



Growing Through Exposure: How Traineeship Sparked Anika's Confidence in Engineering



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Name

Anika Tasnim Parisa

Institution

**Ahsanullah University
of Science and
Technology**

Field of Study

**Electrical and
Electronic Engineering**

Current Status

Final Year Student

www.shestem.org



Through SheSTEM, Anika found the confidence and clarity she once lacked in her engineering journey. From entering the program unsure of her place in STEM to completing her Walton traineeship as the only female trainee, SheSTEM helped her build both technical and professional resilience.

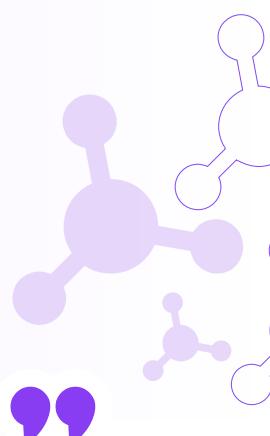
"At first, I wasn't sure whether engineering was really for me, but step by step I realised I could belong here too."

Anika's STEM Journey

At 24 years old, Anika Tasnim Prachi is in the final year of her Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) degree at Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology. Her entry into engineering was shaped by her father's encouragement, though initially she was uncertain if this was the right path for her. Over time, as she delved deeper into her core courses, her interest grew, and she began to see engineering not just as an academic pursuit but as a career she wanted to own.

Her participation in the SheSTEM program became a turning point, helping her gain industry exposure, build confidence, and prepare herself for a career in STEM, even amidst challenges such as gender bias and limited job opportunities for women engineers.

"Before SheSTEM, there were days I wondered if I could ever actually build a career in engineering."





SheSTEM Experience

Anika joined SheSTEM at a time when she was seeking real industry exposure. She took part in mentoring, career guidance sessions, and a 14-day industrial traineeship at a large manufacturing company. Walking into a fully male environment was daunting. She was the only female trainee in the department and her room, and the silence, the occasional stares, and the feeling of being watched made the first few days difficult. But instead of stepping back, she stayed focused, showing up every day with determination. She learned how to operate in a professional engineering setup, apply her academic knowledge in practice, and use tools like MATLAB, Excel and PowerPoint in real work settings.

The combination of guidance, mentorship and hands-on exposure helped her understand the realities of engineering work and see where she might fit in the wider industry. Even something as simple as transportation support during industrial attachments made a powerful difference. It allowed her to focus fully on learning without worrying about safety or long commutes, and that sense of security gave her freedom to explore, to take risks, and to show up with confidence every day. To Anika, it was a reminder that small, thoughtful interventions can open big doors for women in STEM, especially in contexts where opportunity alone isn't enough without access and safety.

“Being the only woman in the room was intimidating at first, but by the end, I felt like I truly earned my place.”





Confidence and Career Progression

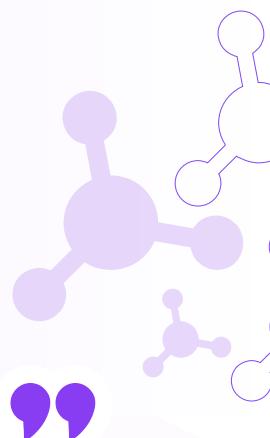
When Anika first joined SheSTEM, she placed her confidence at 1 out of 5. The vastness of engineering and the uncertainty of finding a job in the field felt overwhelming. Through the structured exposure and mentoring she received, she now rates her confidence at 4 out of 5. The shift came from real experience, stronger communication skills and a better understanding of the sector she wants to enter.

However, Anika is also clear about the barriers she will face:

- High competition among engineering graduates
- Limited availability of stable technical roles
- Social and gender bias toward women engineers in technical roles
- Being overlooked or underestimated in mixed-gender workplaces

She plans to overcome these challenges by enhancing her technical skills, building confidence through more hands-on experience and expanding her professional network. She now has the clarity to push through setbacks instead of doubting herself.

“SheSTEM made me feel capable again. I learned how to speak up, trust myself and remember that I belong in this field.”

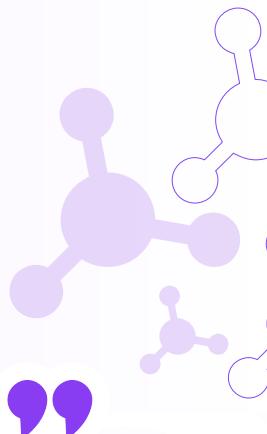




Way Forward

Anika now envisions a future where she remains firmly rooted in STEM. She hopes to work in a major public utility organisation or in the country's leading telecom sector, depending on the opportunities available after graduation. She is also considering pursuing a master's degree later on, to strengthen her technical expertise and access higher-level roles. What matters most to her now is not just getting a job but staying within engineering. She wants a future where she can apply the knowledge she has spent years building, grow within a professional team and navigate the engineering sector with confidence. No matter how uncertain the job market may look, she remains determined to continue in STEM, something she attributes to her SheSTEM experience.

"SheSTEM gave me the confidence to stick to STEM jobs no matter how bleak the job market looks at present."





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