

EASTERN NEBRASKA WIRE



Volume 2:
January 2009

Section Officers:

President

Amanda Stahlnecker
president@swe-nebraska.org

Vice President

Cybil Boss
vice_president@swe-nebraska.org

Council of Sections Representative

Angel McMullen-Gunn
COR-rep@swe-nebraska.org

Treasurer

Lara Syrocki
treasurer@swe-nebraska.org

Secretary

Jo Whitaker
secretary@swe-nebraska.org

Webmanager

Aarhi Parthasarthy
webmanager@swe-nebraska.org

Membership Chair

Janis Pflingsten
membership@swe-nebraska.org

WOW! Event Chair

Amanda Stahlnecker
wow_event@swe-nebraska.org

Career Guidance Chair

Aarhi Parthasarthy
Career_guidance@swe-nebraska.org

UNO Student Section Counselor

Lara Syrocki, P.E.
UNO_Counselor@swe-nebraska.org

UNL Student Section Counselor

Angel McMullen-Gunn
UNL_Counselor@swe-nebraska.org

Program Development Chair

Cybil Boss:
Program_development@swe-nebraska.org

Holiday Party with the President

Celebrated the winter season and joy of being in a group that is dedicated to the growth of its members and the community!!!



December 5, 2008

This social event was great fun for all who attended. Professionals mingled with UNO students while enjoying wine and various snacks including cheese and crackers and chocolate covered strawberries.

In the spirit of the season, we completed a fleece tie blanket and donated it to Project Linus. This was an activity that all enjoyed and some of us learned a new skill while doing it.



From Gabriella Ostler

“Thanks for hosting the party. We had a good time. Sonja enjoyed meeting ladies that are on campus. “

Message from the President



New Year – Fresh Start

January is always a fun time of the year. Everyone is working on their new year's resolutions, setting new goals for the year, and starting fresh. I set some goals for the year, including the very popular lose weight. Instead of it being so ho-hum I decided to put a positive spin on it. One of my new year's resolutions/goals for the year was to get healthy. It sounds so much more achievable when you just change the wording. If you think about it healthy is more than just weight, it is making sure you are taking care of your body and mind. If you set some resolutions or goals for yourself, review how you stated it. See if you put it in a positive, "I can achieve this" light, or if there is some underlying negative to it. You may find that if you rephrase it, you may be easier to achieve it.

As we enter the new year, our section is growing and having successful events. I encourage all of you to look at the calendar that was sent out in December showing the remainder of FY09 events and set a goal of attending at least 2 of the events. As a section, we are a group of strong individuals with a lot of heart doing great things for our community and the engineering community. Keep up the great work in 2009.

Respectfully,

Amanda Stahlnecker

Eastern-NE SWE Section President

Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held the first Wednesday of every month at 5:30 at Lara Syrocki's house. All are welcome to attend. The officers and chairs will provide monthly reports and discuss unfinished and current business of the section. For more information contact the president, Amanda Stahlnecker, at Hpresident@swe-nebraska.orgH.

Tips of the Month:

One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above the little things. - **John Burroughs**

10 Tips for Keeping New Year's Resolutions

1. Be Realistic
2. Plan Ahead
3. Outline your Plan
4. Make a "pro" and "con" list
5. Talk about it
6. Reward yourself
7. Track your progress
8. Don't beat yourself up
9. Stick to it
10. Keep Trying

Keep trying Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right. - **Oprah Winfrey**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Next Meeting

OMAHA

Society of Women Engineers-Eastern Nebraska Nebraska has invited you to

Resolutions to Reality: Yoga and Nutrition



Date: Jan 21, 2009

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: URS

Everyone should have received an evite for this event. If not, contact president@swe-nebraska.org.

For more information about this event contact Cybil Boss at vice_president@swe-nebraska.org.

LINCOLN

Career Fair Prep Panel For UNL collegiate section

January 27th, 7pm

If you would like be a part of the panel, contact Amanda Stahlnecker at president@swe-nebraska.org.

If you have any ideas for topics of meetings or other suggestions or know of another organization's meeting that would be of interest to the section, please email SWE_Planning@swe-nebraska.org.

Meeting and Lecture

February 10th

We will have a brief meeting at the 12th Street Pub (5:45pm, 12th and O Streets), then attend the F.W. de Klerk lecture at the Lied Center (7:00pm).

Tickets have already been reserved for the lecture. Please RSVP through Evite so we can ensure we have enough tickets for all who want to attend. Friends and family are invited also.

Please look for the Evite for this unique event!

For more information about this event contact Cybil Boss at vice_president@swe-nebraska.org.

Bridging the Gap: Globalization without Isolation" - F.W. de Klerk

Tuesday, February 10 - 7:00PM

E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues lecture

During his time as president of South Africa, F.W. de Klerk released Nelson Mandela from prison, and initiated and presided over the dismantling of apartheid, the adoption of South Africa's first fully democratic constitution and the first-ever multi-racial elections. In 1993, Mandela and de Klerk shared the Nobel Peace Prize. One of the most influential statesmen of our time, de Klerk founded and is currently chairman of the Global Leadership Foundation a consortium of former heads of state dedicated to promoting peace, democracy and development worldwide by providing confidential peer to peer advice to governments around the world.

Upcoming Meetings

Joint Meeting with another Professional Organization

March

LEED Presentation

By Elizabeth Hunter
April 21st at noon
At Leo A Daly

LADY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Gabriela Ostler has worked for Raytheon Company for over ten years. She has a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science Engineering from the University of Texas, El Paso. She works as a Software Quality Assurance Engineer Team Lead on the National Polar-Orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS). The thrust of this program is to increase the timeliness and accuracy of severe weather event forecasts.

Gabriela's job is to ensure that the Software developers are following the contractually required processes and procedures in implementing the software development. She uses her engineering skills in problem solving and providing information and guidance on procedures to the integrated product team on the NPOESS program. She has worked on this project since October 2004.

Gabriela is a member of the Raytheon Women's Network and served as the President in 2008 and will serve as the co-President in 2009. This network focuses on the enhancing of women's growth in personal and career areas of technical companies. It also supports the volunteering in schools and group settings to provide information on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers for the local youth.

Gabriela has recently re-joined SWE because this provides a good forum to share information on math, science and engineering to today's youth. Being involved in SWE where women have a common goal can be a great place to enhance and grow your management and technical skills. It is a great way to increase your network especially when moving to a new area of the country or a new career.

Gabriela enjoys foreign travel, ballroom dancing, hiking, skiing, cooking and activities with friends. She is the Sunday School superintendent and remains very involved in her church. She is a "Marching Band Mom", where she serves as the Bus Chaperone organizer. Her husband, Chuck is a registered EE. She has a daughter, Sonja, at UNO PKI and a son, Peter, at Millard North High School.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Angel McMullen-Gunn on her promotion to Shipping and Receiving Manager at Hamilton Sunstrand!!!

Congratulations to all those that passed the Fall 2008 PE exam, including our very own Cybil Boss!!!!

HDR donated items for Future Cities Competition Goodie Bags on behalf of SWE

EWEEK is Quickly Approaching

There are plenty of great events going on your professionals and all members of the community to celebrate EWEEK. The following are just a few.

Global Marathon For, By and About Women in Engineering

2/19/2009

The fifth annual Global Marathon For, By and About Women in Engineering – a live webcast and teleconference -- runs continuously from Noon on Tuesday March 10 through Noon Wednesday, March 11, 2009 (EDT). [Archives](#) from the 2008 Marathon feature presentations originating from points worldwide, with North America leading off, followed by South America, China, India, South Africa, and Europe. Topics included tips on heightening awareness of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics issues among pre-college, college, and young career women, and examining issues such as retaining women in college engineering programs and the workplace.

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day

2/19/09

EWEEK Banquet

2/19/09

Engineering Displays at the Qwest Center

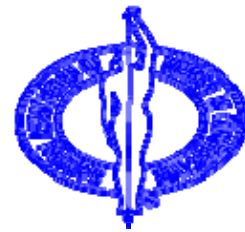
2/21/09



Block Kids

Brought to you by:

NAWIC
National Association of Women in Construction



- What:** Block Kids is a national building competition, where kids use Legos to build structures and are then judged on the building and why they built it. The winner in each age group (grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6) wins a \$50 savings bond.
- Who:** Boys and Girls in grades 1-6
- When:** Saturday, February 7, 2009 starting at 10:00 am
- Where:** IBEW Hall
8946 "L" Street, Omaha, NE
- Why:** *It's FUN!! FREE T-SHIRT, HARD HAT AND GOODIE BAG – IT'S ALL FREE*
- How:** Get your entry form at [Hwww.nawicomaha.com](http://www.nawicomaha.com)H and turn it in by January 30, 2009 or call 720-0118 or 721-2906 for entry form

LOCAL JOB POSTINGS

To post local engineering or engineering related jobs please contact our SWE section at newsletter@swe-nebraska.org.

Mechanical Engineer II

BCDM is a reputable architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, construction management, and engineering firm that integrates the built and natural environments to develop innovative and high-quality solutions for our clients. It is the goal of BCDM to provide an array of project opportunities for our employees; we feel that well rounded and successful professionals need the opportunity to have their hands on various types of projects.

BCDM is seeking a positive and creative individual with excellent design, graphic and communications skills to fill a **Mechanical Engineer II** position in our Omaha office.

Essential Job Functions

- Perform building engineering design calculations
- Assists all Team members with drafting and technical tasks
- Aids in the development and documentation of a project
- Assists with Construction Administration, calculations, layout, design, commissioning, and periodic site observations

Qualifications

- Has obtained Bachelor's/Master's degree in Engineering
- Previous work experience is required, experience in an Architectural Engineering environment is preferred
- Has knowledge of design principles and the ability to interpret design concepts and layouts.
- Relies on instructions and pre-established guidelines to perform the functions of the job, while working under immediate supervision.
- Has a desire to cross train in other disciplines
 - In training in the execution of AutoCAD and project production
- Must be willing to work with design teams and individually in a studio-like environment

- Must be a detailed, goal oriented, value driven individual with proven problem solving abilities.

BCDM offers a competitive salary, 100% paid medical and dental benefits, life insurance, generous time-off benefits, 401(k) and a flexible work environment. BCDM is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.

Please email or call Audrey Dye with resumes or questions. adye@bcdm.net 402-384-6406



If you would like to post a job opening or become a sponsor of the Eastern Nebraska Professional Section, contact Amanda Stahlnecker at newsletter@swe-nebraska.org for more information.

SWE Trivia

Question: How many societies, corporations, and government agencies comprised the National Engineers Week Foundation?

Answer: 100

IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

Gender Equity Legislation Passes House, to be Considered in Senate

On January 9, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 11, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2008 and H.R. 12, the Paycheck Fairness Act of 2009, by votes of 247-171 and 256-163 respectively. Both pay equity measures had passed the House in the 110th Congress, but then stalled in the Senate. With the make-up of the new 111th Congress and a new President, the bills are expected to fare much better. On January 15, the Senate voted to take up the Lilly Ledbetter Pay Act, and is expected to move forward with a debate and vote on the bill the week of January 19.

In *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.*, the Supreme Court ruled that employees cannot challenge ongoing compensation discrimination if the employer's original discriminatory decision occurred more than 180 days before filing the complaint, even when the employee continues to receive paychecks that have been discriminatorily reduced. Prior to this decision, the law, as interpreted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and nine of ten courts of appeals that had considered the issue, treated each discriminatory paycheck as a separate discriminatory act that started a new 180-day clock. Addressing this U.S. Supreme Court's decision, the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act restores the long-standing interpretation of civil rights laws and EEOC policies that allowed employees to challenge any discriminatory paycheck they received. On the other hand, the Paycheck Fairness Act would update the Equal Pay Act signed by then President John F. Kennedy, providing additional tools to deter wage discrimination by closing loopholes in the Equal Pay Act.

[Learn more about these two bills.](#)

Obama Announces Science and Technology Team

In late December 2008, President-elect Barack Obama announced the leading members of his science and technology team. At the same time, the President-elect presented his vision of the role that science and technology will play in his administration.

“Whether it’s the science to slow global warming; the technology to protect our troops and confront bioterror and weapons of mass destruction; the research to find life-saving cures; or the innovations to remake our industries and create twenty-first century jobs—today, more than ever before, science holds the key to our survival as a planet and our security and prosperity as a nation. It is time we once again put science at the top of our agenda and worked to restore America’s place as the world leader in science and technology.

“Right now, in labs, classrooms and companies across America, our leading minds are hard at work chasing the next big idea, on the cusp of breakthroughs that could revolutionize our lives. But history tells us that they cannot do it alone. From landing on the moon, to sequencing the human genome, to inventing the Internet, America has been the first to cross that new frontier because we had leaders who paved the way: leaders like President Kennedy, who inspired us to push the boundaries of the known world and achieve the impossible; leaders who not only invested in our scientists, but who respected the integrity of the scientific process.

“Because the truth is that promoting science isn’t just about providing resources—it’s about protecting free and open inquiry. It’s about ensuring that facts and evidence are never twisted or obscured by politics or ideology. It’s about listening to what our scientists have to say, even when it’s inconvenient—especially when it’s inconvenient. Because the highest purpose of science is the search for knowledge, truth and a greater understanding of the world around us. That will be my goal as President of the United States—and I could not have a better team to guide me in this work.

“I am confident that if we recommit ourselves to discovery; if we support science education to create the next generation of scientists and engineers right here in America; if we have the vision to believe and invest in things unseen, then we can lead the world into a new future of peace and prosperity.”

[Listen to the full radio address and/or view the video of the address.](#)

The Obama-Biden science and technology team comprises the following individuals:

- Dr. John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; Co-Chair of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST)
- Dr. Eric Lander, Co-Chair of PCAST
- Dr. Harold Varmus, Co-Chair of PCAST
- Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Nominee for Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

[Review a summary of each team member’s biography.](#)

[Get a more complete list of those individuals who have been nominated to join the Obama-Biden Administration.](#)

Education Secretary-Designate Duncan Draws Praise from Both Sides of the Aisle

On January 13, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a confirmation hearing for President-Elect Obama’s Secretary of Education Designate Arne Duncan, who has served as the CEO of Chicago’s public schools since 2001.

In his testimony, Duncan called education the “most pressing issue facing America,” saying “Preparing young people for success in life is not just a moral obligation of society. It’s an economic imperative. As President-Elect Obama has said many times, the nations that out-teach us today will out-compete us tomorrow.” Duncan also stressed the need to focus on early childhood education and teacher quality. Drawing praise from both sides of the aisle and no Senator speaking against his nomination, Duncan is expected to be approved unanimously in the HELP Committee, and approved in the full Senate.

[Get more information about this confirmation hearing.](#)

To review SWE’s general position statement on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and learn more about SWE’s public policy activities, please visit swe.org/publicpolicy.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Undergrad Salaries

05/08/2008

BETHLEHEM, PA—New college graduates with degrees in the engineering and computer science fields boast the highest average starting salaries, according to a new report from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

The Spring 2008 issue of NACE’s *Salary Survey* shows that chemical engineering graduates are currently pulling the highest average starting salary offer—\$63,616—followed by computer engineering graduates at \$59,962. (See Figure 1.)

“There is competition among employers for many graduates in the technical disciplines, and the high salary offers we’re seeing reflect that,” says Marilyn Mackes, NACE executive director.

Curriculum	Average Salary Offer
Chemical Engineering	\$63,616
Computer Engineering	\$59,962
Computer Science	\$59,873
Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering	\$58,252
Aerospace/Aeronautical/Astronautical Engineering	\$57,999

*Source: Spring 2008 *Salary Survey*, National Association of Colleges and Employers. All data are for bachelor's degree candidates and reflect majors for which 45 or more offers were reported.

In fact, many disciplines have seen their starting salaries offers rise by 10 percent or more over the last year. For example, the average offer to computer science graduates skyrocketed 14.7 percent from \$52,177 in Spring 2007 to \$59,873 currently. Also experiencing big jumps in their average starting salary offer: construction science/management (13.4 percent increase from \$46,506 to \$52,745); aerospace engineering (11.3 percent increase from \$52,131 to \$57,999); and agricultural business and management (11.2 percent increase from \$38,055 to \$42,299).

And hefty increases aren't limited to the technical fields: "The average offer to psychology graduates rose 10.7 percent from \$30,751 to \$34,054," says Mackes.

Conversely, many of the business disciplines seem to be feeling the effects of changes in the economy and have seen little movement in their average starting salary offers. For example, the current average salary offer to accounting majors—\$47,429—is literally just a few dollars higher than the average these grads posted in Spring 2007—\$47,421. Business administration and management graduates didn't fare much better: Their average offer increased 0.3 percent from \$44,048 to \$44,195.

NACE will continue to track demand and average salary offers for the Class of 2008 in the two remaining issues of the 2008 *Salary Survey* reports, Summer and Fall, which will be released in July and September, respectively.

About *Salary Survey*: *Salary Survey* is a quarterly report of starting salary offers to new college graduates in 70 disciplines at the bachelor's degree level. The survey compiles data from college and university career services offices nationwide. *Salary Survey* is issued in Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall, with the Fall issue serving as the year-end report. (Salaries reported in this press release reflect offers to bachelor's degree candidates.)

About NACE: Since 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has been the leading source of information about the employment of college graduates. For more information, visit www.nacweb.org. NACE maintains a virtual press room for the media at www.nacweb.org/press.

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

"There is no personal charm so great as the charm of a cheerful temperament." ~
~ Henry Van Dyke



VOLUME 11, ISSUE 10

Five Questions for Leaders With Newfound Authority

The most revealing chapter of a leader's journey begins when they ascend to their first position of influence. Much can be deciphered about a person's character by observing how they wield authority.

Don't misinterpret me; leadership transcends titles, and influence cannot be confined to positions of rank or seniority. Nonetheless, newfound authority carries the weight of responsibility. How a leader responds to that responsibility can be a measuring stick of their overall fitness to lead.

When leaders are handed authority, they enjoy broader latitude to exercise their leadership style. As positional leaders, they are able to implement their ideas more freely and instill their values more directly. The decisions they make at this critical juncture may either launch their careers or stunt their development.

In his blog for Harvard Business Publishing, Bill Taylor poses five questions aspiring leaders should consider as they assume the reigns of authority. For rising leaders, or those mentoring a leadership rookie, his material will be particularly beneficial.

Five Make-or-Break Questions for Aspiring Leaders

1) Why should great people want to work with you?

Money without mission attracts mercenaries. Talent "for-hire" flows to the highest bidder, and refuses to drop anchor. In the absence of a compelling vision, leaders find themselves presiding over a collection of individuals rather than leading a team.

As Bill Taylor writes, "great people want to feel like they're part of something greater than themselves." By offering more than a paycheck, an aspiring leader attracts values-based performers. Such employees are likely to forge emotional ties to the organization, take ownership of its mission, and invest themselves to accomplish its vision.

2) Do you know a great person when you see one?

"When it comes to evaluating talent, character counts for as much as credentials," writes Taylor. Aspiring leaders are wise to hire people who, in addition to being competent, fit smoothly into the company's culture. To do so, it may be necessary to endure the inconvenience (and extra work) of a longstanding opening until a suitable candidate surfaces.

3) Can you find great people who aren't working for you?

Aspiring leaders may want to polish their sales pitch to attract star performers from outside the organization. According to Taylor, "Leaders who are content to fill their organizations with people actively looking for jobs risk attracting malcontents and mediocre performers."

Talent will not beat a path to your door. The best leaders are actively on the lookout for key contributors. They look to hire, not when the need arises, but whenever they locate peak performers.

4) Are you teaching great people how your company works and wins?

In an effort to showcase their leadership skills, insecure leaders may rally their team to outperform others within the organization. The result: a counterproductive spirit of competition instead of togetherness. Smart leaders are wary of silos. They define the win for their team and connect that win to the company's overarching strategy. They recognize the power of a "we" mentality. As such, they prioritize connecting the performance of their people to the overall success of the company.

5) Are you as tough on yourself as you are on your people?

Bleed your creed. Undemonstrated or uncertain commitment on the part of a leader has a corrosive effect on that leader's influence. Followers resent leaders who are unwilling to make the investment they demand of those they supervise.

Oppositely, leaders who pay the price to fulfill lofty self-expectations earn the right to place high standards on their people. By doing so, they are imbuing their authority with authentic influence.

For more content from Bill Taylor, browse his blogs on the [Harvard Business School's publishing website](#).