

State News for NSPE Members

Honolulu Named a Top STEM City

Honolulu, Hawaii was recognized as a 2020 Top STEM City for being a community showcasing exceptional dedication to science, technology, engineering, and math education and careers.

The data science team at Insurify (an insurance quotes comparison site) analyzed both proprietary and publicly accessible data to determine the top STEM city in each state. The team identified cities with the highest proportion of residents in STEM-based careers and compiled data from Niche on the colleges and graduate schools with the best programs in STEM, as well as the best cities for women in tech.

[Read more.](#)

Nominations Open for Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year

Nominations are now open for the Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year candidates. Nomination forms are available on the Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies website at <http://hceshawaii.org/>. The award winners will be recognized during the Engineer's Week Banquet in February 2021.

NSPE-HI members can also contact Kurt Kunimune at kkunimune@bowersandkubota.com with any questions or to request nomination forms.

Nominations are due by **December 30, 2020**. Mahalo!

Hawaii Awarded \$23.3 Million to Protect, Improve Water Infrastructure

Hawaii was awarded more than \$23.3 million in federal funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency to protect and support the state's water infrastructure.

The aid comes from the EPA's State Revolving Funds, which assists states, tribes, and territories with infrastructure projects that help protect surface water and provide safe drinking water to communities across the country, according to a *Pacific Business News* report. The Hawaii Department of Health—which assists wastewater and water systems to maintain or bring them into compliance with state and federal clean water and drinking water requirements—will receive and administer the funds.

The State Revolving Funds programs function like infrastructure banks by providing low-interest loans for drinking water and clean water infrastructure projects. As the loan principal and interest are repaid over time, it allows the state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Funds to be recycled. As money is returned to the state's revolving loan fund, the state makes new loans to other eligible recipients.

[Read more.](#)

Connected Vehicle Sensors Installed in East Hawaii

The Hawaii Department of Transportation announced the installation of Blynscy Intersect Connected Vehicle units on the 16 state-owned traffic signals in East Hawaii in cooperation with Elemental Excelerator, according to a *Roads & Bridges* article.

These connected vehicle sensors calculate travel times between units by anonymously collecting data from Bluetooth-enabled devices in passing vehicles. HDOT and the County of Hawaii will use data from the units to optimize traffic signal timing. Data from the connected vehicle sensors is similar to traffic information currently available from navigation apps like Google and Apple Maps, but is more accurate as it captures data from units installed directly on traffic signals. The dashboard also allows users to view information such as speeds along the corridor and current delays.

[Read more.](#)

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

PEs, Technicians, and Teamwork

Construction projects come with numerous roles and responsibilities that must be

carried out with skill and efficiency to achieve success. For professional engineers, perhaps the most critical relationship is with the project's engineering technicians.

In a recent [NSPE webinar](#) on PEs, technicians, and the engineering team, Shannon Looney, P.E., F.NSPE, called the contributions of skilled technicians "invaluable." As the senior project manager for the Glenn E. Mitchell and Company Inc. in Knoxville, Tennessee, Looney specializes in concrete construction. He relies heavily on the data collected by technicians—"the technicians with their hands on the ground that work directly with the labor force and is able to tell us the data we need...to make real-time decisions on important aspects of production."

The webinar covers many aspects of the PE-technician dynamic and the factors that make a strong team. In addition to Looney, the webinar panel included Kent Dvorak, P.E., of Terracon's Salt Lake City office; John Quidley, SET, president and senior quality consultant with Caliber Consulting Services LLC; and Kenny Johnson Jr., P.G., with expertise in the geotechnical and materials testing industry.

The webinar, "Put Me in, Coach! The Engineering Team from Concept to Completion," can be [accessed online for free](#).

Georgia Adopts Structural PE Requirement

Beginning January 1, a professional engineer who designs, signs, and seals plans for "designated structures" in Georgia must be licensed as a structural engineer. Legislation signed into law in August, creates a professional structural engineer licensing process, which includes a requirement that a licensure applicant take the 16-hour PE Structural exam.

The process [establishes several paths](#) for current licensees to be grandfathered into obtaining an SE license, which is supplemental to the PE license. An individual licensed in Georgia will have to submit an affidavit form and pay fees to the [State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors](#) from November 1 to December 31, 2020 to participate in this grandfather process.

In June, NSPE and the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers expressed concerns that a SE license requirement would create an additional layer of bureaucracy, requiring an engineer who is qualified to practice in more than one area to obtain multiple licenses.

NSPE believes that fragmenting the professional engineering license into discipline-specific title or practice acts weakens rather than strengthens the integrity of the license. The Society advocates for an alternative structural engineering certification that could be obtained after earning a PE license to offer more flexibility and without drawing a hard line between structural and other

engineering disciplines.

Officer Nominations Open

Nominations are now open for the positions of NSPE 2021–22 vice president and 2021–23 treasurer. The individual nominated for vice president will advance to president-elect in 2022–23 and president in 2023–24. The deadline for submitting nomination packages for either position is **January 11, 2021**.

Please share this information with those you believe should be considered for the next leaders in our Society. Additional details can be found in the [Leadership Toolbox](#). If you have any questions, email the NSPE Executive Office at executive@nspe.org.

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