Hyperloop Testbed Slated for West Virginia

Virgin Hyperloop has selected the site of a former coal mine in Grant and Tucker counties as the location for a new $500 million certification center and six-mile test track for an alternative high-speed transportation system, according to *Engineering News-Record*. The facility will be the first US regulatory proving ground for the high-speed travel system. Federal regulators will use the facility to establish hyperloop regulatory and safety standards, building upon regulatory framework guidance issued in July by the US Department of Transportation. Virgin Hyperloop says its system can propel passenger or cargo pods at speeds of over 1,000 km/h.

Plans for Natural Gas Plant Abandoned

A developer has dropped plans for a 920-MW natural gas-fired power plant in Brooke County due to changing market conditions and alleged interference from the coal industry, reports *Power* magazine. The West Virginia Economic Development Authority approved $5.6-million loan guarantee for the project on September 9. The article says, “a political push and pull involving an array of business, industry, union groups, and state leadership appears to have doomed the project.”

*Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.*

NSPE President Warns Against Broad-Brush Licensing Reform

NSPE President Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE, recently challenged an opinion piece that advocates making temporary licensing deregulation permanent, measures that were enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
In a letter to the editor of the *Oklahoman*, Hatley warns that efforts to weaken licensing, however well-intentioned, make no distinction for highly complex, technical professions. This is a critical distinction that broad-brush proposals like those referenced in the article fail to make—and puts thousands of lives at risk in Oklahoma and elsewhere.

She also states that professions like engineering, architecture, accounting, landscape architecture and surveying are responsible for the safety of our physical spaces and the integrity of our financial systems. Because of this, they are required to meet rigorous standards based on education, experience, and examination to demonstrate a minimum qualification level.

Read more.

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**An Adventure to the Moon with Future City**

Future City is a project-based learning program where middle school students imagine, research, design, and build cities of the future. This year’s Future City theme is “Living on the Moon.” Teams will be challenged to design a lunar city and provide examples of how their city uses two moon resources to keep citizens safe and healthy.

Due to COVID-19, Future City transitioned this year’s program into a virtual format to offer impactful volunteer opportunities you can do from the comfort of your home or office.

**Inspiring the Next Generation**

Kay Bailey is a senior research and development engineer currently working on an innovative mechanical device that relieves back pain and pressure. She knows firsthand the added challenges in academia—and professional settings—when few people look like you. “When I was a middle school student, I didn’t see many examples of African Americans doing engineering,” she says.

This inspired Kay Bailey to volunteer as a Future City
mentor in a predominantly African American school in Milwaukee. “I wanted to do whatever I could to show these students that it’s okay to be interested in engineering. Right away I could tell Future City would be a great way to get involved.”

Over the last two years, Bailey has loved working with these young scholars. Sometimes she helps them shape their creative ideas or explains STEM concepts, and other times they simply want to hear about what she is working on at her job. “I want these young people to be encouraged to pursue whatever they want.”

If, like Kay Bailey, you’re interested in inspiring the next generation, you can sign up to be a mentor by clicking here or email Info@FutureCity.org with any questions. This year, the program (including mentoring) will be virtual.

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**Upcoming Webinars: Roundabout Design Safety, the Engineering Team**

NSPE’s PE Institute helps members stay current in the profession, earn PDHs, and advance in their careers through webinars on important topics. The webinars are held at 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST at a member price of $99 ($129 for nonmembers).

**October 28**

**Put Me in Coach! The Engineering Team from Concept to Completion**

Within the construction industry, engineering-based decisions are made by professional engineers closely engaged with technicians. Working as an efficient team, a project moves smoothly and is successfully completed. A panel of PEs and technicians will share engineering best practices and approaches to overcoming technical challenges.

This webinar is **FREE** for members and non-members.

*Presenters: Kent D. Dvorak, P.E., Chip Hollis (moderator), William Kenneth Johnson, Jr., P.G., Shannon Looney P.E., and John W. Quidley S.E.T.*

**November 2**
Canon 1, NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers: “Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public”

This webinar will introduce you to four of the current members of the NSPE Board of Ethical Review (BER). Discussion will focus on four ethics cases that illuminate multiple aspects of Canon 1, to “hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public.” These cases are personal favorites selected by each BER member from the more than 600 opinions the BER has published since the late 1950s.

Presenters: Mark Dubbin, PE, FPE, Jeffrey H. Greenfield, Ph.D., P.E., BCEE, F. NSPE, David Kish, Ph.D., P.E., William D. Lawson, P.E., Ph.D., F. NSPE

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