



Freddie Smith

'26

BS in Civil Engineering

Why did you choose to study at WPI?

I chose to study at WPI because of its unique project-based curriculum, which emphasizes hands-on learning and real-world problem-solving. The pace of the courses ensures a balanced yet challenging experience, allowing me to delve deeply into subjects while building practical skills. WPI's degree requirements, including the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), offer outstanding opportunities to explore interdisciplinary topics and work on impactful projects with external organizations. This approach aligns with my desire to not only gain technical knowledge but also apply that expertise to solve societal problems and make a tangible difference in the world.

How are you involved with the WPI community?

My involvement in American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) goes beyond professional exposure—I'm committed because of the strong community and the people who make our chapter thrive. The collaboration, mentorship, and shared



Hometown

New Braintree, MA

Mentor/Advisor

- Leonard Albano

Achievements

- Named to the American Society of Civil Engineers 2025 New Faces of Civil Engineering recognition list
- Dean's List
- Chi Epsilon - Civil Engineering Honor Society

Interests

- Football
- Basketball
- Film
- Lifting

passion for engineering create an environment where I can grow both technically and personally. Through sponsored competition teams, like Steel Bridge and Concrete Canoe, I've had the opportunity to apply creative design solutions while reinforcing classroom knowledge. These projects challenge me to think critically, balance innovation with practicality, and work as part of a dedicated team. ASCE has shaped my perspective on engineering, emphasizing both technical excellence and the value of collaboration.

What's your favorite thing about WPI?

One of my favorite things about WPI is the people and the opportunity to surround myself with driven, like-minded individuals who are passionate about learning and problem-solving. There's a shared curiosity here—a desire not just to know what works, but to understand the why and how behind every real-world innovation. Whether it's collaborating on hands-on projects, tackling challenging coursework, or engaging in research, I'm constantly inspired by my peers' dedication and creativity. WPI's environment pushes me to think critically, explore new ideas, and continuously grow both as a student and as an aspiring engineer.

Do you have a faculty or staff mentor?

Professor Albano is someone I model myself after in a professional setting. Beyond being a valuable resource for technical questions, he fosters critical thinking through engaging discussions, encouraging students to go beyond surface-level understanding. His ability to challenge ideas while creating a supportive environment has shaped how I approach problem-solving and professional interactions. He also takes the time to check in on students personally, which I find meaningful amidst WPI's fast-paced structure. His mentorship has not only strengthened my technical foundation but has also influenced how I want to engage with others in my future career.

- Cooking
- Hiking/Backpacking
- Reading
- Photography

Campus Activities

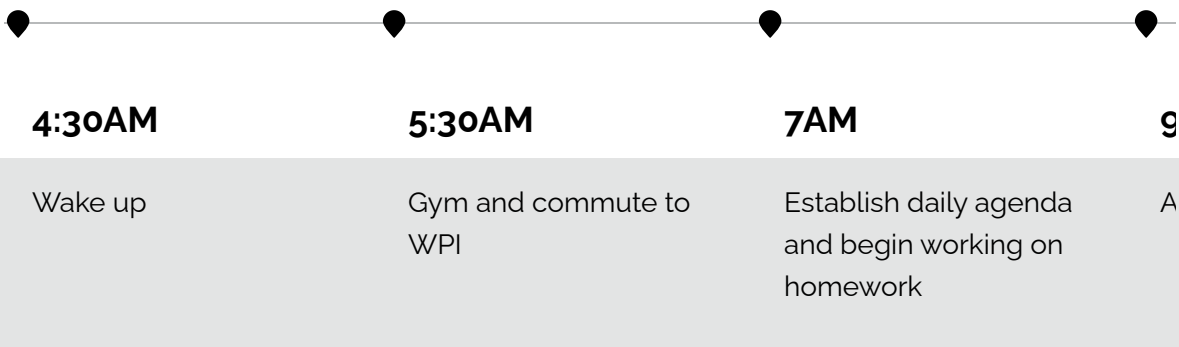
American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

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

Project-based learning at WPI has redefined the conventional definition of education by transforming it into something far more immersive and impactful. My [IQP in London](#) showed me that learning isn't confined to lectures or textbooks but rather about engaging directly with the world, navigating unfamiliar situations, and understanding different perspectives. Experiencing cultural immersion and even culture shock challenged me to think more critically and adaptively. This approach has made me a more conscientious problem-solver, reinforcing that real-world challenges require not just technical expertise, but also an awareness of the social, historical, and cultural contexts that shape them.



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