

The ME Connection

UE Mechanical Engineering Newsletter

April 2023

"Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together."

— James Cash Penney

Spring, a time for growth

The School of Engineering and Computer Science is working to expand our 3D printing and rapid prototyping capabilities. Advanced systems will offer students new opportunities and enhance student projects. Thanks to a generous donation, SECS has recently added a new Stratasys F370CR 3D printer, capable of printing a wide range of materials including carbon fiber infused Nylon and ABS. This new 3D printer will allow our student project teams to design and build lighter and stronger components.



UE is also planning for further growth across campus. If you have not received information about new Pep & Vim events, like a kickball tournament and the Harlaxton Hangout, please check out the UE Alumni Association website.



Congratulations Corner

Congratulations to Bradan Bruce (*Class of 2024, pictured left*) and friends on their victory at UE's 2023 Nerd Wars trivia event. As the winning student team, *Newton + Grace*, will have their name engraved on the legacy trophy.



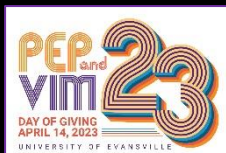
2023 Engineering Student Awards



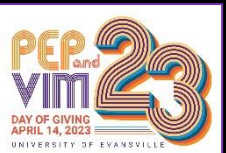
In March, the School of Engineering and Computer Science announced the annual Engineering Awards recipients. The Paul "PR" Brown Spirit Award was presented to mechanical engineering student Justin Fritch (*Class of 2023, pictured center*). This award recognizes Justin for his good academic standing, being an encouragement to fellow students, and demonstrating leadership in fostering cooperation and camaraderie among SECS students. The Dick Blandford Memorial Award was presented to Dalton Clark, and Zach Worley received the James M. Hall Jr. Outstanding Engineering Student Award.

Examining Pandemic Effects on Professional Skills

Dr. Douglas Stamps published an article titled "The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Development of Engineering Students' Professional Skills" in the *International Journal of Engineering Education*. Based on a student survey conducted annually, the results showed nearly three quarters of the students perceived that the pandemic had a negative impact on the development of the professional skills surveyed. However, despite these challenges, the only professional skill students rated moderately lower than the pre-pandemic period was oral communications. The students rated their ability to manage a project, communicate in written form, manage time, and develop their leadership skills similarly to the pre-pandemic period. Finally, students rated a slight increase in their ability to work on a team and a moderate increase in developing mentoring skills compared to the pre-pandemic period.



UE's 11th annual **Pep and Vim Day of Giving** is scheduled for **next Friday, April 14th, 2023**. All alumni gifts are appreciated. Any time you make a gift to the university, you have the option to designate where it is applied, if you wish. Suggested designations for gifts to engineering include: *Gerhart Legacy Fund, SECS Student Project Fund, and Mechanical Engineering.*



Alumni Spotlight: Mary Miller, Class of 1991



Mary (center) and Merco team at Feeding Tampa

After graduating with honors in 1991, Mary began her 22-year career with Whirlpool Corporation, serving in a variety of Manufacturing, Engineering, Competitive Intelligence, Marketing, Finance, and Project Management roles. Following her departure from Whirlpool, she joined Welbilt, Inc. as a Product Sales Manager in 2013 and is now the Senior Product Manager for Merco brand of hot holding equipment within Welbilt. She has always been interested in volunteerism and community involvement and has actively sought opportunities to give back throughout her career. Mary's service and impact have been recognized through various awards and honors, including being named a Manufacturing Institute *STEP Ahead* Nominee and a recipient of the ZTA Honor Ring.

Mary participated in many of the Whirlpool United Way Days of Giving in the Evansville area with her coworkers. While at Whirlpool, she was instrumental in forming a team to support the Komen Walk for the Cure in partnership with KitchenAid brand. She also chaired the Expanding Your Horizons workshop program for middle school girls from 2006 - 2010 as a member of the American Association of University Women. In her current role, Mary and the rest of her team also enjoy giving back in the Tampa Bay area by volunteering at Feeding Tampa Bay, where they work in the warehouse sorting food each time the team gathers for their quarterly team building events.

Mary has supported the UE OPTIONS summer camp for high school girls as a mentor since 1991, expanding her role to include Resident Director for both the high school and middle school girls' camps. She says her most fun experience was by far the 2018 High School OPTIONS trip to Harlaxton, where she acted as a chaperone, mentor, and instructor. It was not as easy for engineering students to go to Harlaxton when Mary attended UE, and she described this trip as "a literal dream come true!"



Mary also continues to serve her fraternity, Zeta Tau Alpha by handing out pink ribbons to promote breast cancer awareness at NFL games and other local events, and volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House or other local charities that her local alumnae chapter participates in. She also serves as a National Officer, currently the chairperson for the Alumnae Programming Committee.

Q: How do you stay warm in an empty room?

A: Go stand in the corner – it's 90 degrees!