

The ME Connection

UE Mechanical Engineering Newsletter

September 2024

"I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious."

- Albert Einstein

Keeping it Classy

With the start of the new semester, we welcomed our newest cohort of Mechanical Engineering majors! It has been exciting to see all of the new and returning faces on campus. Classes are well underway and student project teams are drafting their proposals. What projects or certifications have you been working on? Your story could become our next alumni or student spotlight!

CHANGING LIVES. CHANGING THE WORLD.

You may notice new billboards around Evansville, or see new features on UE's website and social media pages, that highlight the impact of the UE experience. If members of the ME faculty have had a positive impact on your life, there are two upcoming opportunities to nominate them for an Outstanding Teacher Award. Alumni and current students are eligible to nominate.

- The American Society for Engineering Education presents an Outstanding Teaching Award at the IL-IN Section Conference each Spring. Nominations open in late Fall. ([ASEE Outstanding Teaching Award](#))
- The University of Evansville presents an Outstanding Teacher Award at Commencement each year. Nominations open in early Spring. ([UE Outstanding Teacher Award](#))

If you would like assistance nominating a current faculty, please contact Dr. Lofton or Dr. Fulcher



Class of 2028 (mostly pictured)

A New Formula for Aces Racing

Seniors Dani Santos Lopez, Owen Bryant, Kaylee Ivy, Kaleb Werner, Gracie Davidson, Nick Taylor, Jakob Grundbacher, and Sam Morgan (*not pictured*) are bringing **Formula SAE**® back to UE! The group began organizing a team as juniors and used the summer to secure initial sponsorships that will help them design, build, and test a formula style vehicle according to the SAE International Collegiate Design Series specifications.



We want to celebrate our alumni!
Please submit a photo and short blurb to:

mechanicalengineering@evansville.edu



Student Spotlight: Grace Vandenburg Class of 2026



Over the past two summers, I had the opportunity to work at Toyota's Motor Manufacturing Indiana plant, which provided me with invaluable hands-on experience in the automotive industry. During my first summer, I worked on the Pilot Quality team, where I was involved in the launch of the Grand Highlander and Lexus TX. Despite my initial nerves as a freshman with limited experience, I quickly adapted and learned a great deal. One of the highlights of that summer was a port trip to Jacksonville, FL, where I gained insights on how Toyota addresses part problems when they arise. Additionally, I worked on Toyota's software writing system, analyzing battery State of Charge (SOC) throughout the production process of the Grand Highlander to implement a design target of 70% SOC, which continues to be utilized.

In my second summer, I transitioned to a role in Exterior Quality, where I took on more responsibility and independence as an engineer. I

led an ongoing investigation into a water leak issue on the left-hand rear door of the Grand Highlander and Lexus TX, ensuring that the problem was effectively addressed. During this investigation, I had the opportunity to work with team members on the floor, learning how to completely build a door and understanding how each part comes together to create a fully functioning vehicle. I also executed numerous Process Change Requests for various components of these vehicles, including mirrors and moldings. My role involved frequent communication with suppliers worldwide to address part-related issues, and even included a visit to a supplier in Bellefontaine, IN, where I evaluated their glassmaking process and contributed to reducing window defects.

Working at Toyota has significantly enhanced my problem-solving skills and deepened my understanding of automotive manufacturing. I am incredibly grateful for these two years of experience at TMMI & look forward to continuing my career with them.



Congratulations Corner

Congratulations to our ASME members on receiving the 2024 Student Section Achievement Award from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers!



The 2024-25 callout meeting was hosted on September 5th with a fantastic turnout. Interested students competed for prizes in a trivia game and learned more about the benefits of ASME membership. The section hopes that everyone walked away with more knowledge and interest in the national organization. Here's to a great year!

Q: Why did the mechanic go to bed in their coveralls?

A: They wanted to get up *oily*