

## State News for NSPE Members

### **\$20.4 Million Awarded for Infrastructure Projects in St. Petersburg**

St. Petersburg will receive \$20.4 million in grant funding through the state's "Resilient Florida" initiative for infrastructure projects, [according to Patch.com](#). The funds, awarded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection, will be used for projects related to stormwater flooding and water reclamation.

"We have an intentional focus on partnerships and seeking grant opportunities. These Resilient Florida Program funds will enable the City to make necessary infrastructure improvements that will mitigate flooding and increase utility service reliability," Mayor Kenneth T. Welch said.

The city will spend nearly \$11.6 million to mitigate stormwater flooding at Lake Maggiore in the Salt Creek basin. Nearly \$10.7 million will be used for the Basic C Resiliency Salt Creek Outfall Pump Station and \$900,000 on Basic C Resiliency Salt Creek Conveyance improvements. The city will also replace maintenance buildings at water reclamation facilities to increase service reliability and safety during extreme weather, including hurricanes. About \$4.8 million will be spent to replace the building at the Southwest Water Reclamation Facility while about \$4.1 million is earmarked for the Northeast Operations and Maintenance Buildings Replacement Project. [Read more.](#)

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### **Autonomous Shuttle Pilot Program Launches in Orlando**

The City of Orlando has announced the start of a six-month autonomous shuttle pilot program in partnership with Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX) and Beep Inc., an Orlando-based provider of autonomous shared mobility solutions. The autonomous pilot, called SWAN Shuttle (Shuttling With Autonomous Navigation), will provide the city and LYNX data and learnings to guide the city's

transportation strategy on how shared, electric and autonomous vehicles can enhance accessibility, improve the quality of life for residents and ensure the city remains future-ready and sustainable.

"The City of Orlando believes communities must be connected to thrive, and so we are always looking at new ways to embrace creative, innovative ways to do this," said Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer. "With the expansion of autonomous vehicle shuttles into our neighborhoods, we can converge cutting-edge technology with new mobility solutions to further redefine the way our community moves. The SWAN Shuttle builds on our diverse network of mobility options and furthers our commitment to our residents, our environment and our future."

Residents, visitors, and businesses will have access to the fare-free SWAN Shuttle pilot seven days a week in Creative Village starting on August 20. The roughly one-mile route will have five stops connecting LYNX Central Station and SunRail to UCF/Valencia Downtown, Luminary Green Park, Electronic Arts and Parramore and Creative Village residents and businesses. [Read more.](#)

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## **University of Central Florida Engineer Leads Project to Study Offshore Wind Turbines**

A \$3.3 million research project led by Tuhin Das, an engineering professor at the University of Central Florida (UCF), is being funded by the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to study floating offshore wind turbines. The aim of the project is to develop a software platform that simulates the impact of external factors, such as changing winds and crashing waves, on these systems, [Energyportal.eu reports.](#)

The initial phase of the research, which received \$772,000 in funding, demonstrated the potential benefits of the software. The results showed comparable outcomes to industry-accepted models and experimental data. The recent \$3.3 million grant from ARPA-E will finance the second phase of the research, allowing for further investigation over the next three years.

The goal is to develop a publicly accessible software platform that will be hosted on the university's website and available for licensing and commercialization. This will enable researchers from academia and the industry to utilize it to advance wind turbine research and innovation. [Read more.](#)

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## **Vermont PE Rises to Top Leadership**



**William (Bill) Atkinson, P.E., F.NSPE**, was installed as NSPE's 2023–24 president during a ceremony at NSPECon23 in Louisville, Kentucky, on August 3. He has spent most of his career volunteering for NSPE and various engineering organizations that hold true to his passion for protecting the public through licensure and ethical engineering decision making.

Atkinson serves as the engineering manager and lead engineer at Vermont Mechanical Inc., a mechanical and plumbing design build contractor that focuses on healthcare and commercial construction (where he has been employed since 2001). He currently directs the service and engineering departments.

Throughout his engineering career, Atkinson has taken on various volunteer and leadership positions within NSPE, the Vermont Society of Professional Engineers, ASHRAE, and NCEES. He served on the Vermont Board of Professional Engineers and the University of Vermont College of Engineering Advisory Board. He has also served as an ABET observer and as the president of the Clarkson University Vermont Alumni Chapter. He is a licensed professional engineer in New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont.

Atkinson lives in Essex, Vermont, with his wife, Kim Atkinson, P.E., and two young active sons. When he and his wife are not working they are often found coaching or enjoying the outdoors in all seasons.

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## Honoring Excellence in the Profession

NSPE members were recently honored for their outstanding contributions to the profession during NSPECon23 in Louisville, Kentucky.

### Engineering Education Excellence Award

This award recognizes licensed engineering faculty who have demonstrated the ability to link engineering education with professional practice. It is sponsored by the Professional Engineers in Higher Education (PEHE) interest group.



**Waterloo Tsutsui, Ph.D., P.E.**, is a senior research associate in the School of Aeronautics and Astronautics at Purdue University where his primary aim is to provide a rigorous education that nurtures an engineering mindset among students and empowering them to analyze, communicate, and solve complex problems. He ensures students derive maximum advantage from meticulously designed educational experiences integrated into their curriculum, fostering lasting knowledge and capabilities that extend far beyond the confines of the classroom

for the ultimate benefit of students. As an example, Tsutsui implemented virtual labs and visualization in lab courses as an innovative way to link engineering practice to education.

### New Professional of the Year Award

This award recognizes a young NSPE member who has made outstanding contributions to the engineering profession and the community during the early years of one's career.



**Sri Kumar, P.E.**, is the president and CEO of Connico, a national consultancy serving the aviation, civil, and transportation markets. In his current role, he is responsible for outlining the company's strategy for the future, ensuring the company continues to execute its goals, and delivering excellence to clients from Tampa to Seattle. He is also committed to building Connico's employee-focused culture and is passionate about developing a strong, diverse, and uniquely talented team who work each day on solving some of the nation's most complex infrastructure challenges.

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## Emerging Leaders Program Seeks Candidates



The [NSPE Emerging Leaders Program](#) is seeking the next group of engineering change-makers. Candidates with 5–8 years of professional experience in the engineering field who are prepared to think strategically about their career and begin taking on leadership roles are [invited to apply](#).

The 2024 ELP syllabus and related time-commitments are available and the application for the program is due by **Thursday, August 31**.

[Apply Now](#)

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