

UH MĀNOA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING HITS HISTORIC HIGH IN ENROLLMENT

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Engineering is experiencing a surge in student interest, reaching a historic high in enrollment this fall. On August 25, 2025, the College welcomed more than 1,600 students back to campus—marking a milestone for the program and signaling strong momentum for Hawai'i's engineering workforce pipeline.

For Fall 2025, engineering enrollment includes 1,498 undergraduates and 184 graduate students across programs in civil, electrical, mechanical, and computer engineering, as well as construction engineering, and engineering science. Pre-engineering students alone account for more than 400 undergraduates, reflecting a robust pipeline of future majors.

The enrollment gains come alongside heightened activity across the College, from expanded student orientation and engagement, to increased scholarship support, and new partnerships with industry that strengthen hands-on learning and career readiness. This semester's Engineering Blueprints Orientation brought a large cohort of new students to campus early, building community and preparing them for an academically rigorous year ahead.

College leaders point to several drivers behind the growth, including Hawai'i's growing demand for engineers in infrastructure, energy, defense, and technology; enhanced outreach to local high schools; and expanded opportunities for research and experiential learning. With

enrollment rising and retention initiatives in place, the College is positioning more students to graduate into high-impact roles statewide.

As the College continues to invest in student success and industry collaboration, the

record-setting fall signals sustained interest from Hawai'i's next generation of problem-solvers—and a strong foundation for continued growth.



1,600 students arrive on campus for the first day of classes at the University of Hawaii College of Engineering.

COST ENGINEERING COMMENTARY

BY LOY KUO, PE, CCM, SOCIAL MEDIA BOARD DIRECTOR - AACE HAWAII SECTION

Some may have shared same casual encounter with cost planning or engineering as I did without much thought: a first time viewing on home television *The Price Is Right*. Attention captured as excited contestants guess their own price for fascinating prizes.

Whether as individual consumers or project procurement agents we face cost decisions and feedback loops throughout our lives. Monetary values are consciously and subconsciously assigned to goods, services, and even branding. Through education and experiences more advanced cost principles such as market forces, loan interest rate, and inflation are further learned and applied.

For the construction cost professionals in United States this past century, one likely has read or used published construction cost references attributed to Clinton E. Sweets, Frederick W. Dodge, and Robert S. Means. Technological advances in computers,

spreadsheet software programs, and internet telecommunication in the last three decades have helped further distilled cost engineering as its own specialty discipline amongst the different disciplines on a project team.

Apple Inc. co-founder Steve Jobs shared in a 1995 interview of what he defined and termed as the "dynamic range." It calculates a benchmark ratio of the productivity range for any profession. The yellow taxicab driving profession in NYC was assigned by him as example with a 2:1 dynamic range. Hypothesizing the drive times for the average and the best drivers driving crosstown mid-Manhattan would respectively take 30 and 15 minutes.

He postulated that the dynamic range is 50:1, or even 100:1, for the software engineering profession. The concept is that each profession has a dynamic range. For the professions with higher dynamic range such as the software engineers, it becomes more important and

worthwhile to recruit and retain the "A players" of that profession.

So, this begs the question of what is the dynamic range of a project team delivering projects here in Hawaii? My own past experiences peg it somewhere between those of the cab drivers and the software engineers hypothesized by Jobs. Further pondering on this question, I would also add the caveat that it highly depends on the complexity and magnitude of the undertaken project. And this is just for the initial project design and construction cost. If factor in the life cycle costs, also termed as Total Cost Management (TCM) Framework; this dynamic range difference is often still overlooked and can scale up significantly higher

For many public infrastructure projects such as a bridge, police station, wastewater treatment plant, or marine harbor the service life lasts

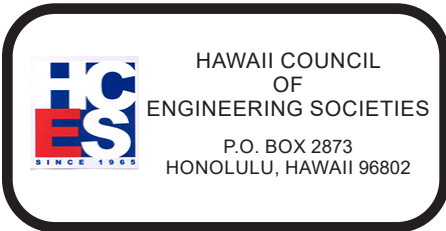
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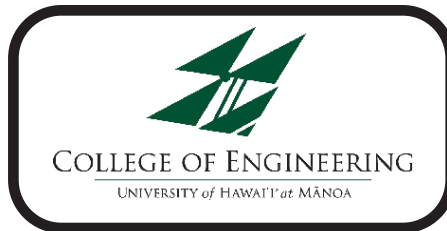
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As a member of the Board of the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB), AAEC International offers a range of certification levels from technician to professional to expertise level including CCT, CCP, CEP, EVP and PSP Certification Programs.

The local section, AAEC Hawaii, was originally established in 1973. It achieved both the Platinum and Gold Award for seven consecutive years 2014-2023. Our local area continues to achieve CCP, CEP, CST and PSP certifications. For more information, please visit <http://web.aacei.org/certification> and our local website www.aacehawaii.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT

"Please look out for an upcoming site visit announcement and sign up for December 12th. Project site is a 32-story, high-rise building with ongoing interior work."

CONT'D FROM "COST ENGINEERING COMMENTARY" ON PG 1

many decades beyond the amount of time spent during design and construction. Such time magnitude can easily outspan the entire working career of those on the project team by general comparison. After construction public works agencies are left saddled with whatever operating and maintenance (O&M) costs the project ends up incurring. This impacts not only what current and future rate payers will pay but often festering beneath the public surface quality level being diminished or forgo for some originally intended project benefits.

In addition to nationally compiled and published construction cost data, there are more facilities management O&M data being

compiled and published than before. Gordian, CBRE/Whitestone Research, and International Facility Management Association (IFMA) are examples. Implementing robust Total Cost Management approach to elevate the project team to "A player" status is becoming more feasible and attainable. It is especially our social and civic responsibilities to do so whenever working on public works projects.

In the same year The Price is Right television was first aired in 1956, the American Association of Cost Engineers was founded in New Hampshire. It later became what is today the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering, and AAEC International. Hawaii currently has over 45 members from over 11 companies. All interested are welcomed to find and chat with us at any of the section events held throughout the year.



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Nominations for the Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year candidates are being accepted. Nomination forms are available by contacting Kurt Kunimune or Pac Chung of HSPE. The awardees will be presented at the Engineer's Week Banquet in February of 2026. Please contact Kurt Kunimune or Pac Chung at kkunimune@bowersandkubota.com or pchung@bowersandkubota.com for nomination forms or with any questions. Nominations will be due by Friday, December 26, 2025. Mahalo!



WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.ASCEHAWAII.ORG/YMF.HTML](http://www.ascehawaii.org/ymf.html)

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YMF GENERAL MEETING

The next YMF general meetings will be in-person on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 6:00PM and Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 6:00PM. Please check our website, social media channels, or weekly eblast for the latest information on our upcoming general meetings and events. If you are interested in attending and learning more about the various professional, social, and service opportunities available through YMF, please contact YMF at ymf.hawaii@gmail.com.

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

On November 5, 2025, ASCE Hawaii YMF had their November General Meeting at TJ's Bar and Grill. Thank you to our Social Activities Chairs for planning the fun ice breaker. Thank you everyone who attended who helped make it a fun night with great turnout.



FOOD & FUND DRIVE WITH HAWAII FOODBANK

ASCE Hawaii YMF is hosting a Food & Fund Drive to support individuals and families in our local community impacted by the government shutdown and the ongoing uncertainty surrounding SNAP benefits. On top of the regular need for food assistance in Hawaii, these recent challenges have put even greater strain on our local food banks. The Food & Fund Drive is from November 12, 2025 to December 10, 2025. Please contact ymf.hawaii@gmail.com to find the nearest engineering office to donate canned foods and rice or to receive the link to our fundraiser page.

ASCE 2025 CONVENTION

At the ASCE 2025 Convention in Seattle, the ASCE Hawaii YMF was awarded the Younger Member Group Award for Small Groups. The award was accepted by Lance Lam, ASCE YMF Past President. Thank you to everyone in ASCE YMF for helping us receive these national honors.



ASCE YMF Past President, Lance Lam, accepted the Younger Member Group Award for Small Groups at the ASCE 2025 Convention.



Members of ASCE YMF, HWEA, and AWWA tour the Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant.

HONOLIULI WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT TOUR BY AARON VILLANUEVA AND CONNOR KAGAMIDA, FIELD TRIP CHAIRS

On Thursday, October 23rd, 15 total members from ASCE YMF, HWEA, and AWWA attended a tour of the Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Attendees got a chance to visit key parts of the facility to learn about the treatment process, including the dewatering building, headworks, pre-aeration facility, aeration basins and control building, digesters, primary and secondary clarifiers, and the effluent outfall. Attendees also got a sneak peek of the upcoming dryer facility that will convert the dried solids to biosolids, which can be used for fertilization. We would like to give a special mahalo to Chin Ming, Jacob, Tony, HWEA, and AWWA for giving us this opportunity!

VICTAULIC 2ND ANNUAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT BY JAREN IWASA, TREASURER

On Thursday, October 30th, seven ASCE Hawaii YMF members were amongst the 150 attendees at Victaulic's 2nd Annual Bowling Tournament at Aiea Bowl, where engineers and contractors came together for some friendly competition. We're proud to share that our team

was First Place for Best Group Photo! A big thank you to Anthony Maisonet and Bia Mae Villejo of Victaulic for creating opportunities for our industry to connect outside of the workplace.



2025 PE EXAM UPDATE

The PE Exam is now computer-based, with appointments available year-round at Pearson VUE test centers. Information about how to register for the exam can be found on the YMF website: <https://ascehawaiiyfm.org/pe-exam-information>



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Last held: November 13, 2025
 Next meeting: December 1, 2025

ASCE HAWAII SECTION DINNER MEETING

We will keep you informed via e-blasts and/or notices posted on our website at ascehawaii.org with the meeting information and schedule.

COMMITTEE POSITIONS

ASCE Hawaii is looking for volunteers for various committee positions, including Local Legislative Affairs Committee Members, Advocacy Captain, Communications Chair, Infrastructure Report Card Committee Members, and Water Resources Chairperson. If you are interested or have questions on any of these positions, please contact President Steven Doo, president.ascehawaii@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP

If you haven't already done so, please renew your ASCE membership, which includes 10 free PDHs. You can renew your membership at www.asce.org.

ASCE HAWAII SECTION STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

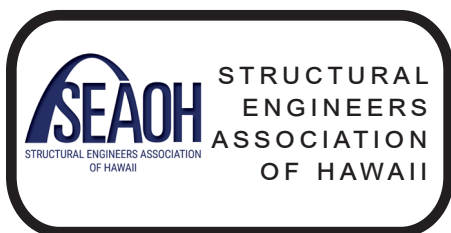
Please help us increase our scholarship endowment so that we can recognize deserving students. We continue to accept tax-deductible donations with the goal of increasing the annual scholarships. Make your check payable to 'ASCE Hawaii Section' and include the note 'Walter Lum Scholarship Fund' and mail to: ASCE Hawaii Section, P.O. Box 917, Honolulu, HI 96808-0917. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Waki at presidentelect.ascehawaii@gmail.com.

ASCE JOB LISTINGS

The following job listings are currently posted on the ASCE Hawaii Section website:

- **Schnabel Engineering** (Senior Engineer/ Project Manager and Project Engineer)

For further information, please visit <http://www.ascehawaii.org/jobs/>



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PREVIOUS BOD MEETING

November 5, 2025

MEMBERSHIP

New membership application was received from Din Hong, associate – Coffman Engineers

The following memberships have been approved:

- Robert Asato, student – MKE Associates LLC
- Rianne Christel Tangonan, associate – MKE Associates LLC

2025 SEA OH SCHOLARSHIP

Thank you to all the teams, sponsors and volunteers that supported the 13th Annual SEA OH Scholarship Golf Tournament held on November 14, 2025. With their support SEA OH was able to raise funds and award scholarships benefiting our local college students.

Congratulations to the 2025 SEA OH Scholarship Award Winners!

- Ashlyn Uehara
- Heidi Naumov
- Travis Nitta
- Malia Lininger
- Joelle Lee
- Leila Usami

Next BOD Meeting

Early December, to be determined, for more information contact SEA OH President Grant Okunaga at grant@mkelc.com



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FRANCIS RHODES MONTGOMERY DESIGN COMPETITION

The Fall 2025 competition is going to be held on Friday December 12, 2025 at UH Manoa. ASME Hawaii is still seeking volunteers to judge the UH Manoa mechanical engineering students design competition if interested feel free to reach out.

ASME-HAWAII NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled via Microsoft Teams for December 5th, 2025 from 5:30 PM. Please contact us if interested in participating.

KAHE POWER PLANT TOUR

ASME Hawaii is planning a tour of Hawaiian Electric's Kahe power plant during the first quarter of 2026. Date and details will be announced later. Feel free to contact us for additional information.



Website: hawaii.apwa.org

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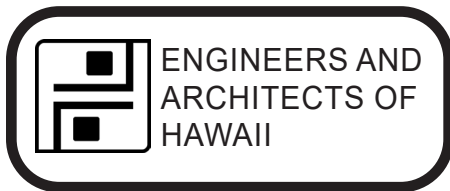
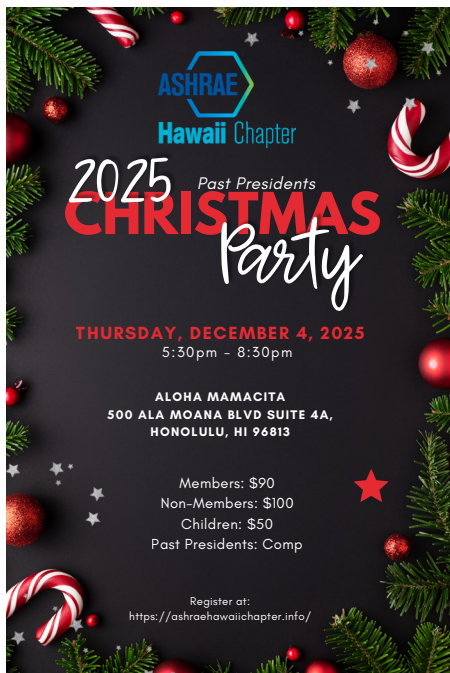


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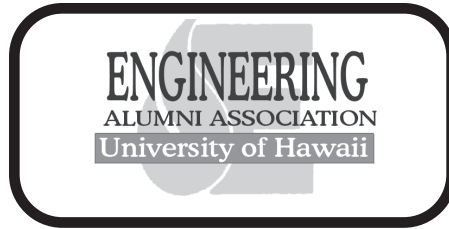
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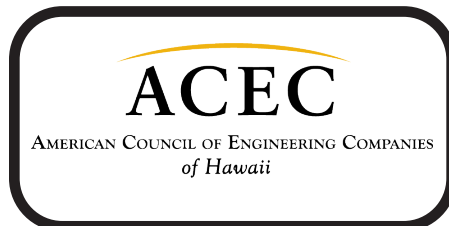


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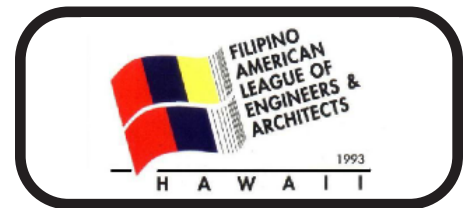
ACEC REQUESTS EXEMPTION FROM THE \$100,000 H-1B VISA FEE FOR ENGINEERS

On November 20, 2025, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) formally requested that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security exempt the engineering industry from the recently announced \$100,000

fee on new H 1B visa petitions. The fee, established under the September 19, 2025 presidential proclamation restricting entry of certain nonimmigrant workers, was intended to address concerns of overuse by IT companies; however, it also burdens the engineering industry, where firms face persistent workforce shortages and depend on international talent to deliver critical infrastructure projects.

In its letter, ACEC emphasized that engineers are essential to America's infrastructure, yet firms face mounting shortages driven by declining graduates, an aging workforce, and competition from other industries. Without access to H 1B visas, companies risk project delays, staff burnout, and reduced capacity to deliver safe, resilient infrastructure. For the 75 percent of ACEC member firms with 50 or fewer employees, the new \$100,000 visa fee is prohibitive, jeopardizing their ability to recruit the international talent critical to U.S. competitiveness.

Read the full letter at <https://acechawaii.org/>.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

IEEE Computer Society's Uncanny Discourse: A New Perspective on Reality-Bending AI and Human-Computer Interaction Talk

- Date: Thursday, 4 December 2025, 6:30 PM
- Location: [Mantech, 680 Ala Moana Blvd, Suite 103, Kaka'ako](#)
- Event Link: <https://lnkd.in/g42uXaXh>

PAST EVENTS



- On November 13th, the IEEE Hawaii Section held its 75th Anniversary celebration at The Pacific Club. Speakers Edward Sun, Wayne Shiroma, and John I. shared stories, triumphs, and historical insights from the Hawaii Section's past. IEEE President Kathleen Kramer shared her well wishes through a special video message. Appreciation goes to Joseph Wei, Scott Tamashiro, and the IEEE Region 6 leadership for joining the celebration. A huge mahalo to event sponsor Deborah Zimmerman! Here's to another remarkable 75 years!
- A huge shout out to Jenny Brown, who served as our Hawai'i Representative for the IEEE Central/Northwest/Northeast Area Meeting on October 18th. This meeting is designed to foster collaboration, learning, and leadership development among Section volunteers and Region leaders. Attendees also had the exciting opportunity to tour Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, a leading national laboratory known for groundbreaking discoveries in energy, physics, and environmental science!
- On October 30, the Lei Your Path: Shaping Your Career Journey event brought together young engineers and students from across



IEEE Central/Northwest/Northeast Area Meeting on October 18.

Hawai'i for an inspiring blend of career development, mentorship, cultural learning, and community building. Participants enjoyed a hands-on lei-making activity that celebrated the spirit of aloha while reflecting on their personal career journeys. The event featured three distinguished speakers — Mary Despe de Echemendia, Eugene Chang, and Chriselle Nagata — who shared practical guidance and personal experiences on career planning, early career decision-making, and internship pathways through the Akamai Workforce Initiative (AWI). Their insights provided students with valuable, actionable strategies to support their next steps in engineering and beyond.

- We are excited to share that the IEEE WIE Coding Adventure program successfully delivered two hands-on coding workshops for middle school students on November 4 and 7, 2025. Students explored block-based programming with Scratch, experimented with interactive sensors using Makey Makey, and learned beginner microcontroller programming with Micro:bit. On Day 2, students submitted the Scratch games they built during Day 1, and our IEEE volunteers reviewed and selected the Top 3 winners, each receiving a \$30 Amazon Gift Card! A total of 30 students participated over the two days, demonstrating impressive creativity, teamwork, and enthusiasm. The program

was made possible through the support of the dedicated volunteers from the IEEE Hawaii Power & Energy Society Chapter, IEEE Hawaii Women in Engineering and the Society of Women Engineer. We love seeing students discover their potential in STEM—and we look forward to offering more hands-on learning opportunities to inspire the next generation of innovators!

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

VEX Robotics Tournament at Kaimuki Middle School

- **What:** Kaimuki Middle School's VEX Robotics Team 4400 will be hosting a local qualifying ADC tournament. They are seeking 12 adult volunteers from any career field to serve as interview judges. As an interview judge, you'll be paired with another judge and provided a set of questions to ask participating middle and high school teams. This is a great way to connect with students, encourage future innovators, and support STEM education—no robotics or drone experience required!
- **When:** Tentatively December 13, 2025 - 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- **Where:** Kaimuki Middle School
- If you're interested or have questions, please contact star.voyagers.808@gmail.com.



IEEE WIE Coding Adventure program taught coding to middle schoolers through hands-on workshops.

Kaimuki Middle School Science & Engineering Fair – Call for Volunteer Judges

- **What:** Kaimuki Middle School is hosting its annual Science & Engineering Fair and is seeking 40 adult volunteers from any career field to serve as guest judges. As a judge, you will review projects from 7th and 8th grade student scientists across categories such as behavioral and social sciences, plant sciences, microbiology, environmental engineering, robotics, and intelligent machines. Judges will receive instructions and scoring guidelines—no science background required! This is a wonderful opportunity to support young innovators and encourage STEM learning in our community.
- **When:** Monday, December 1, 2025 – 1:30 PM to 5:00 PM (late arrival or early departure is okay with notice)
- **Where:** Kaimuki Middle School Library
- If you're interested or have questions, please contact Samantha.Kumagai@k12.hi.us

IEEE JOB LISTINGS

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- 2025 IEEE Automatic Speech Recognition and Understanding Workshop (ASRU), 6 - 10 December 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
- 2025 Annual Computer Security Applications Conference (ACSAC), 8 - 12 December 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
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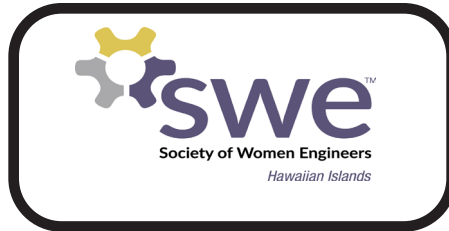
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12

DECEMBER

2025

						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Kaimuki Middle School Science & Engineering Fair	2	3 ACECH Dec GMM ACECH Hawaii Island Holiday Social ASCE YMF General Meeting	4 ASHRAE Christmas Party IEEE Computer Society's Uncanny Discourse Talk	5 ASME General Membership Meeting	6
7	8 2025 Annual Computer Security Applications Conference 12/8-12/12	9	10 ASCE YMF Food & Fund Drive ongoing from 11/12 until 12/10	11	12 ASME Francis Rhodes Montgomery Design Competition	13 VEX Robotics Tournament at Kaimuki Middle School
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 HSPE Engineer of the Year & Young Engineer of the Year nominations due	27
28	29	30	31			

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