



SHILPA MANDAPURAM

Squad Engineer

Q. How did you become interested in working at IDOT?

A. Growing up, I was inspired by a civil engineer in my family. I was motivated to help society and always wanted to be a civil engineer. I knew the most direct way to reach my goal was to work for IDOT and create an impact by building safer roads where everyone could go home safely at the end of the day.

Q. What aspect of engineering are you focused on?

A. I develop designs for roads and create environmental reports to determine the sustainability of projects. I follow the design manual, create plans and ensure cost effectiveness. I also collaborate with the other departments to seek guidance and provide input on projects.

Q. Is there a creative solution you developed to solve a problem for a project you were working on?

A. Our lab team was trying to develop an app to automate testing data, but the programmers were having trouble understanding the design needs. Using my past experience, I was able to bridge the gap with a flow-chart and we were able to digitize the test reporting.

Q. How do you see engineering changing in the next five, 10, 20 years?

A. Advancements in 3D printing, self-healing materials, etc., are going to improve road durability and project pace, sustainability and cost. Young engineers have the potential to revolutionize the way we work.

Q. What advice would you give to young aspiring engineers who may not be thinking of starting a career at IDOT?

A. You will be able to expand your network and find new opportunities at IDOT. Rotation programs and extra training allow for a greater chance of career progression.

Q. One thing you'd like the public to know about your work?

A. A career at IDOT provides a rewarding experience through projects that improve public infrastructure and enhance quality of life. IDOT projects have a lasting legacy, creating positive change.

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