

The ME Connection

UE Mechanical Engineering Newsletter

March 2026

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." - Jane Goodall

Spring Forward

We wish our students a safe and enjoyable Spring Break next week! Last month included UE's annual Road Trip Weekend, several Engineer's Week events, lots of Donut Bank cookies, and some friendly competition as SECS students, faculty, and staff tried to eliminate each other during a multi-day game. After all the excitement, we hope the break from classes will be a chance to rest, recharge, and refocus. It won't be long until Finals Week!



Career Ready

UE's Center for Career Development hosted the annual Engineering, Computer Science, & Construction Management Career Forum in February. Students engaged with employers and alumni in panel discussions focused on maximizing career opportunities from freshman to senior year. The Q&A sessions were followed by an open networking reception. It was great to see both new and returning faces at this year's forum!



Engineer's Week Spotlight

UE Electrical Engineering alumna Amy Barrett (*Class of 2002*) returned to campus to speak with members of the School of Engineering & Computer Science. She shared the history and importance of professional engineering licensure, as well as excellent tips to remember when preparing for the FE exam. Honored as a National Society of Professional Engineers Fellow, Amy also discussed the power of joining and participating in professional societies at all stages of one's career. Equipped with a BSEE degree, her PE license, and LEED AP certification, Amy enjoys acting as an Engineering Career Mentor and providing Leadership Development for others. Thank you, Amy!

ENGINEERS WEEK SPEAKER



Amy Barrett, PE,
F. NSPE, LEED AP

Student Membership to NPSE is FREE!



We love to share what our alumni are doing!
Please submit a photo and short blurb to:

mechanicalengineering@evansville.edu



Alumni Spotlight: Dr. John Layer (*Class of 1987*)

Happy Upcoming Retirement!



Please join us in wishing Dr. John Layer a happy retirement as he wraps up his final semester of teaching at the University of Evansville! As an undergraduate student, he was actively involved on campus in organizations including Pi Tau Sigma and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He took advantage of UE opportunities like the co-op program and Harlaxton. His semester at Harlaxton was a life-changing experience full of adventures that he enjoys reflecting on today. Dr. Layer also met his wife, Katrina, while they were students at UE. The relationships he made at UE, and the close community within the engineering programs left a lasting impression on him.

Drawn in by the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students, Dr. Layer returned to UE after a 20-year career in industry to teach and mentor young engineers. During his career, Dr. Layer earned his MBA from Arizona State University, PhD in Industrial Engineering from the University of Louisville, and his Professional Engineering License in the state of Arizona. As a professor, he has taught a myriad of courses with an emphasis on mechanical component design and advised student organizations including ASME and Pi Tau Sigma. The highlights of his faculty career included leading service-learning projects spread across multiple countries. Dr. Layer advised student design teams as they completed humanitarian projects that had an immediate and visible impact on the lives of others. The photo of Dr. Layer on the Great Wall of China was taken in 2012, on a return trip from a Data Collection visit with eight students to Mongolia for a project.

The opportunities to immerse students in global projects and see those experiences impact student's lives and ways of thinking were some of the most rewarding moments for Dr. Layer. He is also immensely proud of the achievements he has witnessed from sophomores in the ME 297 Mechanism Design Projects. He is continuously impressed by what UE students can accomplish using the mechanical engineering design process as they turn a design on paper into a physical, functioning artifact. In his retirement, he is looking forward to spending more time with his family and grandchildren, who share his fondness for gadgets. He and his wife are also excited to be celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary later this year!

We encourage you to share your favorite memories of a Dr. Layer as a professor, or colleague, and wish him the best in his upcoming retirement. At the request of Dr. Layer, there will be no retirement reception to mark his final semester at UE. This is our *thank you* to him for the time and energy he has dedicated in giving back to the Mechanical Engineering Program as a faculty member over the past 19 years. Thank you, John. We hope you enjoy this next chapter to the fullest!



Q: What is the easiest way to get straight A's in school?

A: use a straightedge!