Delaware Engineering Society Announces Young Engineer of the Year, Government Engineer of the Year and Engineer of the Year for 2024

Wilmington, DE

The Delaware Engineering Society (NSPE-DE) is excited to announce the 2024 Delaware Young Engineer of the Year, Government Engineer of the Year, and Engineer of the Year. The awards are nominated by those in the engineering industry in the State of Delaware and are selected by the past presidents of NSPE-DE. This year’s award winners are D. Preston Lee, Jr., P.E. (Engineer of the Year), Shante Hastings, P.E. (Government Engineer of the Year) and Breanna Kovach, P.E. (Young Engineer of the Year).

D. Preston Lee, Jr., P.E. (Ret) - 2024 Engineer of the Year

D. Preston Lee, P.E. (Ret) is a native Delawarean and has lived and practiced in the state his entire career. He presently lives in the historic town of Lewes with Linda, his wife of 55 years. He attended Salesianum High School and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering in 1969 from the University of Delaware.

After graduating, Mr. Lee worked for the Delaware Water and Air Resources Commission (DWARC) and later at the consulting engineering firm VanDemark & Lynch, Inc. (V&L), where he reviewed permit applications and worked on utility design. He then joined Edward H. Richardson Associates, focusing on designing water and wastewater facilities in multiple states, obtaining engineering licenses along the way. In 1975, he co-founded Tatman & Lee Associates, which became a successful civil engineering firm known for innovative wastewater treatment systems. After several accolades, the firm was acquired by Woodward-Clyde Consultants and later by URS Corporation, where Mr. Lee served as Vice President. He semi-retired in 2001 to focus on project management and engineering through his own business, notably managing the Southern Sewer Service Area Project for New Castle County.

He served 15 years as Board member of the American Consulting Engineers Council (ACEC) Delaware Chapter, now known as the American Council of Engineer Companies, including two terms as Chapter President and two terms as National Director. For several years, he served on the Delaware Association of Professional Engineers’ Law Enforcement and Ethics Committee. He has also remained a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) for the past 56 years.

In 2011 he was elected to the City of Lewes Board of Public Works. He has served in various positions on the Board, including 4 years as Board President. Since 2004, he has served as a Trustee and Property Committee Chairman of the Children’s Beach House Foundation in Lewes. The Foundation was established in the 1936 by Lydia Chichester DuPont “to serve children with special needs”. Over the past twenty years, Pres has also served
8 years on the City of Lewes Parks and Recreation Commission, Lewes Historical Society Board of Trustees, and the Lightship Overfalls Foundation Board of Directors.

**Shanté A. Hastings, PE – 2024 Government Engineer of the Year**

Shanté Hastings is the Deputy Secretary/Chief Engineer for the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), where she has worked since graduating from the University of Delaware in 2000 with a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering. As Chief Engineer, Shanté is responsible for implementation of the Department’s over $600 million annual Capital Transportation Program. She is also involved with personnel management, legislation and national transportation policy in her role as Deputy Secretary. Shanté currently serves as the Chair of AASHTO Innovation Management, Chair of AASHTO Committee on Design and Vice Chair of the AASHTO Committee on Transportation System Operations.

In 2013, Shanté was awarded the Young Engineer of the Year Award by the Delaware Engineering Society in recognition of her work in the field of engineering and community service. She serves on the boards for the University of Delaware Kent and Sussex Alumni Club, Delaware State Fair, the Joshua M. Freeman Foundation and Sussex Academy Charter School. Shanté is also a proud member of Sigma Kappa Sorority and has stayed active as a chapter advisor. She also enjoys singing in the Grace United Methodist Church Praise Band. Shanté her husband Jason are the proud parents of their daughters Lilly and Maya and spend many nights and weekends cheering them on at volleyball and soccer.

**Breanna Kovach, PE – 2024 Young Engineer of the Year**

Breanna Kovach is a Group Engineer with the Project Development North section at the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). She graduated with honors from Temple University with her BS in Civil Engineering in 2011 and began her career at DelDOT working as a project engineer, designing road projects. In 2016, Breanna became a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Delaware and was promoted to a Project Manager. She later obtained her MBA from Wilmington University with a concentration in Organizational Leadership and was promoted to a Group Engineer in 2018.

During her 12+ years at DelDOT, Breanna received DelDOT’s “You Make a Difference” awards in 2014 and 2017. She also participated in DelDOT’s Leadership Academy in May 2017. Breanna is responsible for a program management of capital projects in New Castle County. She is responsible for leading and directing a team of project managers and engineers in developing plans, specifications, and estimates for transportation improvement projects. Some noteworthy projects that Breanna has managed include the SR 72/SR1 Diverging Diamond Interchange, the Claymont Transportation Center and the I-95 and SR 896 Interchange as well as the US 40 and SR 896 Interchange, the US 40 Widening from Salem Church Road to Walther Rad, and the SR 1 Widening program from Road A to Tybouts Corner.

Breanna served on the Board of Directors for the American Society of Highway Engineers, First State Section from 2018-2023, serving as President from June 2021-June 2022. Breanna enjoys being an active participant in the engineering community and loves taking on new projects that continue to challenge her. Outside of work, Breanna enjoys spending time with her husband and children.

For more information on both the award winners, please visit our website: [www.nspe-de.org](http://www.nspe-de.org). The award winners will be recognized during the Delaware Engineers Week Banquet on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at
Riverfront Events in Wilmington, DE. The event will also provide recognition to scholarship award winners, newly licensed Professional Engineer, and the ACEC-DE Engineering Excellence Awards.

**About Delaware Engineering Society:**
The Delaware Engineering Society is the State Society for the National Society of Professional Engineers. NSPE is a member-centric, nimble, future-focused, and responsive organization, serving as the recognized voice and advocate of licensed Professional Engineers. Through education, licensure advocacy, leadership training, multidisciplinary networking, and outreach, NSPE enhances the image of its members and their ability to ethically and professionally practice engineering. Founded in 1934, NSPE serves more than 31,000 members and the public through 52 state and territorial societies and over 400 chapters. For more information, please visit www.nspe.org.