By Stephanie Farrell

ASEE maintains active ties overseas. While advocating for engineering and education research on Capitol Hill, ASEE is being very proactive in representing your interests in the policy world. As I write this, our federal government is shut down. It is perhaps more important than ever that the interests of those in higher education, engineering research, and engineering technology education research have a voice on Capitol Hill. Through its relationship with a respected government relations firm and activities with various STEM-focused coalitions, ASEE seeks to make your voice heard.

The Public Policy Colloquium of engineering deans will be held in early February in Washington, D.C., with attendees visiting their representatives in Congress after a full day of meetings and preparation. At the Engineering Technology Leaders Institute in the fall, ET deans and representatives also paid a visit to Capitol Hill to meet with members, a first for attendees at this particular event.

Regarding international activities, in January I represented ASEE at the Sixth International Conference on Transformations in Engineering Education in India, where there is great momentum in engineering education reform. Did you know that ASEE has a branch in India? It’s one of three international branches that we have, the other two being in Lebanon and Iraq.

I also gave a keynote, “Revolutionizing Engineering Diversity,” at the European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI) conference in Copenhagen in the fall. We are collaborating with SEFI on two position statements, one on diversity and inclusion and another related to credit transfer for students who study abroad. These are in the very early stages, but we’re encouraged about progress so far. Immediately after the SEFI conference, I gave another keynote, “Evidence-based Strategies for Building Inclusive Classrooms in Engineering,” at the International Society for Engineering Pedagogy/Interactive Collaborative Learning conference in Kos, Greece. I’ll use this as a reminder that ASEE is putting together a delegation to Chile, scheduled for May 26 to June 1. Some of the things that visitors will learn about are Chile’s Engineering 2030 Project, admission standards for engineering programs, curriculum, engineering laboratories, and integration between universities and industries. Find more information on the top scroll bar of the ASEE homepage.

Many of you know that diversity and inclusion are significant areas of focus for me personally, professionally, and as ASEE President. I’d like to report on a couple things in this arena.

This spring, CoNECD (Collaborative Network for Engineering and Computing Diversity) conference will be held for the second time—April 14 to 17 in the Washington, D.C., area. This meeting provides a forum for exploring current research and practices to enhance diversity and inclusion of all underrepresented populations in the engineering and computing professions. Sessions encompass minority gender identity and expression, underrepresented races and ethnicities, people with disabilities, veterans, the LGBTQ+ community, first generation students, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. I hope you will consider attending. We also will hold numerous safe-zone workshops at several section and zone meetings this spring, thanks to sponsorship by Chevron.

ASEE members, please remember to vote in the 2019 Board election. The official ballot, which arrived with your January Prism, must be returned by March 31, 2019. I’ve enjoyed getting to see many of you this year and look forward to talking with you at events over the next several months leading up to the ASEE Annual Conference in Tampa, Fla., in mid-June.