

Name: Jocelyn Armarego



Education, Experience & Achievements

I'm a Software Engineer, with a specialisation in Requirements Engineering (RE). I'm fascinated with the process of developing a useful software system from people's concepts. Creating models from these ideas, grappling with issues of communications and all that entails and finally realising those models into a system that has a purpose and does a job well is great. I have a PhD in RE education, investigating the difference between what we teach and how professionals practice the discipline.

I worked for 10 years in industry at a time when every system we looked at developing was 'greenfields'. I became an academic when SE was not an engineering discipline, but the realisation that we needed to promote an engineering ethos in ICT students was gaining momentum. Exploring how to build SE curricula that addressed the needs of the ICT as well as engineering professions was a challenge.

What led you to choose Engineering as a career?

A very round-about route. An interest in languages and how we interpret and translate between them led to a specialisation in mathematical (formal) specification languages for software systems. A move to academia led to developing curricula for (then new) undergraduate Engineering degrees for SE and finally a focus on the differences between what we teach and how professionals practice the discipline.

What is it about Engineering that inspires you?

That the output of our efforts are mostly useful! That it's not all about technical know-how, but also huge amounts of management and people skills.

What has been the high point in your career to date?

In industry - being involved in the specification and eventual implementation of the largest automated system of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

In Academia – being involved with a great SE programme, one noted by EA as setting the standard in Australia.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you solved it?

Working part-time can be a challenge to others – there is often the perception that you are not 'serious' about your work, and therefore need not be included in important events and projects – that it's OK being kept to the periphery. Negating this impression is ongoing – and means being flexible enough to give when required, and still maintain the work/life balance that remains the reason for working part-time.

How have you managed your work and family commitments?

I work part time – this has meant being available while my children were growing up. Now it means I have time to be involved in other interests. This includes time for professional 'duties' and research.

Do you have any advice for women who are considering engineering as a career, or for those who are already Engineers?

Women make great Software Engineers!