

State News for NSPE Members

Hawaii Partners with Army Corps of Engineers to Reduce Coastal Flooding Risks

Hawaii has partnered with the US Army Corps of Engineers in a Hawaii Silver Jackets Interagency Collaboration Team under the state's Ocean Resources Management Plan (ORMP). The Silver Jackets is a nation-wide program focused on reducing coastal flood risks.

The State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development's Coastal Zone Management Program will serve as the lead coordinating agency for state. Now that the state team is formally recognized, Hawaii is now eligible for support from the US Army Corps of Engineers via technical advisory and annual funding opportunities.

"We welcome this partnership that further solidifies the Army Corps' commitment to support local approaches to address our state's significant risks from coastal flooding. Coastal hazards, including flooding from sea level rise, is listed as one of the ORMP's three main focus areas and the Silver Jackets team will play a key role in providing technical support and leveraging resources to best address this issue," said Justine Nihipali, Coastal Zone Management program manager and state lead.

[Read more.](#)

\$800K Boosts Diversity in Materials Science, Engineering at UH-Mānoa

To increase diversity in cutting-edge materials research, education and professions, collaborating University of Hawaii at Mānoa and University of Washington researchers were awarded \$800,000 from the National Science Foundation.

This seed award from the NSF's Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) will support materials research partnerships between minority-

serving institutions and large-scale, NSF-supported research centers and facilities.

The Materials Research and Education Consortium is composed of seven UH faculty from HNEI, the Hawaii Institute of Geophysics and Planetology and the Colleges of Engineering and Social Sciences, as well as 10 faculty from UW Molecular Engineering Materials Center, an NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Center.

PREM is intended to enhance and solidify a pathway for young researchers from underrepresented groups to enter the vibrant field of materials science and engineering. Research activities of this new project maximize the complementary expertise and resources at both institutions while emphasizing the education and training of a diverse next generation of scientists and engineers. The research is focused on developing foundational knowledge about advanced nano-to-microscale materials and properties controlling their unique behaviors, and investigating their use for future energy and space technologies.

[Read more.](#)

State Licensing Board Meeting

The Hawaii Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors & Landscape Architects will host its next meeting on **Thursday, September 16** at 10 a.m.

A Zoom link and agenda will be provided prior to the meeting. Access the [board website](#) for more information.

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

Anti-Licensing Forces Miss the Point

Extreme anti-licensing bills have popped up in numerous states and are posing a threat to the rigorous and established professional standards followed by PEs, architects, and others who design and construct the built environment, [according to an op-ed in The Hill](#).

Lawmakers calling for these extreme measures don't differentiate between barbers and manicurists, for example, and PEs and architects, say Tom Smith, executive director of ASCE, and Michael Armstrong, CEO of NCARB. "In their absolutist free-market view, reflected in the language of their model legislation, a visit to a barbershop or beauty salon should be treated the same as designing a bridge or water treatment plant."

The legislative proposals range from measures that [would eliminate licensing](#)

entirely to so-called “Universal Licensing” bills that would require states to accept licenses from any state regardless of whether the out-of-state license had the same level of qualifications behind it.

NSPE Calls for PE Role in AI Risk Management

To protect the public from the potential dangers of artificial intelligence applications, NSPE is calling for the involvement of licensed professional engineers in the AI development process.

NSPE’s [recommendations were submitted](#) to the National Institute of Standards and Technology in response to NIST’s request for input on an artificial intelligence risk management framework. The recommendations advocate for professional engineers or certain certified individuals to be included within the risk management framework, which covers all levels of development and implementation.

“This individual would be responsible for making decisions related to protecting the public, including those who would use or potentially be affected by an AI application,” wrote NSPE President Rick Guerra, P.E., F.NSPE. “Oversight responsibility should include having the authority to approve or reject the process, methodology, or other characteristics of the specific AI project. Having a credentialed individual to ensure these considerations are made can reduce risk that an artificial intelligence application will fail.”

Meet the 2021 Scholarship Winners

The [NSPE Education Foundation](#) recently awarded several scholarships to support talented students pursuing engineering. Meet the 2021 winners:

Markie Ash, of Waupaca, Wisconsin, is winner of the [Auxiliary Legacy Scholarship](#) and the [George B. Hightower, P.E. Fellowship](#). Ash is studying civil engineering with a structural emphasis at University of Wisconsin-Platteville. The \$2,500 auxiliary scholarship is awarded annually to a female undergraduate entering, or continuing, her junior year of a four-year ABET-accredited engineering program. The \$3,000 Hightower Fellowship is awarded annually to an engineering undergraduate or graduate student who is enrolled in, or graduated from, an ABET-accredited engineering program.



Justin Sivasothy is this year’s recipient of the [Maureen L. and Howard N. Blitman, P.E., Scholarship to Promote Diversity in Engineering](#). The \$5,000 scholarship is

awarded to a high school senior from an ethnic minority going into an ABET-accredited engineering degree program at a four-year college or university. Sivasothy, of Sugar Land, Texas, is attending the University of Texas at Austin.

The \$5,000 [Steinman Scholarship](#) has been awarded to five students studying in ABET-accredited programs this academic year. **Michael Kadus** (Chicago, Illinois) is studying industrial engineering at Purdue University. **Robert Schneider** (West Coxsackie, New York) is studying civil engineering at Clarkson University. **Annabel Sharnowski** (Novi, Michigan) is studying mechanical engineering with a minor in electrical engineering at the University of Michigan. **Noah Struck** (Alexandria, Minnesota) is studying civil engineering at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. **Jacob Witlin** (Ellicott City, Maryland) is studying fire protection at the University of Maryland.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MICHAEL KADUS, ROBERT SCHNEIDER, ANNABEL SHARNOWSKI, NOAH STRUCK, AND JACOB WITLIN

Nominations Open for Federal Engineer of the Year Award

Honoring the commitment of federal engineers to innovation and service is the hallmark of the [Federal Engineer of the Year Award](#). Nominations for the award, which attracts participation from more than a dozen federal agencies, are open until **October 31**.

The FEYA ceremony is scheduled for February 24, 2022, at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Tickets will be available for sale in January. [Apply or nominate a worthy engineer](#).

The 2021 Federal Engineer of the Year

Major Monica Pickenpaugh, Ph.D., P.E., of the US Air Force, was named NSPE's 2021 Federal Engineer of the Year Award winner during a [virtual awards event](#) in February. As US Forces Korea's chief of construction, she directed \$5.7 billion of funded construction in the Republic of Korea. As part of a sharing agreement with the US, the

construction program supports USFK commanders' defense efforts through critical projects.



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