

As an undergrad, Nicole Puente-Solis pursued a Bachelor's Degree in International Business and Management. She then honed her business skills through industry experience before returning to her studies to pursue a Master's in Interior Design. Her love for design stems from her desire to serve the people and community around her. Puente-Solis's design philosophy is centered around empowering people, creating spaces that foster growth, and building bridges of connection between people to help create an environment of limitless possibilities. During her studies here at the University of Florida, her focus was on healthcare design. Her research focused on infection prevention in acute healthcare environments. The tactic she explored was the prevention of bacterial adherence to high touch surfaces through the choice of surface materials that are robust to cleaning and resilient to pathogen adherence and propagation.

In the midst of her research, she was a recipient of the 2022 Metropolis Future 100. This award recognized her as one of the top 50 interior design graduates in North America. She also led an interdisciplinary team that took home the first place prize for the academic 2021 Witter's competition. A competition where students compete in a design charrette project that will potentially contribute to the City of Gainesville Master Plan and Downtown Strategic Vision and Plan.

As her season in academia comes to a close, she is fully aware that this is just the beginning of her career in design. As she prepares to go into industry with a firm in south Florida, Synalovski Romanik Saye Architects, she is beyond excited to grow and learn more about the design field than ever before. Ready to step into new endeavors, Puente-Solis states that "the beauty of it all is that I am still forever learning how to run this race with endurance."