

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

## 6 Questions with *Paris Kalathas*

Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Software Engineering

Hometown: Nicosia, Cyprus

### **What brought you to Cal Poly College of Engineering?**

Last year, I was wrapping up my thesis for my Ph.D. when I attended a recruitment presentation at my college about Cal Poly. During that presentation, I found myself resonating with the culture and the vision of Cal Poly, which motivated me to apply for a faculty position at the university. So far, I'm very pleased with my decision!

### **Tell me about your research interests and why you are passionate about this topic.**

My research interests are related to computer science education. Specifically, how can we train teachers to teach computer science in K-12 as a separate course or infused into other courses? I'm passionate about this topic because I believe there are a lot of benefits from learning how to think computationally. It's an approach to thinking about tasks and problems methodically, and learning this at a young age can shape the way children interact with the world around them and contribute to what they understand and what choices they make.

### **What is your favorite part of your job?**

The moment I see that "aha" expression on the students' faces when something clicks in their brains.

### **If you were stranded on a deserted island, what band or musician would keep you entertained?**

The Greek band Trypes.

### **How do you encourage engineering students to make an impact on the community?**

I think being an engineer has a lot of value because engineers bring ideas to life. I always try to push my students to be curious about what changes we can make to our society and explore ideas and solutions for those changes. I push them to explore their interests, and to challenge themselves in a way that builds both their confidence and self-efficacy. College is a great place to question and experiment because of all the different fields and people that students can talk to and expand their perspective about those things they are interested in.

### **How do you support the college's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion?**

By continuously reflecting on my thoughts, decisions and actions as well as getting educated in ways I can be more diverse and inclusive in my teaching and research. There are a lot of great seminars and workshops from the college about JEDI ideas and practices and how to bring them to classes and research. I already attended a couple of trainings at my previous college, but I'm planning to expand my knowledge more in the near future.



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