

Outstanding Graduate establishes mentorship program

Kavya Walia plans to help achieve clean water equity in underdeveloped communities

By Lisa Irish, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

When thinking about what she wanted to pursue as a career, Kavya Walia decided she wanted to help achieve clean water equity in underdeveloped communities and protect the health of all. Not a small feat.

Her first step? Get a degree in environmental engineering.

"Pollution has always been an issue that I take to heart, especially after learning about the environmental conditions that my parents and past generations of my family grew up with in India," she says.

So Walia enrolled in the [School of Sustainable Engineering and the Built Environment](#), part of the [Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering at Arizona State University](#). She said she chose the school for its research opportunities, innovative coursework and leadership reputation.

"ASU was one of few institutions that offered a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering," she says. "With the scholarships and opportunities I was granted, I knew ASU was where I wanted to start my career."

Walia served as treasurer and president of the [Society of Water and Environmental Leaders at ASU](#), where she established a mentorship program, accumulated more than \$10,000 in funding, and planned career-oriented events for civil and environmental engineering students.

She also helped organize service events as community outreach officer for ASU's [Society of Women Engineers](#), or SWE, and worked with K-12 outreach staff to plan and deliver educational engineering activities for 100 local students.

"Women bring a unique perspective to the workforce that cannot be replicated," Walia says. "My involvement in SWE has only strengthened my passion for women in engineering by providing me

with the resources I need to succeed and help others succeed.”

She also managed the [Ocean Conservation Club](#)'s online presence as social media chair.

A memorable project she worked on was a remedial investigation and feasibility study for [EVE 452: Environmental Investigation and Remediation Design](#).

“Until then, I had only done technical writing in academic laboratory reports, but this project taught me what technical report writing is like in the industry,” Walia says.

Walia thanks Faculty Associate [Rain Richard](#) for helping her grow.

“Rain instructed my environmental engineering processes laboratory course and served on my honors thesis committee,” she says. “Her detailed feedback on my reports honed my technical writing skills, and she has been a great mentor.”

After graduation, Walia plans to earn her master's degree in environmental engineering through the accelerated master's program at ASU, then work in remediation in Phoenix.

“My long-term career goals involve advancing clean water equity in low-income communities worldwide and remediating emerging contaminants, such as forever chemicals and microplastics,” she says.

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Text image(s)



Kavya Walia