

Katerina Ziotopoulou



A native of Athens, Greece, Katerina Ziotopoulou was deeply affected by the dramatic impact a severe earthquake had on her hometown in 1999. Inspired by these events, she decided to become a civil engineer. In 2007, she graduated with a master's degree with high honors from the Department of Civil Engineering at the National Technical University of Athens, with a specialization in Earthquake Geotechnical Engineering.

During her studies, Katerina gained field experience in Japan and Taiwan, where she participated in a geotechnical earthquake engineering workshop. For her thesis, she performed a significant number of nonlinear site response analyses, corresponding to actual soil

profiles and various earthquake excitations, with the ultimate purpose of critiquing and improving the current seismic code provisions.

After being awarded the International Fulbright Science and Technology Award, and before coming to the United States, Katerina continued to work on her thesis by enhancing its applicability and extending it to the topic of soil-structure interaction.

Thanks to her Fulbright grant, Katerina is now a doctoral student in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of California, Davis, where she is working with some of the leading researchers in her field. Currently, she is developing a project concerning the characterization of intermediate soils (i.e., soils whose behavior falls outside of the known limits of other soils). The most exciting part of her research is that she will have the opportunity to actively participate in centrifuge experiments, which are state of the art, accurate experiments that simulate conditions found in nature under earthquake excitation.