

State News for NSPE Members

President's Message

By: John Kustka, P.E.
President –NSPE-WI



NSPE-WI (WSPE) Discovery Conference

Has gone Virtual!

Conference: June 10 – July 30, 2020

Details Below

Conference: April 21-22, 2020

Hello, and thank you again for taking the time to read this message. I want to thank those of you who read our last edition and reached out to assist us. Your involvement is critical to the success of our organization and we appreciate all your contributions.

Much has happened since our last communication. You are all probably sick of hearing about COVID19 and all the resultant restrictions that we have been enduring. It has caused many of us to take a step back and really think about all the things we take for granted. This pandemic has been a test of how long a nation can survive economically while still maintaining a high level of isolationism. It is a delicate balance and one that will be written about in the history books.

We have seen a great deal of strain thrust on our medical services, equipment and personnel as well as our food supply chain. Front line medical personnel have and continue to endure a challenging environment while putting their own health at risk. Food manufacturers have struggled to keep supplies current as much of their labor force continues to be plagued by the virus. Those who are fortunate enough to work from home have learned how to adapt, and those who cannot have become unemployed, the highest level since the great depression. And with very few traveling, gasoline surpluses are large enough to drive the price to 99¢/gallon.

But we are a nation of strong-willed, get it done people. Life will not look like it did before this all started. There will be changes, some of which we have seen already. As engineers, we will be asked to innovate, modify and invent new products and processes to aid society in coping with the "new normal". It has and will continue to affect all of us. So please, if you have a story to share about how this has changed your job or your life (good or bad) send it to us and we will include it in this publication.

The State of the State

NSPE-WI is continuing our search for individuals who can volunteer some of their time and talent to the betterment of NSPE-WI. To each member who reads this and shares our belief that the Professional Engineer is vital to the well-being of our society, we are asking for your help. The effectiveness of our organization does not lie with a few individuals, but all of us collectively. That is why we need to have representation and leadership in all of our (7) chapters.

Metro Chapter has New Leadership

The Metro chapter recently concluded an election of Chapter Officers. Congratulations to the following officers!

President: **Michael Bach, P.E.**
President-Elect: **Mike Mitchell, P.E.**
Secretary: **Melinda Dejewski, P.E.**
Treasurer: **Randy Johanning, P.E.**

If you are a member of the Metro Chapter, please reach out to these folks and volunteer your time, talent and treasures to help in making the Metro Chapter vibrant.

In addition, we have been busy in conducting a **Membership Survey** to gain crucial feedback. We will be reaching out to our **SouthEast Chapter** members next. If you haven't already been contacted by one of our State Officers, you will be. Please take just a few minutes to pick up the phone or return the email as it is very important that we get your input.



Chapter Officers needed in these areas:

- Northwest
- Wisconsin Valley
- Western
- Southeast

Please contact either ExecDir@wspe.org or jkustka@kustka.com for more information about how you can help.

If you would like to learn more about what is involved in serving as an officer or if you have held office at the Chapter level and wish to assist NSPE-WI in this most important goal, please contact either ExecDir@wspe.org or jkustka@kustka.com.

We want to hear from you!

We are seeking input from all members or perspective members.

- What would you like to see from your local Chapter or State Board?
- Do you have an idea for an event or gathering for a Chapter event?
- How can we become more connected here in the State of Wisconsin?
- What efforts would help us to grow our membership?

Please contact me with your input, ideas or feedback at jkustka@kustka.com or 608-756-2910. I look forward to hearing from you!

NSPE-WI (WSPE) Virtual Discovery Conference

By: John Brome, P.E.

President Elect- NSPE-WI

Each year, typically in the spring, our State Society holds their annual "Discovery Conference" for our members and non-members alike. The annual event is meant to provide a means of offering licensed engineers a means of attaining their required PDH credits, to help introduce new technology to a variety of engineering disciplines, to allow attendees the opportunity to network and of course, it helps keep our organization financially solvent.

Last year, our theme was all about the importance of keeping up with technology and pandered to Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Bio-Medical engineering interests. This year, our theme is "Transforming Engineering for Our Changing World". The intent of our theme was to point out how new technology is changing the role of the engineer. In the wake of the corona virus, our theme title proved to be "spot-on" not so much because of new technology but rather because of a pandemic that has caused everyone world-wide to work more autonomously while maintaining interactive communication with our working counterparts. If we "discovered" anything, it's that the high speed internet, desktop and laptop computers and our computer skills have helped to save jobs. Without those tools, everyone would be in a much worse circumstance.

Although we had planned to hold an in-person conference as last year, we ultimately decided on holding a virtual discovery conference, our first one ever. The covid-19 virus won't stop us from holding our conference but admittedly we are having to shift gears. The conference will begin on June 10 and will conclude on July 30. So how can we hold a conference for 8 weeks? By offering two presentations per week, each for one hour long, resulting in 16 conferences and 16 PDHs. So what topics will be discussed, you may ask? We will be offering presentations on Civil Engineering, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering, Artificial Intelligence, Solar Energy Engineering, Manufacturing and Automation as well as Ethics and General Engineering.

The presentations will be conducted on Wednesday and Friday (or Saturday) at 10:00 am the first week and every other week thereafter. On alternating weeks the presentations will be offered on Tuesday and Thursday at 12:00 pm noon. Each presentation will conclude with a Q & A session via chat box. Anyone can register online

by visiting the WSPE.org website. Cost to attend all sessions is \$150 or individually at \$15/each.

We are looking forward to offering this series of presentations to anyone interested and we hope that this Discovery Conference proves successful this year and well into the future.

Registration Open! 2020 NSPE-WI (WSPE) Virtual Discovery Conference

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel and gathering restrictions and recommendations, NSPE-WI will provide a virtual Discovery Conference in place of our annual in-person conference.

We have scheduled 16 conference sessions based on the scheduling survey results. We have 4 sessions on Tuesdays at noon, 4 sessions on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m., 4 sessions on Thursdays at noon 2 sessions on Friday at 10:00 a.m., and 2 sessions on Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. Sessions will be held from Wednesday, June 10, through Thursday, July 30, 2020.

[Session schedule in PDF is available here.](#)

You can pick individual sessions at \$15 each or you can sign up for all 16 sessions as a package for \$150. Payment is by credit card using PayPal—note a PayPal account is not required.

After registration and payment, you will be sent the Zoom meeting information via email the day prior to your session. The sessions will be moderated and there will be an opportunity to ask questions via the chat feature in Zoom.

[Register Now!](#)

Annual State Board meeting

Our annual State Board meeting will also be held via video-conference. We have scheduled this meeting for **Thursday, July 23 from 3–5PM CST**. More information will be made available via email invitation and instructions for how to join the meeting. This meeting is open to NSPE-WI members and all are encouraged to attend. Please join us to see what your state board has been working on as well as plans to move forward. Your input and feedback are critical to the success of our organization.

A BIG THANKS TO OUR CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Fred Groth - Co Chair
John Brome - Co Chair
Marty Hanson - Virtual Conference Administrator

Mathcounts Update

By: **Todd Kinney, P.E.**
MATHCOUNTS Coordinator

MATHCOUNTS is a national mathematics competition for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. Winners at the regional event advance on to the State competition. Winners at the State level advance on to the National competition. The program is designed to enhance the math skills of our students and promote excellence in mathematics. The goal is to draw attention to math skills at the pre-college preparation level. This will hopefully encourage students to take all the math courses they can through high school. Please visit mathcounts.org for further information regarding the MATHCOUNTS program.

Due to the pandemic, the national competition was cancelled this year. However, we are hopeful that the program will resume next year.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact me at tjkinney@charter.net or 920-207-3924. If you have questions regarding your Chapter competition, please contact your Chapter coordinator.

Take advantage of the 15 Free courses

Included with your NSPE membership are 15 FREE on-demand webinars that you can access from the comfort of your home or office. Take advantage of these courses (a \$2,235 value) to further your professional development and meet your continuing education requirements.

The new 2020 courses are now online, and include

- The engineering ethics series;
- Drones: The Sky's the Limit;
- How Engineers Create Added Value;
- How Not to Fail as a Leader;
- Managing Risk Through Arbitration and Dispute Resolution;
- And more!



Continuing Education Requirements

By: John Kustka, P.E.
President –NSPE-WI

On April 15, 2020, I drafted a letter to the DSPS on behalf of our registered professional engineers requesting an extension for the submission of continuing education credits in the 2018-20 biennium. An extension was granted, but the addition of a waiver requirement was included.

[Attached is the letter](#) we received from DSPS in response which outlines the conditions for extending your continuing education requirements.

To alleviate the need for such a waiver, NSPE-WI is offering 16 pdh's via our Virtual Discovery Conference, prior to July 31, 2020.

NSPE-WI Chapter Revitalization

By: John Brome, P.E.
President Elect- NSPE-WI

Over the past several years, NSPE-WI has been experiencing a decline in chapter activity. This is not uncommon among many professional societies and is also true with other NSPE state societies.

What seems to be happening is that 1) after people join our professional engineering society they lose interest after a period of time and 2) young engineers choose not to join because they prefer spending their time on other things. So we're losing participation from both camps.

Currently, NSPE-WI has 7 chapters: Metro, SE, SW, Western, NW, WI Valley and Fox River Valley. Only 2 chapters are currently active except for holding the annual regional MATHCOUNTS competition. What can we do to stem the trend in the near future and reverse this trend for the long term?

The executive committee came up with a plan to address this issue for the short term by drafting and executing a plan to offer as much as 100% membership reimbursement to anyone volunteering to become a chapter officer with up to 5 officer positions per chapter. At least 3 positions were required to be filled before an inactive chapter could redeem active status: President, Secretary and Treasurer. The secretary and Treasurer positions would be reimbursed 50%. Each volunteer would have to commit to a 1 year term and would receive their membership reimbursement after their service.

To begin, the executive committee contacted each member of one of the inactive chapters and after a several month period, found 3 members that agreed to participate. These three officers, along with the determination of the executive committee, will be re-instating the Metro Chapter of NSPE-WI as an active chapter and deserve special commendation! To complete their installment, the executive committee will conduct a Metro Chapter election of these 3 nominees and, after the votes are in and counted, are expected to be installed during an NSPE-WI board meeting, probably in June. The beginning of their service will start on July 1 and conclude June 30 of 2021.

The healing process of our chapter activity may begin with making calls and getting people to agree with our reimbursement plan but for the long term, we are going to have to look at what we can do to prevent chapter inactivity from occurring in the first place, not just play catch-up after the fact.

Contacting each chapter's member, finding people interested in participating in our offer and getting them to accept a 1 year obligation is not an easy task. We need to continue our efforts to get all of our chapters back to a more normal active status as we hatch a plan to prevent this from re-occurring. Some ideas are: 1) to periodically include chapter board members in executive committee meetings to establish an ongoing dialog with each chapter board, 2) to meet with company heads of member employers asking for their help in supporting our professional society and 3) sharing a meal with chapter members periodically to ask for their suggestions and comments.

Getting people revved up about taking time out of their busy lives and spending it to help promote a professional society may not be easy but is necessary. Our professional society is making a difference in our state and country. It's because of competent engineers helping write building and testing codes, making technical advancements and putting in place quality control processes that help make the lives of everyone safer, healthier and more enjoyable. Belonging to our professional society does help ensure public safety and it's what makes your membership worthwhile.

Supporting Organizations

WSPE would like to thank our current **Supporting Organizations**:

Gold Sponsor



Silver Sponsor



Bronze Sponsors



CREATIVITY BEYOND ENGINEERING

You can visit the websites of these companies by clicking on their logos on the WSPE website at wspe.org. Becoming a **Supporting Organization** at any time is easy and your support is vital in funding activities and programs at the state and chapter level. Sponsoring organizations get a variety of benefits based on sponsorship level, including recognition at events and in publications, free or reduced-rate job board postings, free conference registrations, and more.

Please contact ExecDir@wspe.org for details on how you can support NSPE-WI.

WSPE Executive Committee Officers for 2019–2020

President - **John Kustka, P.E.**

President Elect - **John Brome, P.E.**

Past President - **James Buggs, P.E., F.NSPE**

Vice President (Legislative) - **Glen Schwalbach, P.E.**

Vice President (Membership) - **Nancy Schultz, P.E.**

Vice President (Education) - **Andy Myers, P.E.**

Treasurer - **Martin Hanson, P.E.**

Secretary - **Eric Schlevensky, P.E.**

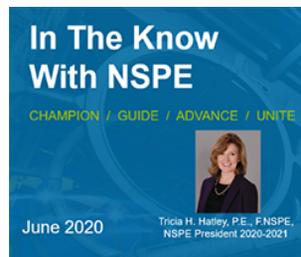
Young Engineer Representative - Open

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.

Are You “In the Know”?

Members who want to get a quick overview of the Society’s news should check out the June [“In the Know with NSPE” video](#) on YouTube. The 15-minute presentation by President-Elect Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE, covers topics like the reopening of licensing and certification exams, [PE](#) magazine highlights, a breakdown of the Society’s [strategic plan](#), [advocacy efforts](#) on behalf of PEs, the upcoming [Virtual Professional Engineers Conference](#), the Society’s [statement](#) on social injustice, and the [Emerging Leaders Program](#).



Register for the *Virtual* PECon 2020

Registration is now open for the 2020 Virtual Professional Engineers Conference (**PECon**) on **August 3–7** with events centered around the annual celebration of [PE Day](#) on August 5.

Virtual **PECon** sessions can be experienced in a live virtual environment or by accessing recordings at a more convenient time. The virtual conference will also provide networking and social connection with colleagues by region and areas of practice in addition to professional development opportunities.



PECon at a Glance

- Keynote sessions featuring IBM’s Global Chief Technology Officer and the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board
- Session: [Ensuring Successful Stakeholder and Community Involvement](#)
- Session: [Stormwater Pollution Prevention Planning: Compliance Guidelines for Your Facility](#)
- Session: [Professional Engineer’s Role in Artificial Intelligence and Technology](#)
- Session: [Ethics of Sustainable Design](#)
- Session: [Shrinking the Distance for Virtual Teams to Succeed](#)

There are three registration options:

1. **Single Session** provides individual one PDH sessions for \$39 (\$99 for nonmembers);
2. **Day Track** provides access to three PDH sessions, networking morning “coffee talk” roundtables, and evening post session discussions for \$99 (\$279 for nonmembers); and
3. **All-Access Pass** provides 15 PDH sessions with networking morning “coffee talk” roundtables each day and event post session discussions for \$249 (\$1,149 for nonmembers).

Nonmembers can join NSPE for \$299 and receive member pricing.

Virtual PECon 2020 Free for Students

NSPE is providing the opportunity for student members to participate in the upcoming **Virtual Professional Engineers Conference 2020** for free on August 3–7.

Student members who register for the conference can sign up for a track or an all-access pass and can also attend networking events, including morning coffee talks and evening round table discussions.

[Register now.](#)

[Register now to customize your attendance package for live events August 3–7.](#)

Call for 2020–21 Volunteers

NSPE needs your knowledge, expertise, and time to assist our organization carry out its [vision, mission, and meet the goals of the strategic plan](#) . Volunteer positions begin in August and end at the annual conference in 2021.

These opportunities are organized into three types with various levels of engagement.

Engagement Level 1: Standing committees and select committees require the highest engagement level. They often involve attending at least one in-person meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting. Most meetings are held via conference call.

Engagement Level 2: These volunteer positions are responsible for organization activities and involve assignment to a committee, task force, or other group. Activities primarily include e-mail and conference calls.

Engagement Level 3: Ad hoc volunteers take part in activities on a project-by-project basis.

[Submit forms by July 15 to be considered for a 2020–21 term.](#)

Aiming for Leadership? This Program's for You

If you're starting your engineering career and looking toward a future of leadership, NSPE is excited to offer an opportunity to participate in the Emerging Leaders Program.

The NSPE Emerging Leaders Program is an intensive seven month, professionally facilitated, focused, practical, virtual program for emerging leaders. Between August 5 (Professional Engineers Day) and February 27 (National Engineers Week) participants will receive specific, relevant training and application on how to be successful at higher levels of leadership responsibility.

The target audience for the Emerging Leaders Program is for promising early-career professionals with 5-8 years of experience who are just beginning to lead and think strategically in the profession and their careers. The reality-based curriculum focuses on the core skills necessary to think strategically, build effective teams, deliver great service for their most valued clients, and lead successfully.

[Learn more and apply by July 1, 2020.](#)

Advocacy Opportunity: Speak Out for Future PEs

You have an opportunity today to advocate for the future of the engineering profession!

H.R. 5339 ([Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act](#)) amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow students with 529 Education Accounts to use those funds for expenses related to obtaining a post-education credential—including the PE license. Funds could be used for expenses associated with both exam prep and the exam itself.

The bill needs additional cosponsors in order to move forward. As NSPE's Government Relations team continues talking with House offices, your support of H.R. 5339 is crucial. The more support we have from NSPE members, the stronger position we're in to ask House Representatives to sign on.

You have the opportunity to take multiple actions if you'd like, [starting with writing a letter](#) , then following up with either a Tweet or a phone call. Or all three, if you're feeling especially ambitious!

Feel free to contact Stephanie Hamilton if you have any questions, or if you'd just like to talk about advocacy! Hamilton can be reached at 703-684-2844 or shamilton@nspe.org .

[Take action on H.R. 5339.](#)

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