

## State News for NSPE Members

### BEAD Funds Expand Rhode Island Broadband Access

US Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse recently joined US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, Governor Dan McKee, and local officials to announce \$108.7 million in Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funds for Rhode Island Broadband Access, [the Warwick Post reports](#).

Rhode Island Commerce Secretary Liz Tanner, Newport Mayor Xaykham Khamsavoravong, and other state and local officials joined the celebration of the federal BEAD funding. The funds were deployed by the Biden Administration for Rhode Island to distribute to nonprofits, public-private partnerships, private companies, utilities, and local governments to ensure every Rhode Islander has access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet.

“In order to expand opportunity, we need to ensure that all Rhode Islanders have access to high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband service. This funding will help our state implement a coordinated strategy that ensures all of our communities are plugged in to Rhode Island’s digital infrastructure. By doing so, we can help folks feel more connected and close the digital divide,” said Reed. [Read more](#).

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### New Law Will Improve Rhode Island’s EV Charging Infrastructure

Legislation to better prepare Rhode Island for the rapid growth of electric vehicles on the state’s roadways has been signed into law, [the Newport Buzz reports](#).

The legislation (2023-H 5159aa, 2023-S 0988aa), which passed the General Assembly and was signed into law by Governor Dan McKee in late June, requires that new and expanded parking lots built using any public funds include a certain percentage of electric vehicle charging stations.

Beginning January 1, 2024, new parking lots and lots that undergo an expansion of 50% or more parking spaces using public funds will be required to include electric

vehicle charging stations with a specified ratio of parking spaces to minimum charging stations. [Read more.](#)

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## Rhode Island Awards Agricultural Energy Grants

Rhode Island has awarded \$59,250 in green energy grants for farmers, [according to the Daily Energy Insider](#). The grants, funded through the Rhode Island Agricultural Energy Grant Program, will support project that help farmers move to greener agricultural operations, saving energy and money, officials said.

“Our farmers in Rhode Island play an essential role in providing the state with fresh, locally sourced products,” Governor Dan McKee said. “We must continue to support our local farmers and provide them the resources needed for implementing clean energy projects. I am very happy to announce the next round of grant winners for the Agricultural Energy Grant program. These farms have converted to energy efficient equipment that will help lower their energy bills and reduce their carbon footprint.”

Grants included \$20,000 for Hattoy’s Nursery and Garden Center in Coventry, RI for a 1353 kW rooftop solar project to offset 100% of the farm and landscaping company’s energy consumption; \$20,000 for Walnut and Willow Farm in Lincoln, RI for a 6.84 kW rooftop solar project to offset 93% of the farm’s total energy consumption; and \$19,250 for Wicked Tiny Farms in Narragansett, RI to install a mini-split and multi-zone non-ducted heat pump system that will save an estimated 200 gallons of oil used by the farm. [Read more.](#)

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

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## Meet the 2023 NSPE Emerging Leaders



NSPE is pleased to recognize 15 talented professionals who recently completed the Society’s [Emerging Leaders Program](#). This diverse group of young professionals was selected from around the country to take part in an intensive, unique enterprise designed to equip them as leaders in the engineering field.

**Nicholas J. Bailey, P.E.** (Cincinnati, Ohio)

- **Frank Block III, Ph.D., P.E.** (Silver Spring, Maryland)
- **Timothy Choma, P.E.** (Iselin, New Jersey)
- **Courtney Cunningham, P.E.** (Houston, Texas)
- **Steven T. Fox, P.E.** (Nashville, Tennessee)
- **Blane Gee, P.E.** (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)
- **Holly Hartley Guillaume, P.E.** (Katy, Texas)
- **Lingbee Chyna Lim, P.E.** (Charleston, South Carolina)
- **Brianne R. Jole, P.E.** (Lubbock, Texas)
- **Corey Kingsland, P.E.** (Kansas City, Missouri)
- **Carter Lytal, P.E.** (Lubbock, Texas)
- **Rebecca Martinez, P.E.** (Cherry Hill, New Jersey)
- **Alissa Neuhausen, P.E.** (Rockville, Maryland)
- **Victor Odili, P.E.** (Conroe, Texas)
- **Skylar Wierzbicki, P.E.** (Grapevine, Texas)

The program is [accepting applications](#) for the next class of rising leaders until August 31.



The upcoming [Professional Engineers Day](#) (Wednesday, August 2) is an incredible opportunity to showcase the value of NSPE and your PE license. We encourage you to post on your social media accounts a highlight from your community, your work, your impact, your story and include the #IAMNSPE, #WeareNSPE, #ProudPE.

NSPE's [apparel shop](#) features the PE Day logo on a variety of items including many styles of t-shirts and other apparel for men, women, and kids, as well as accessories like mugs, notebooks, tote bags, wall prints, and even phone cases. [Shop now.](#)

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## Check Out the Latest Issue of *PE*

### The Chatter About AI

OpenAI's ChatGPT came on the scene in November 2022. This type of generative AI has made a noticeable impact in a brief period of time and other versions of chatbots have been released. This emerging technology is sparking discussions about what impact AI could have on the engineering workforce and in engineering practice.



### Reaching Tomorrow's Innovators

DiscoverE has released its latest research on the views of high school students and parents on engineering and engineering careers. The Messages Matter results were encouraging as they reveal that targeted messages and profiles of engineers can spur interest in engineering among the very groups that will ensure a more diverse future for the field.

Members who subscribe to the [digital edition of \*PE\*](#) can access the current and back issues.

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