

Goalie and gearhead eyes engineering management success

Quinn Eater builds her future on ice, asphalt and innovation

By Lisa Robbins, ASU News
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Most people would be satisfied excelling in one demanding field. Quinn Eater isn't most people.

Eater, an undergraduate engineering management student in the [Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering](#) at Arizona State University, is the starting goaltender for the ASU women's hockey team, president of the [Sun Devil Motorsports](#) Formula SAE team and has contributed to humanitarian engineering efforts through the ASU chapter of Engineers Without Borders. She's been featured on [ESPN](#), represented the U.S. at the [FISU Winter World University Games](#) in Italy, and made 70 saves in a single overtime thriller — and that's just one chapter of her story.

"I consider myself a go-getter," Eater says. "I'm super optimistic, and I think I'm pretty cool."

From LEGO sets to leadership

Eater grew up in the heart of downtown Chicago, and her passion for engineering started early — with a The Hobbit-themed Lego set and a fascination with Minecraft. That early love of building evolved into a deeper interest in how things work, eventually leading her to an engineering track in high school and then to ASU, where she found the perfect mix of size, community and opportunity.

Eater wasn't just looking for an engineering school; she needed somewhere she could keep stopping pucks and chasing goals.

"I needed a big school with women's hockey and a good engineering program," she says. "As soon as I stepped foot on ASU's campus, I knew, 'This was it.'"

Eater entered the [School of Computing and Augmented Intelligence](#), part of the Fulton Schools, as an engineering management major — a choice that turned out to be the perfect match for her strengths.

“I’m a people person,” she says. “I love organizing, managing and communicating. And I also love math.”

She’s narrowed her academic focus in engineering management to electrical engineering, particularly power systems, a decision fueled by her interest in sustainability and real-world engineering applications.

She notes there are strong parallels between hockey and engineering.

“You’re part of a team, you’re managing pressure, and you’re constantly solving problems in real time,” she says.

Engineering with impact

Eatinger’s desire to make a difference pushed her beyond the classroom early in her college career. After meeting new friends during [E2](#), the Fulton Schools orientation experience for engineering students, she joined [Engineers Without Borders](#) and took part in a multi-year project addressing plastic waste at Simien Mountains National Park in Ethiopia. The team worked on a full-cycle solution to collect, shred, melt and reuse a type of plastic called polyethylene terephthalate, or PET, to create items for sale at a local visitor center.

“It was such an amazing idea,” she says. “Just seeing how engineering could impact a whole community stuck with me.”

Though her time working on the project was brief, the experience left a lasting impression and helped steer her toward engineering management, where she saw the need for stronger coordination, structure and leadership for large, collaborative efforts. These early hands-on experiences expanded her view of what engineering could be — not just technical problem-solving but a tool for service and change.

Fueling the future — literally

Now, as president of Sun Devil Motorsports, Eatinger is leading efforts to design and build a formula-style car from scratch to race at the annual Formula SAE competition at Michigan International Speedway. It’s a technical, high-stakes endeavor with no shortage of challenges: tight budgets, sourcing issues, blown engines and late-night test runs in the Arizona heat. This experience gave her a firsthand look at what an engineering management career might look like.

One of Eatinger’s biggest takeaways as a leader has been learning how to balance competing needs and personalities and to make space for every voice on the team.

“You can’t always make everyone happy,” she says. “But you can make everyone feel heard and feel like their role matters.”

Under her leadership, the team launched its first club-wide resume database and monthly newsletter. She also helped host the inaugural Southwest Shootout, a mock competition that brought together Formula SAE teams from across Arizona.

The ice and the spotlight

On the ice, Eatinger brings the same fire. As a goaltender, she thrives in high-pressure moments. She made headlines during her sophomore year during the 2024 semifinals of the ACHA D1 National Tournament after making 70 saves against the top-ranked team in the country.

“We were the No. 10 seed playing the five-time defending national champions, Liberty University,” Eatinger says. “We had nothing to lose. And that game, even though we lost in overtime, was the best I’ve ever played. I ended up on ESPN and Women’s Hockey World.”

For Eatinger, the unforgettable experience was proof that thinking fast, staying calm and performing under pressure are skills that can serve her just as well in engineering as they do on the ice.

This past year, she took her game international, representing the U.S. at the 2025 FISU Winter World University Games in Torino, Italy.

“It wasn’t just playing for ASU; it was playing for my country,” Eatinger says. “It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”

Mind over matter

Eatinger says her approach to high-pressure moments, whether on the ice or in an engineering lab, starts with her mindset. Before a big game, she runs through a mental checklist: You’ve done this before. You’ve prepared. You’re ready.

It’s a habit built on repetition and trust in the work she’s already put in.

“If you focus on the good and on what’s ahead, everything else — the stress, the noise — fades,” Eatinger says.

She draws inspiration from a quote by American poet Walt Whitman: “Keep your face toward the sunshine, and shadows will fall behind you.”

For Eatinger, that attitude doesn’t just apply to hockey. It’s a skill that shows up in late-night study sessions, leading a team through tight deadlines and facing the unknowns of real-world problem-solving.

“When you learn how to stay calm under pressure, you’re ready for more than just the game,” she says. “You’re ready for life.”

Building what comes next

What’s next for Eatinger? She’s keeping the door open — intentionally.

“I feel like the older I get, the less I know for sure,” she says with a laugh. “But I want to keep putting my foot in every door that comes in front of me. I’ve been looking into renewable energy, entrepreneurship and maybe even moving back to Chicago.”

The opportunities are endless, and wherever she lands, she’s determined to engineer a better world. To her, engineering a better world means recognizing that the work to be done belongs to everyone.

“There’s always something you can improve,” Eatinger says. “Even if you can’t think of it now, the opportunity will come. There is no limit.”

When asked what she’d tell young girls unsure about pursuing science, technology, engineering and math or balancing academics with sports, she doesn’t hesitate.

“Take advantage of every opportunity in front of you,” Eatinger says. “And don’t let anyone tell you that you can’t do something. You don’t have to do things alone and you shouldn’t have to.”

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Quinn Eatinger, an engineering management undergraduate student in the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering at Arizona State University, poses for a photo on the race track during the Formula SAE student competition at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Michigan. Eatinger aims

to work in an electrical engineering field after her college experience, which has included serving as president of ASU's Formula SAE team, participating in a community service project in Engineers Without Borders, and playing as a goalie on the ASU women's hockey team. Photo courtesy of Quinn Eatinger.

Text image(s)



Eatinger strikes a celebration pose on the ice in front of her teammates at Salt Lake City Sports Complex in Utah after beating Utah in the WWCHL conference playoffs. Photo courtesy of Quinn

Eatinger

Gallery



A young Eatinger guarding the net.



Sun Devil Motorsports – Formula SAE on the race track during the Formula Student competition at the Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Michigan.



Eatinger in front of the net representing Team USA during the 2025 Winter Olympics in Torino, Italy.



Eatinger poses with her Sparky and MVP awards following the Sun Devils' undefeated 2023–24 season, along with the Cactus Cup and their second straight WWCHL championship. She recorded nine shutouts during that season as well.