

State News for NSPE Members

Florida Offers Test Site for Flying Cabs in Polk County

Governor Ron DeSantis and State Transportation Secretary Jared Perdue hope to land the next generation of air transport companies at a testing facility in Central Florida.

Perdue for years has championed advanced air mobility, which would involve establishing “vertiports” in urban areas that could serve as hubs for short aerial commutes by battery-powered aircraft that have characteristics of airplanes and helicopters.

DeSantis recently saying he was “mildly excited” about the effort to reduce congestion along the I-4 corridor, Florida will first try to attract the growing technology to Polk County.

While few details were released, DeSantis and Perdue recently announced plans for an aerial test bed at the department’s SunTrax facility in Polk County.

The test facility will include two vertiports, which are take-off and landing sites for primarily electric vertical take-off and landing, “VTOL,” aircraft.

“The idea would be, if they could do this to scale, if they can make it economical, it would take some traffic off the roads, because people, they could cycle through with travelers on doing that. So we’re just trying to have as many options as possible,” DeSantis said during an announcement that was focused on new express lanes on I-4 in Hillsborough County and a truck parking facility along I-4 in Polk County. [Read more in the Orlando Sentinel.](#)

Florida’s Enviably Population Growth Comes at a Cost

Florida’s population grew faster than any other state in recent years, [according to](#)

At first glance, it's a positive – a boon to the state's economy through an expanded workforce, consumer spending and tax revenue.

Florida ranks No. 6 overall in U.S. News' Best States, landing the top score for economy and second place for education. Its mild temperatures and long coastlines – as well as its lack of an income tax – make it an understandably desirable destination.

The population has accordingly increased, rising 8% since 2020 to more than 23 million, according to US Census Bureau data. It's the biggest jump in the country during that span.

But for years, reports have identified problems with the state's affordability, infrastructure and drinking water supply. The surging population has brought those toward a tipping point.

Florida may not have an income tax, but it still has an affordability problem – particularly when it comes to housing and property insurance. [Read more.](#)

For One UF Computer Engineering Student, Coding is Caring

The first time Vivian Rincón Dib realized she could use engineering to help others, it was in a UF Engineering Design and Society course. There, she worked on a wearable body-temperature sensor designed to reduce the workload of nurses by automatically tracking patient data.

"I want to do that on a larger scale," she said of the project. "To design technologies that make healthcare more accessible to communities like the one I came from."

The 20-year-old UF computer science junior grew up in Venezuela, where she experienced the country's economic and humanitarian crises firsthand. She recalled how, in 2014, in a class of 40 children, only three were in attendance.

Her family soon moved to Ecuador, and a year later to Abu Dhabi. There, she received an education at the American International School in Abu Dhabi, surrounded by international classmates and the latest technology.

Now, she's using her tech knowledge to assist communities in need — like the one in which she grew up — and make education more accessible for students across

the world. She's also a leader within her own college, using her skills to help people closer to home. [Read more](#).

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

Call for NSPE Vice President Nominations

NSPE is seeking nominees to serve as vice president on the Board of Directors. The vice president serves four consecutive years: 2026-27 as vice president, 2027-28 as president-elect, 2028-29 as president, and 2029-30 as immediate past president. To learn more about qualifications, time and financial commitments, and how to apply, [please view the call for nominations packet in the governance section of the leadership toolbox](#).

Nominations are due to the NSPE Secretary at executive@nspe.org by **January 12, 2026**. Additional questions can be sent to executive@nspe.org.

Nominations Deadline Extended for FEYA

Federal engineers are at the forefront of our nation's most vital priorities from infrastructure and innovation to defense, public health, and safety. Honoring the commitment of federal engineers to innovation and service is the hallmark of the Federal Engineer of the Year Award (FEYA). Nominations for the 2026 award have been extended until November 30, 2025. [Visit the online portal for full guidelines and submission details](#).



Why Does FEYA Matter?

Lt. Col. Brigham Moore, Ph.D., P.E., PMP, was named the 2025 Federal Engineer of the Year. Here's what Lt. Col. Moore had to say about the impact this award has had on his career: *"Being selected as Top Ten Finalist and ultimately as the Federal Engineer of the Year this past year has been an incredible highlight of my career. Within the Air Force, it has provided me opportunities to mentor and give back to the engineering community that I love. Professionally, it has reconnected me with previous advisors and engineering faculty, opening up doors and networking me with some people that I did not previously know. Finally, and personally, it served as a huge bolster to my confidence and commitment to continue making meaningful change with each project and major decision as I move forward."*

Learn about Moore's government service and contributions to the profession.



Engineers Week 2026 Resources and Outreach Grants

It's time to start planning for Engineers Week and Introduce a Girl to Engineering activities. NSPE members can [access resources on the NSPE website](#).

Outreach Grants

DiscoverE's grant opportunities are designed to support volunteer and educator efforts to inspire the next generation of innovators through hands-on exploration of engineering. Grants range from \$250 to \$1,000. The application period for the grants will close on November 3. [Access more information and apply](#).



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