

WSPE News

Serving members of the Washington Society of Professional Engineers

From the President

By Barbara Philipp, PhD, PE

Dear WSPE members,

Welcome to the Second Quarter Newsletter for 2025 and Thank You for your continued support and contributions to WSPE.

A new year is starting and there are a lot of opportunities to be involved. This is a long newsletter, but if you have any interest in getting involved, please check out the article on “Revitalizing Professional Engineering Organizations”.

This is a transition time for the organization, and everyone is ready for some changes. I want to Thank you all for the opportunities of this last year and hope to see you in the coming one.

Remember always that you can make a difference.

Thank you,

Barbara Philipp

Remember that the NCEES CPC Standard requires licensees to acquire 15 PDHs in each calendar year, of which at least one must be earned in an area that focuses on professional engineering or surveying ethics or improving a licensee's methods of business practice or operations. If you have multiple licenses they provide [CPC Tracking | NCEES](#) .



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From the President (continued)

Support Washington Engineering Students

The WSPE Education Foundation provides scholarships to students enrolled in Washington Community Colleges who transfer to ABET-accredited baccalaureate engineering programs offered by universities and colleges in Washington State.

As WSPE members develop their estate plans, the Foundation provides an opportunity for investing in the education of future engineers for the state.

Legacy gifts to the Foundation will be invested in its Scholarship Endowment that is used to earn income for scholarship use. Past WSPE members have chosen to include the Foundation in their wills.

If you are interested in considering making a legacy gift in your estate plan and have questions, please contact

Steven M. Short, P.E., Foundation Treasurer,
2311 Ferndale Avenue, Richland, WA, 99354-1926
or by e-mail at sgshortss@gmail.com.

The Foundation is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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WSPE News is edited by B. Philipp with input from Board of Trustees members. Opinions expressed by the authors herein are not necessarily those of the Society. Submissions from all WSPE members are welcome. Please send articles of 250 - 500 words to bphilipp35@gmail.com. Articles may be edited for clarity, grammar, and conciseness.



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WSPE incoming 2025-2026 president's thoughts

By Jon Mathison, P.E.

June 6, 2025

On August 8, 1907, the first professional engineering license was issued to Charles Bellamy in Wyoming. Since 1907, professional engineering (PE) licensure expanded to other states and territories and 30 years later, in 1937, the Washington Society of Professional Engineers (WSPE) was founded with the purpose of serving you, the Washington PE. Thank you for being a part of WSPE! We wish you every success in your engineering career and invite you to get involved with WSPE!

My name is Jon Mathison and I have been Seattle Chapter President of the WSPE since 2019. I'm excited to be your state-wide WSPE President from July 2025 to June 2026. Fun facts: I try to live car-free, so if you see someone riding to WSPE meetings on a bicycle or bus please give me a wave My family has been in and around Ballard (NW Seattle) for five generations... I filled fishing boats with fuel starting at age 12. I have been an electrical engineer for Northern Telecom, the US Navy, Lunde Electric (marine electrical company), CH2M HILL (now Jacobs), and for the last 26 years a small electrical engineering firm. Choosing to be an engineer is a fantastic adventure for people who like to build stuff! Stuff that works! Stuff that people need. From buildings to bridges and boats to Boeing B17s (that last one was my grandfather, another EE). It's been a great adventure so far and yet there is so much more to build ahead of all of us.

Please be involved with your local Section. Please invite others to be involved too and enjoy what WSPE has to offer. From social events, programs, outreach activities, networking opportunities, volunteer opportunities for your local chapter, engineering scholarship fund, MATHCOUNTS® math events, Puget Sound Engineering Council (PSEC), Architects and Engineers Legislative Council (AELC), Future Cities® urban planning contests, and more. Our WSPE e-newsletter endeavors to keep you current with the issues that affect your profession and to help inform other engineers of the challenges you face! Pass it along to other engineers.

WSPE members are active in local, state, and national legislative efforts. During each Washington State legislative session your board of trustees' reviews proposed legislation and provides feedback to our lobbyist as part of the AELC. We want PEs like you to be active too.



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Did you know that in the 1970s a lawsuit by the Seattle Chapter WSPE was instrumental in keeping the catenary for “trackless trolleys” from being demolished in Seattle? That WSPE recently engaged with the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (BRPELS) on concerns relating to the practice of engineering by unlicensed individuals... even when those individuals work for the Washington State government? That NSPE recognized the importance of sustainability by adding a new professional obligation to the Society's Code of Ethics? Right now, there are PEs reviewing and actively lobbying for changes in water connection fees to prevent very high water-connection fees from killing small infill projects in the middle of urban areas where they are most needed.

The cost estimate for Seattle's 1.2-mile streetcar extension came in with a blistering price tag an order of magnitude greater than the most expensive urban trolley extensions and more than two orders of magnitude greater than rail track installation. Reducing deaths on Washington streets and roads, de-carbonized healthy buildings, electric ferries, Washington high-speed rail, artificial intelligence, driverless cars and trucks, vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology, and so much more are of intense interest to people who want to build the future. Please get involved in these opportunities and issues and more as a member of WSPE!

WSPE is here to support you, the Washington State PE. We know your challenges don't end with reviews, reports, designs, and support. If it were only the technical challenges we were required to solve – then how simple and boring our life's work would be. We celebrate your service, ask for your involvement, and look forward to getting to know you.

Thank you,

Jon Mathison, P.E.

President

Washington Society of Professional Engineers (WSPE)

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Legislative Update

By Ken McGowan, PE, F.NSPE

AELC Bill Status & Upcoming Events Report

Budget, Taxes, & Bill Signings

Governor Bob Ferguson wrapped up his role in the legislative process on the afternoon of May 20th, signing into law the Legislature's five-part, \$9.5 billion tax increase package, as well as the state's 2025-27 operating, transportation, and capital budgets and their funding bills. This final bill action came despite a mounting campaign from many quarters of the business community (and others) to veto some or all of the largest tax increases underlying the operating budget. As a reminder, the five tax bills are SB 2077, imposing taxes on the banking and sale of manufacturer credits under the state's zero-emission vehicle program, HB 2081, increasing B&O rates and adding surcharges, SB 5813, increasing capital gains and estate taxes, SB 5814, imposing a sales tax on services and excise tax on nicotine products tax, and SB 5794, repealing various preferential B&O tax rates. On the last bill, the Governor vetoed a provision removing the mortgage interest deduction for community banks. Finally, the Governor signed the operating budget (SB 5161) referencing some line-item vetoes, without specifying the subject or amount of the stricken appropriations.

All told, over 430 bills made their way to the Governor's desk, and he issued no full vetoes. In addition to line-items in the three budgets, he issued partial vetoes of minor matters in four pieces of legislation, relating to emergency clauses, working groups, or other matters he viewed as redundant. Besides the budget and taxes, other "big ticket" bills signed in the last few days included controversial measures imposing residential rent control (HB 1217), and providing unemployment insurance benefits to workers who go on strike (SB 5041).

Unless subject to an emergency clause or another specified effectiveness date, bills enacted this year will go into effect on July 27th, 90 days following the conclusion of the legislative session.

Special Election Season Preview

Candidate filing week ended on May 9th, and with many legislative vacancies filled by appointments leading into the session, there are nine special races this fall in which House and Senate appointees must stand for election for the remainder of their term.

26th District (Gig Harbor/Kitsap County area)

This Senate race will feature a matchup between Democratic appointee and first-term Senator Deb Krishnadasan, a local school board member and public education advocate, and Rep. Michelle Caldier, a five-term House member and dentist. A true swing district, this race has the highest likelihood of altering the balance of power in the Senate, should Caldier succeed, and will accordingly attract the most visibility.



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Legislative Update (continued)

48th District (Bellevue/Kirkland area)

In the Senate race, former House member and Democratic appointee Vandana Slatter is facing a challenge from fellow Democrat and current House member Amy Walen. In the House race, Democratic appointee and political newcomer Osman Salahuddin is facing a challenge from Democrat and small business owner Ranga Bondada, and Republican and recently unsuccessful Redmond City Council candidate Dennis Ellis. The Senate race will attract considerable attention as it carries the prospect of moderating the progressive bent of the Senate Democratic caucus should generally business-friendly Rep. Walen succeed.

5th District (Issaquah area)

In the Senate, following the unexpected passing of Senator Bill Ramos in the final week of the session, Democrat and current House member Victoria Hunt will face off against Republican and former House member Chad Magendanz. Hunt is a first-term member of the House, former member of the Issaquah City Council and an environmental science Ph.D. Magendanz served two terms in the House and is a former naval officer and software developer. Magendanz ran for this seat in 2024, losing to Sen. Ramos by 3,400 votes.

33rd District (South King County)

In the Senate race, Democratic appointee Tina Orwall, a long-time House member prior to her appointment to the Senate, is running unopposed. In the House race, Democratic appointee Edwin Obras, a City of Seattle Human Services employee, is facing a challenge from Democrat Kevin Schilling, the current mayor of Burien and government affairs director for the state dental association, and Republican Darryl Jones, whose political resume includes an unsuccessful run for Kent City Council in 2023. Schilling is generally regarded as a centrist Democrat, whose election, should he succeed, could add another moderate voice to the House Democratic Caucus.

41st District (Eastside area)

In the 41st District House race (Bellevue/East Side), Democratic appointee Janice Zahn is facing a challenge from Democrat Vinita Kak and Republican John Whitney. Zahn is a former Bellevue City Council member and chief engineer at the Port of Seattle, while Kak is a City of Newcastle planning commission member, and Whitney is a Bellevue-area real estate agent and property manager.

34th District (Seattle/West Seattle area)

For the Senate seat, Democratic appointee Emily Alvarado is running unopposed, and in the House Democratic appointee Brianna Thomas is also running unopposed.

The primary election will be held on August 5th. With most races featuring only two candidates, they will also advance to the November 4th general election, along with the top two vote-getters in the two House races that feature three candidates.



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Mathcounts Update

By Doug Hendrickson, PE, F.NSPE, Washington State [Mathcounts](#) Coordinator

The Washington Team traveled safely to Washington, D.C. and competed in the National Competition with the culminating Countdown Round May 12, 2025. Our Washington Team was composed of Alexander Yang, Vivaan Mukherjee, Saamik Agrawal, and William Xin, all from Seattle area schools. Our Washington Team Placed 3rd among 56 Teams with all of our competitors in the top 46 of 224 competitors. Congratulations go out to all of our competitors at Chapter, State, and National.

HOD Update:

The W&PR group of HOD members has been meeting virtually each month and planning to meet together at the NSPECon in Kansas City. There will be a governance meeting at the front end of the NSPECon, but I will not be available to attend as I will be Chairing the BRPELS meeting August 6th. The NSPE HOD is meeting virtually on June 26, 2025, to conduct most of its business and to elect the next President Elect and Treasurer. Candidates for President-Elect are Mrs. Leanne Panduran, P.E. out of Michigan, and Mr. Zia Yasrobi out of Wyoming; The Treasurer is uncontested and out of PA.

Election results will come out of the meeting and available for the WSPE meeting on June 27, 2025.



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Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (BRPELS) Update

By Doug Hendrickson, PE, F.NSPE, [BRPELS](#) Board Member

BRPELS met June 16-17 in Seattle for its Annual Board Meeting. This meeting was the last for Board Member Aaron Blaisdell, PLS, following ten years of service. Two highly qualified candidates have applied to the Governor to fill the vacancy, with one a past President of the National Society of Professional Surveyors. Board elections placed Doug Hendrickson, P.E., F.NSPE, as Board Chair again (previously chair 2022-2023) for 2025-2026, with Vice-Chair Michael Harney, P.E. Please look forward to our notice upon Governor selection of a new LS Board Member.

Discrete action highlights by the Board were to finalize recommended changes to RCW 18.43 Engineers and Land Surveyors. The Board had worked with Representatives to propose changes during the last legislative session which did not reach the floor. Those recommended changes would have eradicated obsolete language and terms, have meshed RCW 18.43 with RCW 18.235 to allow three Pro-Tem members, and to allow an On-Site Designer to be a Pro-Tem. Continued work is carrying those proposed changes but also providing language for decoupling of licensure examination and experience and assuring application of the law to Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors in avoidance of generic terms of engineer and surveyor.

Washington legislative actions established law taking \$440,000 from Board accounts. This value is approximately 25% of Board reserves and 10% of Bi-annual expenses/revenues. All Board monies are from 'user fees', meaning your license fees. The swept funds, equivalent to renewal of nearly 3,800 registrants, will be allocated to the State general funds.

The next Special Board Meeting will be held virtually and in Olympia on August 6-7, 2025, in advance of the NCEES Annual Meeting August 19-22, in New Orleans, LA.



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Revitalizing Professional Engineering Organizations

By Roger Hutchison

Membership in professional organizations has seen a decline since the days of more personal social engagement. While it appears that people are more connected than ever, these connections are often more diffuse and centered around hobbies rather than professional interest groups. This shift has led to a decrease in engagement within professional communities.

At WSPE, we are actively working to reverse this trend. Our first step has been to reach out to newly registered professional engineers in the state. With so much competition for attention, it's possible that the existence of WSPE, or even NSPE, has not appeared on their radar.

Newly registered PEs in the state receive a welcome message from WSPE by email and are invited to connect with the organization through our website. Here, they can learn more about both state and national organizations and are encouraged to become members, plugging into our professional community.

Our next step is to foster personal connections. We have members spread across the state, and it's easy to feel isolated. Even in areas with few WSPE members, there are certainly more registered professional engineers. This commonality can be the foundation for building stronger connections within the organization, promoting personal and professional development, and strengthening the organization as a whole.

A stronger professional engineering organization enables us to better fulfill our professional obligations, making our communities better places by designing and building projects to high standards while prioritizing public safety.

To begin building these connections, we can start by reaching out to other professional engineers in our local areas. Inviting them for coffee or lunch, or planning meet-ups at local events are some ideas for initiating and nurturing these connections. We need individuals to step forward and offer to be contacts for their area, providing a point of connection for PEs interested in meeting up with other engineers socially.

If you're interested in being a contact person for your area, please reach out to Roger Hutchison at [vpwest@washingtonengineer.org] (<mailto:vpwest@washingtonengineer.org>) for more information on how to connect with other engineers in your area.



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News and Events

WSPE Educational Foundation Announces Scholarship Recipients

During its Annual Meeting on May 17, 2025, the Foundation Board of Trustees selected seven community college students to receive \$3,000 Engineering Scholarships conditional upon being admitted to an ABET-accredited baccalaureate engineering program at a college or university in Washington.

The recipients are:

1. Audrey Harveaux, Zillah, WA; applying for admission to the chemical engineering program at the University of Washington
2. Ethan Gallardo, Richland, WA; applying for admission to the electrical engineering program at Washington State University
3. Isaias Duenas, Kennewick, WA; applying for admission to the mechanical engineering program at the University of Washington
4. Larissa J. G. Carter, Federal Way, WA; applying for admission to the industrial engineering program at the University of Washington
5. Mauro Martinez, Pasco, WA; applying for admission to the mechanical engineering program at Washington State University
6. Olivia Tamer, Auburn, WA; applying for admission to the aeronautical and astronautical engineering program at the University of Washington
7. Zachary Stone-Undem, Richland, WA; applying for admission to the aeronautical and astronautical engineering program at the University of Washington

The Foundation congratulates these outstanding students and wishes them the best as they continue their engineering education.

Links

1. . NSPE Board of Directors Update, March 2025 ([link](#)).
2. NSPE Daily Designs (Business News for PEs) ([link](#))



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