



# Seyda Usalan

## '25

**BS in Management Engineering with  
concentration in Marketing and Entrepreneurship**

### Why did you choose to study at WPI?

I chose to study at WPI because its Business School takes a unique approach by combining technical skills with business knowledge. As a management engineering student focusing on marketing and entrepreneurship, I've been able to learn about business strategies while developing technical skills like data analysis and operations management. WPI's focus on innovation and applying knowledge to practical challenges has allowed me to approach problems in ways that feel both impactful and meaningful. I'm still learning every day, but I know this blend of business and technical education is preparing me for what's ahead.

### How are you involved with the WPI community?

I am actively involved in various WPI communities that align with my interests and goals. As president of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (C-E-O), I lead efforts to inspire entrepreneurship on campus through workshops and events. In the

### Hometown

Ankara, Turkey

### Mentor/Advisor

- [Debora Jackson](#)
- [Rosanna Garcia](#)
- [Mariah Donahue](#)
- [Ardian Preci](#)

### Achievements

- Dean's List

### Interests

- Blockchain technology and investing
- Entrepreneurship and innovative problem-solving
- eSports - competitive League of Legends

Marketing Communications division, I manage website content, ensuring accessibility and functionality. At i3 Lab (which supports student entrepreneurship), I contribute to strategic initiatives such as organizing Demo Day, WPI's largest pitch competition. Additionally, as a co-founder of the Turkish Employee Resources Group, I help foster connections and collaboration among Turkish faculty and staff at WPI.

These roles allow me to collaborate with diverse teams, apply my skills in real-world settings, and contribute meaningfully to the WPI community.

### **What's your favorite thing about WPI?**

What I truly appreciate about WPI is the supportive and collaborative community, which extends beyond campus through the alumni network. The project-based learning approach also stands out, giving me the chance to work on meaningful initiatives that challenge and inspire me. Whether it's through the i3 Lab, engaging clubs, or even the new esports lounge, WPI creates an environment where students can explore their passions and feel supported along the way.

### **Do you have a faculty or staff mentor?**

Dean Debora Jackson has been an unwavering source of guidance throughout my time at WPI. Beyond advising my Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) on documenting the history of business education at WPI, she has always been approachable for any questions or advice, offering support that extends well beyond academics and fosters personal growth.

Professor Rosanna Garcia and Ardian Preci, my club advisors for the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (C-E-O), have had a significant impact on my leadership journey. Through their mentorship, I've learned to effectively lead teams

- Traveling to explore new cultures
- Scuba diving
- Culinary exploration: cooking and trying new foods

### **Campus Activities**

- Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization, president
- Marketing Communications Division, CMS Helpdesk assistant
- i3 Lab, strategy and operations manager
- Turkish Employee Resources Group, co-founder
- International Student Council, peer mentor



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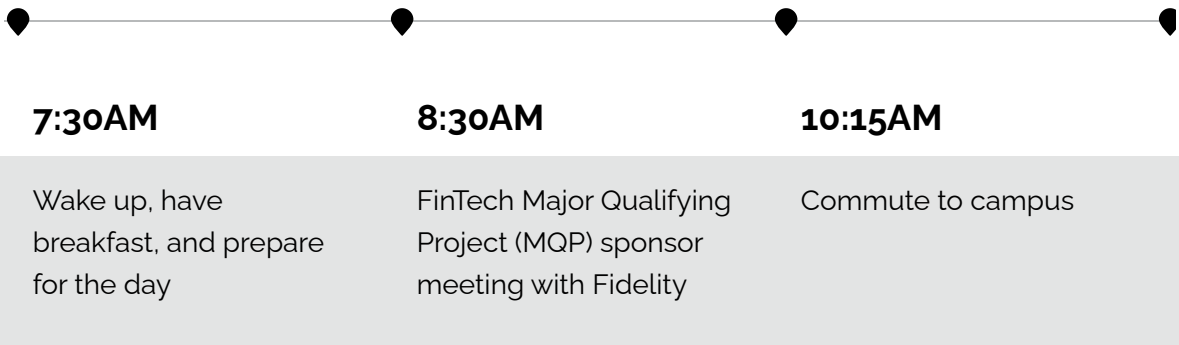
effectively, organize impactful events, and foster innovation within the WPI community.

Mariah Donahue, my manager in the Marketing Communications division, has been instrumental in developing my communication and problem-solving skills. Her guidance has taught me to approach challenges with a creative and strategic mindset, preparing me to work in real-world professional settings.

Lastly, Professor Rob Sarnie has inspired me through his passion for FinTech and education. His mentorship, especially as the former director of the Wall Street FinTech Project Center, has motivated me to delve deeper into financial technology and explore solutions to industry challenges.

**How has WPI's project-based learning influenced your education?**

Project-based learning at WPI has had a big impact on my education by giving me the chance to work on real-world challenges. In Visiting Professor Martin Burt's Social Entrepreneurship class, my team and I developed a plan for Last Mile Health, a social enterprise focused on improving healthcare access in remote areas. We researched its impact, created a sustainable pitch for a hypothetical \$1 million award, and worked together to deliver a strong presentation. This hands-on experience taught me how to solve problems, work effectively with a team, and approach challenges with confidence—skills that I know will help me in my career.



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