

THE WOMEN ENGINEERS OF VMASC

A Social Media Series



All about Jessica Cordner

WRITTEN BY JESSICA ZIMMERMAN

VMASC is excited to announce that Jessica Cordner has recently been promoted to Project Scientist and Capabilities Lab and Integration Manager! Having worked at VMASC for the past three years as a Research Associate, in her new role, Jessica will be helping to set up a hackathon, working on several projects, and managing the VMASC Capabilities Lab.

Born and raised in Hampton, VA, Jessica grew up in what she calls a “techie house,” so it was inevitable that she would end up in the engineering field. “My dad is a computer scientist, so I was raised in a techie house. My dad had the ability to cut off the internet before the invention of smart technology. He would always cut it off right at 9 pm. That was my life. I was born into tech,” Jessica said.

Jessica holds a bachelor’s degree in Computer Engineering from ODU and is currently working on a master’s degree in Cybersecurity. “I’ve always liked computer engineering. I like working with hardware versus doing coding. I like to put things together that go ‘zap’ and work. Now I am learning about cybersecurity. People don’t realize how important cybersecurity is, especially now with large corporations and businesses,” Jessica said.



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In her undergraduate career at ODU, Jessica worked at the library in the business office. She was also a member of the Cybersecurity Alliance and the Society of Women Engineers. “As a woman in engineering, it was prominent to me that most of my classmates were male. The one other woman in my classes became my friend and now she works for NASA. In group teams, often I was the only female, but I just got used to speaking up to make sure I was heard,” Jessica said.

We asked Jessica for any advice for those who want to pursue a degree in the engineering field. “My advice would be to not give up because it’s worth it. I could see the number of people dwindling from my classes as the years went on. A lot of my classmates quit because it was so hard,” Jessica said. “Luckily, I have a family who supports me, and if I ever questioned anything about my career goals, I would talk it through with them. But really, just don’t give up. You can do it!”

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