

# PE MATTERS

STATE  
NEWS

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

>>>> SEPTEMBER 2018

## President's Message

By Jim Buggs, P.E.

Greetings, and my apologies for the long delay between newsletters. Writing is difficult for me because I am keenly aware that whatever I put in writing could be read by almost anyone almost anytime. It makes me want to make my writing thoughtful and useful. Lately, though, it has been even more difficult for me to write because I am so distressed by the current state of affairs – divisiveness, discrimination, passion over reason, personal views over data-driven science, attacks on labor, underfunded education and infrastructure, continued growth of the income inequality gap, debt-ridden college graduates with bleak futures, and the list goes on.

Closer to home, we are seeing attacks on professional licensure, including attempts in some states to completely eliminate it (at last count, there has been legislation in 31 states in the last 3 years, including 16 in 2018 alone). Wisconsin is currently undergoing a review of all certification and licensure regulations with a goal of eliminating as many as possible. The theory is that licensure or certification is a barrier to entry into the workforce. Pardon me for stating the obvious, but that's the whole point. The regulations exist to ensure that anyone practicing in a regulated profession or vocation has some minimum level of competency in order to protect the public. Licensure plays a vital role in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. While there are likely some occupations that could get by without stringent regulation, engineering is not one of them. We need to be extremely vigilant to prevent special interests from pushing through legislation that would adversely impact engineering licensure and put the public at increased risk.

Now that you know what's been weighing on my mind, I'll get down to discussing the current state of WSPE, including my goals for this fiscal year. First let me say, we need more members and, more than that, we need more **active** members. *YOU* are WSPE. Without *YOU*, there is no WSPE. It is that simple. So please get involved and encourage your colleagues to join and also get involved. That said, we have officer openings in all chapters. This is a great way to meet people and develop leadership skills, so please contact me at [president@wspe.org](mailto:president@wspe.org) to let me know which chapter you want to serve and I'll

work to make it happen. Also take a look at my goals below and let me know how you think you might be able to help. And please share your ideas about how to make WSPE the organization that **YOU** want it to be, including ways you might be able to use your own special skills.

My goals for this year include:

1. Updating the WSPE bylaws to comply with new NSPE bylaws.
2. Creating a strategic plan aligned with the goals of NSPE, but specific to WSPE.
3. Increasing membership and member involvement.
4. Updating the WSPE website.
5. Improving outreach and programs.
6. Increasing the volume and effectiveness of legislative activities.
7. Holding State/Chapter leadership training.
8. Improving relationships with other professional societies to advance interests of mutual benefit.
9. Retaining an Executive Director or management association to assist with meeting these goals.

We've got a good group of officers on the Executive Committee and we look forward to working with you to make WSPE the vibrant and vital organization that we all know it can be. We are working to: **Champion** the P.E. by defining, promoting, and protecting professional licensure; **Guide** engineers in the ethical practice of engineering; **Advance** engineering careers through professional development and leadership opportunities; and **Unite** fellow PEs through online social platforms, Interest Groups, state and chapter activities, and involvement in programs like MATHCOUNTS, Engineers Week, and Professional Engineers Day. Come and join us!

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## **WSPE Executive Committee Officers for 2018-2019**

The officers for the 2018-2019 fiscal year are as follows:

- President – Jim Buggs, P.E.
- President Elect – John Kustka, P.E.
- Vice President (Legislative) – Glen Schwalbach, P.E.
- Vice President (Membership) – Nancy Schultz, P.E.
- Vice President (Education) – Larry Steingraber, P.E.
- Treasurer – Marty Hanson, P.E.
- Secretary – Jim Makosky, P.E., P.M.P.
- Young Engineer Representative – Andy Meyers, P.E.

We welcome John Kustka, Jim Makosky, and Andy Meyers as new Executive Committee members this year and we thank them for bringing their skills and perspectives to the State Board. We are in the process of revamping the WSPE website and will have brief board member biographies posted soon to help you get to know us all better.

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## **MATHCOUNTS Update**

The 2018 State MATHCOUNTS was a great success, thanks to State Coordinator Todd Kinney and his team of volunteers. The event was once again held at the headquarters of Acuity Insurance in Sheboygan, WI. WSPE thanks Acuity for their tremendous support for this program, including the use of their beautiful facility and the help of their staff. Please plan to help out with the 2019 competition by contacting Larry Steingraber at [steingraberl@gmail.com](mailto:steingraberl@gmail.com) to get on a list of volunteers so you will be kept informed of details as the date approaches.

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## **Discovery Conference Update**

WSPE had a successful 2018 Discovery Conference in Green Bay hosted by the Fox River Valley Chapter. Many thanks to co-chairs Shelly Cornelius and Mike Lefebvre, along with GRAEF, who provided significant logistical support. Thanks also go to everyone who assisted them in putting together a great program and for our speakers and vendors. We are also grateful for the Supporting Organizations whose contributions helped fund the conference: Silver Sponsor – Foth; Bronze Sponsors – DAAR, Davy Engineering, Flygt (a Xylem brand), GRAEF, Hy-Brid Lifts, UW-Platteville, and We Energies. In addition to the educational aspects of the conference, the social hour at the end of the first day's conference provided a fun and relaxing networking opportunity for attendees.

We are currently looking for chapter input for the **2019 Discovery Conference**. Typically, the conference has rotated between the Metro (Milwaukee area), Fox River Valley (Green Bay area), and Southwest (Madison/Dells area) Chapters. Southwest Chapter would be in line for the next one, but the conference committee members can be from any chapter and they can make the determination as to where it should be held. All that's needed is a desire to help organize the details and get speakers lined up. I would also like to include more activities, such as an Order of the Engineer ceremony, at the next conference. The more help we have, the more varied the program can be so we can provide something to interest

everyone. Please contact Larry Steingraber at [steingraberl@gmail.com](mailto:steingraberl@gmail.com) to get on the Discovery Conference planning committee.

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## New Membership Model

The new NSPE membership model went into effect on July 1, 2018. Dues are now \$299 per year for all NSPE members and include membership at the local, state, and national level. Membership continues to include 15 free online seminars per year as well as a 50% discount on courses through the PE Institute. These are in addition to a wide variety of other benefits. Visit the [NSPE website](#) for more information and to access all your member benefits. If you have problems logging in, just contact Membership Services at [memserv@nspe.org](mailto:memserv@nspe.org) and someone will gladly help you.

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## National Delegate Year in Review

By Angela Hanz, P.E.

Greetings WSPE Members –

I recently returned from the NSPE National Conference, which was held in Las Vegas, NV on July 18-22. The national conference is a great opportunity for continuing education, networking, and leadership development. I found myself mingling with Elvis the first night at the Viva NSPE Reception and finishing out the conference having breakfast with a NASA engineer who works with astronauts in developing the ergonomics of the space shuttle capsules. What a variety of experiences! I had the opportunity to meet Kristina Swallow (the ASCE President) as well as Michael Aitken (the 2018-2019 NSPE President). I spoke with the employees of Michael's company and learned that Michael closed the office so that the employees could attend the NSPE conference with him!

Volunteering on the State Board for WSPE opens up many opportunities to attend events such as the national conference. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the organization in the National Delegate role.

What has NSPE done for *YOU* this past year?

- **NSPE Champions the PE License:** NSPE protects the integrity of the PE license in a changing world and promotes a constant focus on the public health, safety, and welfare. In Ohio, the NSPE fought legislation that could undermine and potentially eliminate engineering licensure in the state.

- **NSPE Increases Federal Presence:** NSPE represented professional engineers to numerous federal agencies, Congress, and organizations in the nation's capital. NSPE successfully championed federal legislation to strengthen QBS requirements.
- **NSPE Stands as the Ethical Guide to the Profession:** NSPE gives voice and impact to the practice of ethical engineering and serves as the profession's most respected ethics authority. NSPE celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Board of Ethical Review opinions (the first case was published in 1958) and released 12 new cases.
- **NSPE Powers Professional Advancement:** NSPE provides the tools PEs need to keep current in the profession and advance their careers. NSPE enabled NSPE members to earn professional development hours from their home or office with 15 free online courses offered annually.
- **NSPE Unites the PE Community:** NSPE connects like-minded professionals at all stages of their careers. Hundreds of PEs, students, and organizations celebrated the second annual Licensed Professional Engineers Day in August. Sixteen states and local governments issued official proclamations.

You can access the entire 2017-2018 Year in Review here. Another great online tool for members is the [NSPE Communities](#). NSPE membership and communities give engineers the resources they need to be better informed and better connected within their professional community.

Goals for 2018-2019: Step up and be active in your chapters this year! The main reason people don't volunteer is because no one asks them or lets them know it is important. I first became active back in 2006 after meeting Bob Parmley, Mike Davy, Mark Davy, and Archie Becher, who were all active in WSPE. They were the engineers that introduced me to the organization. Make it your goal this year to participate in your local chapter and introduce someone else to the organization – they could be the next person mingling with Elvis!

*NSPE's 2019 Professional Engineers Conference will be held July 17-21 in Kansas City, Missouri. Mark your calendars!*

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## Is Your Membership Information Up to Date?

As a member of the Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers, you are also a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers. If you haven't visited the [NSPE website](#), check it out. On the site, you can [update your membership](#)

[information](#) or set up your user name and password, [renew your membership](#), show others [how to join](#), and find many great resources.

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## **WSPE Mission Statement**

WSPE is an organization of licensed Professional Engineers (PEs) and Engineering Interns/Engineers in Training (EIs/EITs). WSPE 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.

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## **Thank You to Our Sponsoring Supporting Organizations**





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## As Threats Increase, Don't Be Complacent

Professional licensure seems like a no-brainer. When you drive on a road, enter an elevator, or cross a bridge, you want to make sure that competent engineers performed the engineering work. Licensing the practice of engineering ensures that PEs are there to recognize risks that the public can't identify and protect themselves against.



However, another paradigm is at play currently: that licensure is a barrier to economic growth, workforce development, and investment. This belief has driven anti-licensure initiatives in 31 states in just the past three years, and in 16 states in 2018 so far.

PEs cannot be complacent. Unified, nationwide action is critical. And that is exactly the mission of NSPE and its network of state societies.

[Read more from NSPE's Executive Director Mark Golden.](#)

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## **Congress Addresses Occupational Licensing Reform**

In July, the House and Senate passed the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 2353) to address excessive licensing burdens. NSPE worked with Congress to ensure that occupational licensing reform would not have a direct impact on public health and safety and that only rigorously trained and tested individuals would be allowed to practice engineering and in related design fields.

Among the amendments adopted in the legislation was a version of the New Hope Act, that would allow states to use federal education funds to identify and examine licenses or certifications that pose an unwarranted barrier to entry into the workforce and don't protect the health, safety, or welfare of consumers. With the law, states could use this money to form a commission or task force to review existing licensing requirements in their state and identify ones that should be eliminated or curtailed.

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## **New Reports Clear Up Differences in State Laws**

Professional engineers know that the laws and regulations related to their license will vary, sometimes markedly, from state to state. Confusion often results.

To help clarify the state-by-state details on key licensing issues, NSPE will release four reports in the coming months that will be helpful resources for NSPE members, state societies, licensing boards, legislators, and policymakers.

Reports on the following documents are scheduled to be released over the next few months:





- **September 12:** [Digital Signing and Sealing of Engineering Documents](#)
- **October 17:** Engineering technology degrees and the PE license
- **November 14:** Structural engineering practice requirements
- **December 12:** Disciplinary self-reporting requirements

NSPE members have [unlimited access to a series of valuable state assessments](#) , including *Continuing Education Requirements for Professional Engineers*, *Exemptions to Engineering Licensure Laws*, and *State Licensing Fees for Professional Engineers*.

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