF SKILLS TO COMPLETE MY WORK, SUCH AS ENGINEERING, PROJECT MANAGEMENT, CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS.

EDUCATION

- ✓ Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (California State University, Sacramento)
- ✓ Master of Science and Doctorate in Environmental Engineering (University of Florida)

1 Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Belize. I came to the U.S. in 2001 to pursue higher education.

2 How do I become an engineer?

Having a broad range of experiences will help you become a successful engineer. Pursue the highest possible math level available, such as pre-calculus or calculus, as early as you can. Take advanced placement and/or honors courses and keep your grade point average high. Start engineering courses in high school, if available.

Apply for schools that are the best fit for you — whether it’s a small college with engineering programs or a larger, more specialized engineering school. Participate in student organizations and learning experiences that expose you to the field, such as internships.

3 What have been some of the most exciting projects in your career?

The most exciting projects have been related to beneficial reuse of properties. Beneficial reuse means that the land can be used for the benefit of the community, such as an outdoor space or park that all can enjoy.

At the Colonie, New York, Site, I was able to set up a groundwater program. At the Middlesex South, New Jersey, Site, there is the opportunity for beneficial reuse, even while the site is still undergoing groundwater cleanup and remediation. I also help prepare new sites for transition into the Office of Legacy Management (LM) so that we can conduct long-term stewardship activities, such as monitoring the groundwater for hazardous materials or developing institutional controls that limit access to contaminated/hazardous materials.



4 How does your job affect the world?

My job is to ensure the protection of human health and the environment for communities that contributed to the Manhattan Project and Cold War efforts across the country. LM is also maintaining the history and the awareness of these sites for future generations. Ensuring that communities are protected from environmental hazards is a rewarding component of my job.

5 Tell us about a person that has been influential in your life.

There have been many influential people in my life that helped to ensure that I was on the right path academically and professionally.

One of those people is my aunt Angela. She was an electrical engineer for the telecommunications industry, and she helped me understand the impact that engineers have on people's everyday lives. She encouraged me to pursue engineering as a career and helped guide me through the college process.

But my primary influence was my dad. He was a draftsman. He started in construction. My dad introduced me to engineering at a young age when I helped him with his business.