

October 2005 Newsletter

Message from the President

This month, the Potomac Chapter has continued to remain active and break new ground through its expanded roles and relationships. The month began with an informative talk to engineering students at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) and will conclude with a very interesting presentation on nuclear reactor power systems. All the while, the Potomac Chapter began formally assisting engineers and those trained in the field of engineering in their quest to find or change employment.

The UMCP presentation addressed professional development issues related to maximizing résumé potential, how to determine how much you are worth, and what to expect on the job as a new engineering graduate. The audience of approximately 100 students seemed to be especially receptive to the message and said that they look forward to our continued interaction. As a matter of fact, students even approached us to discuss starting a student chapter of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) on UMCP's campus. We in the Potomac Chapter are extremely grateful that we have been able to contribute to the students' interest in NSPE and we look forward to helping them to realize their goal of a student NSPE chapter on campus.

In addition to developing stronger ties with engineering students within the Potomac region, we have begun a service to forge bonds with those seeking engineering employment in our region. Given the abundance of high paying engineering positions in the area, wading through all of the available information to find, secure, and feel comfortable with the job that is optimal can be challenging. In an effort to facilitate this process, we have begun to use our personal and professional networks help job seekers quickly identify employers and positions that are good fits. Through our efforts, engineering job seekers are able to focus more of their attention on the decision process and spend less time learning what companies are hiring and jobs that are available. Although Potomac Chapter and NSPE memberships are not a required to take advantage of these services, it is our hope that those benefiting from our efforts might see the added value membership and might be more open to joining.

Finally, because it is the month of October, I feel compelled to offer words of encouragement and advice to those who are planning to sit for the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) Exam and the Professional Engineering (PE) Licensure Exam. First, independent of the exam you are planning to take, I must start by saying, "Congratulations!" Qualifying to sit for either exam is a statement of accomplishment. In the case of the FE Exam, you should be congratulated on your successful completion of an Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredited undergraduate degree. In the case of the PE Exam, you should feel proud that you have amassed the combination of education and experience that qualifies you to take the exam. Although it has been a while since I have taken my exams, there are several helpful hints that still apply. I wish you all the best!

1. Relax.
2. Eat breakfast before you arrive and eat lunch in between the morning and afternoon sessions.
3. Work the easy problems first.
4. Answer all of the questions, even if you haven't had a chance to work them all.
5. The test is only 8 hours -- it is a finite test. Do not stop trying until you are finished or time has expired.
6. Leave some time to proofread your work.
7. Remember, the questions are meant to be straight forward -- there shouldn't be any "gotcha"/tricky questions on the exams.
8. PE Exam Takers: Know your reference materials -- bookmark pages, etc. (Remember the adage: "Engineers know where to look.")
9. For ½ hour each day, every day until the exam, visit the following website and just browse around: http://ppi2pass.com/ppi/PPI_pg_enghome.html. The site has practice exams, advice from recent exam takers, etc. I was able to particularly benefit from the forum section. This information was invaluable to me during my preparations.

I look forward to seeing everyone at this month's meeting at Tony Lin's in Rockville, MD. If you have any questions or comments for me, please feel free to contact me. My contact information can be found in the Listing of Officers on the final page of this newsletter.

Dwight L. Williams, Ph.D., P.E.
President, Potomac Chapter, MDSPE

October 2005 Monthly Meeting

Topic: Nuclear Reactor Power Systems

Thursday 10/27/05
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Location

Tony Lin's Restaurant
12015 Rockville Pike Suite G
Rockville, MD 20852
301-468-5858

This month, our president, Dwight Williams, Ph.D., P.E., will be providing an overview of nuclear reactor power systems. This is a talk that he originally presented at the City University of New York (CUNY) in 2004. The reception that the talk received in New York was exceptional, and we are expecting that the Potomac Region will enjoy it just as much! In this talk, Dr. Williams begins with foundational principles of nuclear physics, walks the audience through various categories of nuclear reactors, and even addresses historic nuclear reactor accidents. As always, there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion following the talk. We look forward to seeing you at Tony Lin's. (An all-you-can-eat dinner will be served for \$20. Please contact Dwight Williams to RSVP.)

Speaker's Biographical Summary

Education and Registration

Ph.D., Nuclear Engineering, University of Maryland.

B.S., M.S., Nuclear Engineering, North Carolina State University

Licensed Professional Engineer (P.E.), Nuclear Engineering, Commonwealth of Virginia

Current Employment

U.S. DoD, Technical Applications Division (2004 - present), *Chief Engineer/Principal Nuclear Physicist*

Affiliations and Activities

Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) Program Evaluator

Co-author of National Professional Engineering Licensure Examination - the "P.E. Exam"

National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES)

Awards and Recognition

National Young Engineer of the Year (2005 - 2006)

Young Engineer of the Year for DC Council of Engineering and Architectural Societies (2004 - 2005)

Young Engineer of the Year for State of Maryland (2003 - 2004)

Potomac Chapter 2005 - 2006 Calendar

November/December 2005

Activity: Dulles Airport Expansion Project or NASA

Thursday 12/8/05
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

January 2006

Activity: Missile Defense Program

Thursday 1/26/06
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

February 2006

Activities: EWeek, Mathcounts, Family Day

EWeek, 2/19/06 - 2/25/06
Mathcounts, 2/18/06
Family Day, 2/25/06

March 2006

Activity: Multidisciplinary Engineering Panel

Thursday 3/30/06
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

April 2006

Activity: The Air and Space Museum

Thursday 4/27/06
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

May 2006

Activity: Year in Review/Transition Meeting

Thursday 5/20/06
Networking 6:30 p.m.
Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Potomac Chapter 2005 - 2006 Officers

President: Dwight L. Williams, Ph.D., P.E.
mdyoungengineer@nspe.org

Vice President: Bruce Cranford, P.E.
Bruce-Cranford-PE@comcast.net

Treasurer: Jayadev Telikicherla, P.E.

Secretary (Acting): Dwight Williams, Ph.D., P.E.

Past President: Randy Petersen, P.E.

Chapter Directors: Karin Castro-Kass, P.E.
Tom Dixon, P.E.
Issa Khozeimeh, Sc.D., P.E.
Frank Winfield, P.E.
Leslie A Grant, P.E.