

Talking Points: September 2011

Need leadership tools? Visit www.nspe.org/toolbox (user name and password will be required).

Advocacy & Outreach

- The NSPE House of Delegates approved a **new professional policy on industrial exemptions**, stating “that all engineers who are in responsible charge of the practice of engineering as defined in the NCEES Model Law and Rules in a manner that potentially impacts the public health, safety, and welfare should be required by all state statutes to be licensed professional engineers. NSPE recommends the phasing out of existing industrial exemptions in state licensing laws.”
- The NSPE Board of Directors approved a **fourth NSPE goal**, recommended by the Licensure and Qualifications for Practice Committee. The goal calls for “advocacy of U.S. public policy pertaining to engineering matters in the interest of enhancing public health, safety, and welfare.”
- The board approved **revisions to NSPE Position Statement 1757 on Nuclear Electric Power**. The new position statement, recommended by the Legislative and Government Affairs Committee, states that PEs “should be required to have direct supervision over all engineering design, operations, and maintenance decisions at nuclear power plants.”
- The NSPE Legislative and Government Affairs Committee met at the Annual Meeting in Las Vegas to discuss the committee’s goals for the coming year and determine **NSPE’s primary public policy agenda for 2011–12**. Based on committee discussions and a recent survey of NSPE members, NSPE will focus on the following federal issues:
 - Qualifications-based selection;
 - STEM education;
 - Good Samaritan protection for professional engineers;
 - Energy;
 - Licensure of federal engineers; and
 - Critical infrastructure and homeland security;
- NSPE sent a letter with approximately 30 other professional and scientific organizations to the Office of Government Ethics supporting a proposed rule that would ease the way for **federal employees to hold leadership positions in professional societies**. The rule would clarify that serving in such roles was not a conflict of interest with federal employees’ duties to the government, removing the legal concern that has prevented federal employees from holding leadership positions in the past.

- NSPE sent a letter with the STEM Education Coalition to Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee leadership recommending that the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** be reauthorized with a focus on improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. NSPE is a member of the STEM Education Coalition, which supports STEM programs for teachers and students at the Department of Education, National Science Foundation, and other agencies that offer STEM-related programs. The coalition is composed of more than 1,000 diverse groups representing all sectors of the technological workforce.

Volunteer Leadership

- NSPE volunteer leaders have a variety of **online leadership resources** to help them carry out their responsibilities. All of the following, plus other resources, can be accessed at www.nspe.org/toolbox (user name and password required):
 - New brochure on the benefits of membership for young engineers;
 - Sample recruitment letters;
 - NSPE's Mentoring Guide for Small, Medium, and Large Firms;
 - Benefits of Licensure presentation;
 - State leader and chapter leader handbooks;
 - *Strategies For Member Retention and Attraction*;
 - A current list of NSPE-related trademarks; and
 - Archived Webinars.

Honors & Awards

- Christopher Stone, P.E., F.NSPE, of Norfolk, Virginia, was installed as **the 2011–12 NSPE president** during the NSPE Annual Meeting. Stone is a structural engineer and president of Clark Nexsen PC, one of Virginia's largest architecture, engineering, and interior design firms. The PE has been active in the Society since 1989, and was formerly president of the Virginia Society of Professional Engineers and its Tidewater chapter.
- Teresa Helmlinger Ratcliff, P.E., Ph.D., F.NSPE, was recently given **the NSPE Award**. Ratcliff, past president of NSPE (2003–04), has applied her service energies in many areas, including as president of the Professional Engineers of North Carolina's Educational Foundation. The NSPE Award, presented for outstanding contributions to the engineering profession, public welfare, or humankind, is the highest award given to an individual by the Society.
- NSPE presented **the President's Award** to Craig Musselman, P.E., F.NSPE, who has put his services into numerous licensing committees, including the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying and NSPE's Licensure and Qualifications for Practice Committee. His past service includes serving as president for the New Hampshire Society of Professional Engineers, which named him Engineer of the Year in 2004.

- Leslie Turner, P.E., has been named **Young Engineer of the Year**. Besides her professional work, Turner is involved in a number of areas of professional organizations, serving as chair for MATHCOUNTS in both her regional and state divisions of the Florida Engineering Society, as well as treasurer for her region.
- A former member of the U.S. Navy Seabees and officer of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, George Knecht, P.E., F.NSPE, has been given the **Distinguished Service Award**. He has served as national director for NSPE, and received both state and national awards for membership in the 1980s, personally recruiting 150 first-time members over a three-year period.
- **Mentor of the Year** Jeffrey Russell, P.E., Ph.D., has educated, researched, and served the civil engineering profession for more than 20 years. Chair of the department of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Russell has advised over 100 graduate students—including 26 Ph.D. students.
- **NSPE's interest groups gave out awards** as well. This included:
 - William Lawson, P.E., Ph.D., received the PEHE Engineering Education Excellence Award;
 - Sandra Knight, P.E., F.NSPE, received the PEG Achievement and Service in the United States Award;
 - Thomas Voss, P.E., received the PEI Distinguished Service Award;
 - Connie J. Eggleston received the PEPP Award; and
 - Thomas M. Maheady, P.E., F.NSPE, and L. Daniel Tanksley, P.E., F.NSPE, each received the PEPP Merit Award.

Education

- A number of **scholarships and fellowships** were recently awarded by NSPE's interest groups. They included:
 - The Professional Engineers in Industry Scholarship was awarded to Gretchen Heberling, in the architectural engineering program at the University of Wyoming;
 - The Professional Engineers in Construction George B. Hightower, P.E., Fellowship was awarded to Timothy C. Becker, P.E., Ph.D., a student of civil engineering at Iowa State University; and
 - The Professional Engineers in Government Management Fellowship was awarded to Fay Costa, P.E., for a master's program in environmental management at Illinois Institute of Technology's Stuart School of Business.
- The NSPE/PEI **Innovative Engineering Award** recognizes the best engineering projects at science fairs sponsored by Intel for grades 7–12. More than 500 students are given a pin and certificate each year; from this pool, one is selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship. This spring, Kelles Gordge of Great Mills, Maryland, won the scholarship for her project on analyzing lung sounds amid noisy environments (such as an ambulance or helicopter).
- *A Field Guide for Inspection of Sewerage and Drainage Construction*, for sale now on the NSPE Web site, has been downloaded almost 700 times, and is available to members for only \$10.

- Last fall, NSPE began offering **15 free online PDHs** to all members. A new set of courses will be released in January 2012, while the original set will be available on the NSPE Web site under “Shop NSPE.” Get them while they’re still free! Available at www.nspe.org/15forFree.
- NSPE has a **new batch of Web seminars**, including the Ethics Forum Series on September 28, October 19, and November 9.
 - September 22: How to Get Your First Job
 - September 28: Conflicts of Interest—Will Proposed Federal Rules Impact Engineering Practice?
 - October 4: Project Management and Ethics
 - October 19: Confronting an Ethics Disaster—What Can Professional Engineers Do?
 - November 3: IT Solutions for AEC Professionals
 - November 9: Whistleblowing—What Are the PE's Obligations to Report Misconduct?
 - November 15: Harnessing the Power of Change
 - November 29: How to Conduct Effective Meetings
- Synergy 2011, NSPE’s HR and Finance Roundtable, was a success this past May in Alexandria, Virginia. The event included sessions on employee engagement, identifying and cultivating business development leaders, driving motivation, and engineering a great place to work. The knowledge shared among these professionals **impacts over 50,000 engineer employees**. Planning is already under way for the next roundtable in early May 2012.

Communications

- NSPE President Christopher Stone, P.E., F.NSPE, has posted a video on NSPE’s YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/NSPEVideo>) that explains the 2020 Transformation Plan. The plan aims to inform the public: 1) about what a professional engineer is and that a PE is the only recognized standard for the engineering profession, 2) that PEs are part of a learned, honorable profession, 3) that PEs take an oath to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, 4) that PEs are held to the highest ethical standards, and 5) that PEs are LEADERS in the engineering profession, in business, and in our communities. LEADERS is the acronym for NSPE’s focus this year (Licensure, Ethics, Advocacy, Diversity, Education, Recruitment, Sustainability.)
- NSPE’s **social networking** efforts continue to expand and provide the Society with new channels for communicating its messages.
 - Twitter (<http://twitter.com/NSPE>): NSPE’s Twitter feed has almost 1,700 followers, with exceptional growth over the last year. It was mentioned as one of the Top 100 Twitter feeds for engineering students, and ranks as the 13th most influential on “Wefollow.com” for the keyword “engineer.”
 - *PE* magazine on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/PEmag>): In April, *PE* launched its own Twitter feed as another way for the editorial staff to connect with the engineering community they cover. Almost 150 people follow the feed.
 - Facebook (www.facebook.com/NSPEonFB): 1,600 fans and growing.
 - YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/NSPEVideo>): Twenty-one videos are now available and NSPE’s channel has been visited more than 6,700 times since it began in July 2009.

- NSPE's **Job Update**, a newsletter published every other week that highlights the latest engineering job openings, was launched last year. Each issue has over 4,000 readers. Additionally, a new Twitter feed that highlights job openings was started one year ago at <http://twitter.com/NSPEngineerJobs>. Both of these communication tools have resulted in greater traffic to the NSPE Job Board.

Other Notables

- The **7th Annual Young Engineers' Forum** was held July 16 during the NSPE Annual Meeting. The event was free to young engineers, and all speakers were young engineer members of the Society.
- The **Young PE Quarterly** is an electronic newsletter available to all student members and engineers under 35, specifically covering topics of interest to engineers in the early stages of their careers, such as what employers look for, what licensure can offer, and workplace trends. In addition to this, Young Engineer Advisory Committee Chair Austin Lin blogs on similar issues on the NSPE Web site: <http://community.nspe.org>.
- Last year, CNA/Victor O. Schinnerer & Co. established a **5% professional liability insurance credit** for firms insured under the CNA/VOSCO program, if at least 50% of the firm's professional staff are NSPE members. To date there are still many members/firms that are eligible for this exclusive benefit but have not yet taken advantage of it. To learn more or find out if this opportunity is open to you, contact Jasmin Tatum at Jasmin.Tatum@schinnerer.com or call 301-961-9861 for details.
- Recent graduates of ABET-accredited engineering programs may be eligible for up to **80% off of NSPE membership dues**. Lesser discounts could apply up to four years after graduation. To verify that a graduate's state participates in the graduated dues program or to enroll, contact NSPE member services at memserv@nspe.org or 888-285-NSPE.