

## Mason Blinson, Harnett County 4-H My Interview with Harnett County's Engineer

Have you ever wondered who is behind the engineering process of buildings in our counties? Well I had the privilege of sitting down and talking to our county engineer and ask her questions about what she does. Amanda Bader is our county engineer and she told me that some of her responsibilities are, working with Campbell and the Harnett Forward Together Committee on projects they need help with. She advises different departments and works with IT, planning, public utilities, legal departments, design review and even the library. As you can tell she has a lot to do every day. A typical day for her is "putting out fires" dealing with urgent issues. She gets calls and refers them to other offices for assistance as needed. She also takes care of a lot of complaints. Her days are full of scheduling and working with developers.

One of my questions was, "what are some of the challenges of your job?" Amanda said the main challenge is budget. We don't have money coming out of our ears. We have to work with what we have and manage our resources. There is only one of her and dealing with all kinds of different personalities is hard and you have to get everybody on the same page by negotiating. So she is glad that at the end of the day she has such great people to work with in her office.

After she listed her challenges, I asked her about her successes. She said that her biggest success was the medical corridor and the execution process of it seeing it all become a reality. I also asked her what some of her favorite things about her job were. Some of the things she enjoys are, being able to go out in the field and see the progress, she loves coming up with ideas and solutions to help people figure out what they want to do. She likes the diversity of projects. She even got to learn about beavers when helping with flooding issues in the Riverside community. Her favorite thing of all is the employees and citizens and being a part of that big picture.

She was really passionate when I asked her what life experiences have helped her prepare her for this job. At first, you know, she talked about past jobs and being a consulting engineer and being involved with architects, and knowing about design infrastructure. Then she started talking about growing up on a farm with her family. This is what I really wanted to here because I live on a farm too. She said it teaches responsibility, strength, and how to get things done. When I heard that it all made sense. I learned a lot from this interview, I didn't know how much a county engineer did and now I do. She came from a great background and is very good at what she does. Thanks to her I can now proudly say I know more about who is behind the engineering process in our county and what they do.

Mason Blinson, 4-Her  
and  
Amanda Bader,  
Harnett County Engineer

