

# PE MATTERS

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NEWS**NSPE-WI**™ WISCONSIN SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

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*State News for NSPE Members*

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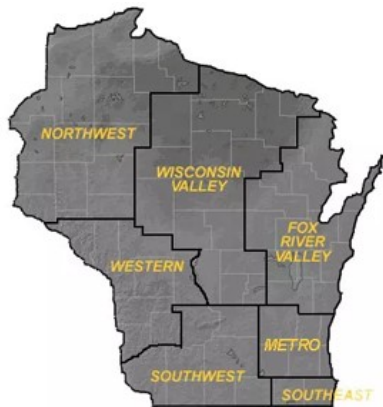
***Hello Again!*** With winter almost in our rear view mirror, it's time to start thinking *spring*. I know that I'm ready for the warmer weather to return and I suspect that you are, too.

The NSPE-Wi Executive Committee (EC) has certainly been busy these last few months which has helped make winter seem to pass by quickly, at least for me. We've had scholarship applications to consider, MATHCOUNTS competitions to plan for, an All Chapters Scholarship, Chapters and State Engineers Week virtual awards ceremony, a virtual Discovery Conference to plan, finding and training volunteers to take chapter officer positions later this spring and a membership drive to conduct, not to mention PE Licensure legislation to monitor both State and Nationally.

Thanks to our EC and the Chapter board members, we have completed much of our work that we set out to accomplish last July; but we're not quite done yet. Please take a look at our progress below. Enjoy!

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## WI Chapters – Coming Down the Home Stretch



Last July we (the EC) agreed to the goal of getting all of our inactive Chapters back to active status. The Metro Chapter officers were just installed leaving 4 chapters (SE, W, NW and WV) inactive and in need of chapter officers. Since then, and thanks to the help of Jim Buggs, John Kustka, Eric Schlevensky, Norm Arendt and Angela Hanz, I can say that we have been able to find volunteers for the SE, NW, WV and W Chapters. As of this writing, however, we still need two more volunteers for the W Chapter to complete our Chapter revitalization goal. At least 3 of the 4 inactive chapters will be returning to active status this spring! The first of two training sessions for our soon-to-be new officers was held on February 19 and the second will be held March 19.

While this is certainly a worthy achievement, it is imperative that we understand that just finding volunteers to hold a Chapter office is not the long term solution for

the longevity of our professional society. The real long term solution is 1) much improved communication between EC and Chapter boards, 2) enlisting new younger engineers to be a vibrant part of our professional community and 3) improving relations between our professional society and business leaders that employ our state's engineers.

Restoring old relationships and establishing new ones is a difficult task but worthwhile. It is to this end that our State board has committed their time and talents and we are just beginning to see some promising results.

On February 13, just two weeks after we sent out solicitation mailers to WI engineers, two such engineers joined NSPE-WI and we look for our membership to continue growing with the help of younger engineers to replace those that have retired, moved out of state or have decided not to remain with NSPE.

Our plan of strengthening our professional society by getting inactive chapters back to active status, soliciting younger engineers to join us and adding laser focus to threatening licensure legislation is beginning to work and with everyone's continued help will renew our professional society in strength and numbers.

## **MATHCOUNTS 2021 – Chapter Competition Results**

As you know, this year was somewhat unorthodox in that the Chapter competition consisted of two parts; winners of the February 5/6 competition advanced to the Chapter invitational held on February 25. Only Sprint and Target rounds were administered to each competitor, unlike in a more normal year where sprint, target, team and countdown rounds would be included.



Numbers of competitors from each for the Feb. 5/6 competition: FRV(57), Metro & Waukesha(152), SE(1), SW(55), W(43), NW(97), WV(1) = 406, total. About 25% of those competitors advanced to the Chapter invitational and only 42 of all competitors advanced to the State competition to be held on March 25.

All Chapter competitors received a certificate of participation, those advancing to

the Chapter invitational also received a medal and winners of the Chapter Invitational (up to 5th place) received a trophy for their accomplishment. In addition to the top 5 competitors from each Chapter, the 10 highest scoring competitors over the entire State from the Chapter Invitational advanced to the State competition.

Chapter Invitational winning schools are (not in any order): (FRV): De Pere, Thomas J Walker, West De Pere, (Metro): Maryland Ave Montessori, St. Robert, Steffen, Whitefish Bay, Brookfield Academy, Lake Country, Nature Hill Intermediate, Wisconsin Hills, (NW): De Long, New Richmond, Rice Lake, South, (SE): Maker Academy, (SW): Eagle, Kromrey, Madison Country Day, Hamilton, (W): Onalaska, Viroqua, West Salem, (WV): Central Oaks Middle Schools.

The National competition, to be held May 8-10, will be in-person at Washington DC. We wish all State competitors the best of luck!

## Engineers Week Celebration – Big Success



This year’s Engineers Week Celebration was different not only because we celebrated it virtually but also that we celebrated with all of our Chapters represented.

The celebration began with a welcome and brief prayer, followed by the reading of

the Governor's Proclamation of Engineers Week, February 21-27. Scholarship awards were presented by FRV Chapter's Glen Schwalbach, Metro Chapter's Mike Mitchell and Bill Weltin, NW Chapter's Brad Volker and SW Chapter's Ron Voss. While all chapters were generous in their scholarship donations, the Metro Chapter was the most generous at donating over \$16,000 in scholarships and over \$21,000 from all chapters combined!

The Executive Committee of the NSPE-WI State board decided to donate \$500 to the EFW. NSPE-WI Treasurer Marty Hanson sent a check for \$500 to Glen Schwalbach of the EFW.

In addition to presenting scholarship awards, the SW Chapter also presented a Chapter "Educator of the Year" award to Ms. Ruth Frawley of the Glacier Creek Middle School for her outstanding contributions, over 25 years, to our Madison School System as a special education instructor and for all of her hard work for the MATHCOUNTS program. Congratulations, Ruth!

Phil O'Leary, SW VP Education for UW Madison, presented a report on how recent scholarship recipients were faring in College and in the world of employment. Not surprisingly, these young adults are all doing very well to extremely well as many of them have earned graduate degrees in their field of choice and are making contributions as engineers, scientists and college professors. Those still pursuing their college education are also doing very well and expect to be graduating in the near future. So, if you've ever wondered how these scholarship winners progressed after receiving their award, now you know! We wish all scholarship candidates the best of luck in their pursuits.

The meeting then turned toward presenting Chapter and State awards. There were 3 State awards presented: 1) NSPE-WI Treasurer Marty Hanson received the "Engineer of the Year" award for his contributions during 2020 by his very professional hosting of the 2020 Discovery Conference presentations which resulted in significant revenues to WSPE.

2) James Buggs was awarded "Engineer of the Year in Private Practice" for his contributions two years previous to 2020, which were critical in helping WSPE come out from near bankruptcy to what is now a very strong financial position. In 2020, Jim was instrumental in helping get the Metro chapter to return to active status as he was able to find a volunteer to take on the chapter office of President.

3) Fred Groth and John Brome were each awarded "Engineer of the Year in

Education” for their very successful contributions to our society as Chairmen of the annual Discovery Conference for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

All in all, the Engineers Week celebration was very successful and we were glad to have held it, recognizing our youth as well as other award recipients. We will likely make the “All Chapters Scholarships, Chapter and State Awards” meeting an annual event. Thank you, everyone, for helping to make this event a big success!

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## **PE Licensure and Legislation of Interest**

One of the things that our membership committee has been working on over the last couple of months is a “Road Map to PE Licensure” document. Angela Hanz, SW Chapter President, volunteered to work on this and has done a great job at completing this assignment.

Angela came up with all of the text on the document but, along with all of our Executive Committee, had some difficulty in creating a “road map” feel to the document. Past President (well, past-past President) James Buggs offered to show this document to his niece as she has some artistic abilities that we don’t seem to have, to see if she might offer some suggestions and for a fee, create an artist’s view of this “Road Map to PE Licensure”. Jim’s niece, Megan, did a great job in creating artwork to complement Angela’s text, and the completed document is shown on our [NSPE-WI website](#).

While the document is pleasing to look at, it also has a practical value as it clearly shows a pathway from college to PE licensure; something that is unfamiliar to many engineering students. Angela’s intent is to use this document as a means of communicating to younger engineers and engineering students how to acquire PE licensure especially those planning to take their FE or PE examination.

Once one acquires their PE license, however, it’s necessary to monitor state and national legislation that may jeopardize the license of Professional Engineers as law makers continually seem to believe that having a Professional Engineer’s license is not necessary in the interest of opening jobs to a larger number of people that have not acquired PE licensure. Apparently these legislators and lobbyists have little or no idea of what is at stake; the safety of the public.

An article in the Winter 2021 issue of the *PE* magazine indicates that one of the newest tactics of lobbyists that support removal of the PE license is to convince law

makers that “the issuing and passing emergency executive orders and legislation” during the pandemic, overriding the strict PE licensure requirements that had been in place until now, has shown that there is no need to continue the strict PE licensure requirements because these temporary law changes that have opened up employment for lesser qualified candidates has been successful thus far.

I suggest that you read the full article on page 31, “[Members Drove Advocacy Success in 2020; Get Ready 2021](#)”, for all of the details. This may prove to be difficult to overcome and we will likely need the support of all members as it could threaten licensed engineers in multiple states.

**March 6, 2021** – *Written by Glen Schwalbach, P.E. (FRV Chapter, VP Government Affairs)*

## **NSPE-WI Working to Repeal the Associate Degree Provision of the P.E. Registration Statute**

NSPE-WI has been working to repeal a provision in state statutes which allows a person with an associate degree in an engineering-related field to be considered for sitting for the two exams leading to P.E. registration. Last year, we got a bill drafted to do so but time ran out to get sponsors. Currently, the bill draft is being finalized by the Legislative Reference Bureau. Discussions have begun to get some sponsors for the bill.

The current law requires a baccalaureate degree in engineering or an associate degree in an engineering-related field for a P.E. applicant to be considered to sit for the P.E. exams. The associate degree provision got into law years ago at the request of the Wisconsin Technical College System. We opposed the WTSC’s request and explained that the associate degree does not prepare a person to be an engineer and not even an engineering technologist. We pointed out that ABET, the accreditation board for associate engineering technology, baccalaureate engineering technology and baccalaureate engineering programs, states an associate program prepares the student to be a technician. We provided feedback that employers would be reluctant to hire an engineer who only had an associate degree even if that person had passed the exams. We also pointed out that the WTCS’s provision would likely result in some students, who want to become engineers, getting onto the wrong education path and waste their time and money. We are now aware that has been the result.

Sparing you the political details, we were unsuccessful in eliminating the associate

degree at that time. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, which regulates P.E. registrations, felt they could manage the associate degree provision to still protect public safety. But, since that time, DSPS no longer vets P.E. applicants but instructs them to first take the exams and then apply for P.E. registration. This has likely resulted in students now spending money to take the exams and failing to pass them because they only have an associate degree.

So, our new bill to repeal the associate degree option is attempting to get potential engineers on the right education path and not mislead students, parents and student counselors in thinking an associate degree is a path to being an engineer.

NSPE-WI will keep you updated as this bill goes through the process. If anyone has any comments, please send to Glen Schwalbach, P.E. at [glenschwalbach@netzero.com](mailto:glenschwalbach@netzero.com).

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## **Chapter and State Nominations Due March 31**

Usually we associate March as the month heralding spring but we also have to remember it's that time of year when we need to think of who to nominate for each chapter and state office.

You should of course make sure that the person you wish to nominate has agreed with you that they will accept your nomination before nominating them but don't forget that you can also self-nominate. It's only for one year, you'll receive a reimbursement of at least 50% of you're annual NSPE membership dues.

So please spend a few minutes thinking about who to nominate and look for a survey monkey to complete your nominations for your chapter or state board.

Elections will be held in April and officer installations will be in June. Thanks for your participation!

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## **Discovery Conference 2021 – Starts 3/9, Register Now!**

Our annual Discovery Conference, for 2021, is soon to begin and registration has been underway since February 9 (officially since February 15).

This year, our virtual conference will feature a diverse group of presentations to



include Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Safety, Bio-Medical and Chemical Engineering as well as 2 ethics presentations.

The conference will span 7 weeks and offer 2 presentations per week, one on Tuesday and another on Thursday at 12:00 pm noon CST. Most will last 60 minutes but some will last 90 minutes and will offer 16.5 PDH if all are attended.

Alternatively, one can register for these presentations individually at \$15/ea (or \$150 for all 14 sessions).

A copy of the 2021 Virtual Discovery Conference brochure can be found on our [website](#) where there is also a link to register for the conference. Members, students and non-members are welcome to attend via Zoom once registered. All presentations will be live and interactive. If you enjoyed the 2020 virtual Discovery Conference, I'm sure that you'll enjoy our 2021 virtual Discovery Conference as well. And don't forget, new NSPE-WI members that joined NSPE between January 1 and April 22 will receive 50% off of their DC 2021 full registration fee of \$150. Please join us, even if for only a few presentations!

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## **Annual Golf Outing Announcement – September Date**

Each year, the SW Chapter has held an annual June Golf outing at the Bridges Golf Course in Madison, WI. This year, however, the outing will be held on Tuesday, September 14, starting at 12:00 pm noon.

Early registration deadline is August 14 when greens fees change from \$70 to \$85/person for 18 holes with cart, box lunch and dinner sandwich/drinks following the event along with ample raffle prizes for participants.

For complete information and registration, please visit our website at [wspe.org](http://wspe.org) and click on the link at the top of the website landing page. See you there!

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## **Thank You to the NSPE-WI Supporting Organizations!**

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Please contact [ExecDir@wspe.org](mailto:ExecDir@wspe.org) for details on how you can support NSPE-WI.

## NSPE-WI Mission Statement

NSPE-WI is an organization of licensed Professional Engineers (PEs) and Engineering Interns/Engineers in Training (EIs/EITs). NSPE-WI enhances the image of its members and their ability to ethically and professionally practice engineering through education, licensure advocacy, leadership training, multi-disciplinary networking, and outreach.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#).

## FAA safety engineer goes public to slam the agency's oversight of Boeing's 737 MAX

Haunted by the two deadly crashes of Boeing 737 MAX jets and his agency's role in approving the plane, veteran Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety engineer Joe Jacobsen is stepping forward publicly to give the victims' families "a firsthand account of what the truth is." In a detailed letter sent last month to a family that lost their daughter in the second MAX crash in Ethiopia two years ago this week, and in [interviews with The Seattle Times](#), Jacobsen gave the first personal account by an insider of the federal safety agency's response to the MAX crashes. Jacobsen should have been among the FAA specialists who reviewed the MAX's critical new flight control software during its original certification, which was largely controlled by Boeing. He's confident that he and other FAA engineers would have flagged its serious design flaws.

Interested in article summaries like this one? Be sure you're subscribed to NSPE's [Daily Designs newsletter](#), delivered to your in box each morning, Monday through Friday.

## Wanted: 2021 NSPE Emerging Leaders



NSPE is fostering a new generation of engineers who can think strategically, build effective teams, and lead successfully through its [Emerging Leaders Program](#). This intensive seven-month, professionally facilitated, virtual program is now accepting applications until **May 31**.

Early-career professionals with 5-8 years of experience who are just beginning to lead and think strategically in the profession are encouraged to apply. The program graduated its [first class of diverse, super achieving professionals](#) in February.

Between August 2021 and February 2022 participants will learn how to be successful at higher levels of leadership responsibility. Participants will engage in 90-minute leadership training sessions each month with learning discussions and mentoring on topics such as ownership, team development, communication skills, giving/receiving feedback, and presentation skills. There will also be ample networking opportunities with peers and national NSPE national leaders.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

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## Ethics Webinars for PEs and Those on the Licensure Path



Don't miss NSPE's upcoming ethics webinars on truthfulness and fidelity to employers and clients, with insight from Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq., NSPE's senior director for ethics and professional practice and NAFE executive director, and other NSPE ethics experts.

### April 7

#### [Engineering Ethics—Canon III—Truthfulness](#)

Learn from a variety of situations in which circumstances can tempt (and even encourage) engineers to dance around the edges of Canon III.

*Presenters: Hugh Veit, P.E., Susan Sprague, P.E., F.NSPE, and Rebecca Bowman,*

*P.E., Esq.*

## May 5

### [Engineering Ethics—Canon IV—Fidelity to Employers/Clients](#)

Examine the duties to employers and clients, and circumstances under which those duties can be pre-empted by higher duties, especially to the public health, safety, and welfare.

*Presenters: David Kish, Ph.D., P.E., Jeff Greenfield, Ph.D., P.E., F.NSPE, and Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq.*

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