

## Records growth persists during economic slowdown

During a period of sharp financial downturns and a slowing of the overall economy, the Records Program at NCEES has continued to see increases in activity from applicants and Record holders.

Shortly before the end of 2008, the number of active Record holders passed the 20,000 mark. And for the first months of the 2008–09 fiscal year, numbers of Council Record applicants, new Records, and renewals are all up significantly compared to the same period last year.

The increase in Records activity continues a pattern of steep growth that began in late 2006. The number of applications received in 2007–08 was up 34 percent compared to the previous year; compared to 2005–06, the number was up 63 percent.

Davy McDowell, P.E., NCEES director of Professional Services, says that the increasing popularity of the program is due in part to greater exposure.

“I think a big part is that more licensees are aware of the Records Program,” said McDowell. “We’ve made a greater effort in the past few years to increase awareness of the service by attending more meetings and conferences of engineering and surveying organizations. We’ve also distributed brochures and run print ads in many publications to detail the service.”

Increased mobility in the engineering and surveying professions and a tight job market have also played a role in the growth of the program. The Records Program has existed in one form or another since the 1920s, when licensees holding a “reciprocal card” were able to obtain licenses from other Member Boards. The program gradually became more formalized as more state and territorial boards joined NCEES. Today, as large firms expand their footprints across multiple jurisdictions, mobility for licensees is more important than ever.

Also, engineers and surveyors who perform consulting work or who own their own firms must be licensed in states where they advertise their services or make bids for projects. In times of recession, firms compete for fewer projects and are more likely to expand their geographical reach. This leads to greater demand for comity licensure, the process by which an engineer or surveyor licensed in one state applies for licensure in another jurisdiction.

A Council Record contains the documentation a licensee needs to apply for comity licensure in additional states, such as college transcripts, exam verifications, and professional recommendations. NCEES collects and stores this information and sends it to a state or territory’s licensing board at the Record holder’s request.

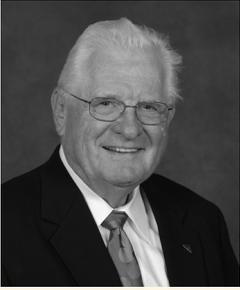
Holding a Council Record reduces the paperwork needed to apply for licensure in additional jurisdictions. Once a Record has been established, a licensee can pay a transmittal fee to have his or her Record sent to a licensing board. NCEES reviews all applications to determine if licensees qualify for the Model Law Engineer or Model Law Surveyor designation, and licensees can also apply for the Model Law Structural Engineer designation. In many cases, licensing boards have a faster process for granting comity licensure to Model Law engineers and surveyors.

To accommodate increased demand for the program, NCEES recently introduced a Web-based application process that allows Records applicants to save and return to their online application, a welcome change given the lengthy application. The revamped online system also allows Record holders to renew and transmit their Records online.

Another addition to the Records Program is the USCIEP International Registry, which is designed to assist licensed engineers in the

*(continued on page 8)*

# MESSAGE



Henn Rebane, P.E.  
NCEES President

## Improving licensure requires dialogue, cooperation

This is the time of year when NCEES members are heavily involved in details, as the various committees and task forces work to prepare their reports ahead of the zone meetings. Working out the details of professional licensure can be a complex process, but there is an overarching goal behind every charge and every resulting motion: to uphold the viability and prestige of licensure.

To strengthen our professions and protect the public, NCEES must maintain strong relationships with other organizations that are related to the engineering and surveying professions. When I became president, one of my pledges was to improve relations with ABET, the accrediting body for college engineering and applied science programs. Until recently, there was little interaction between the leaders of NCEES and those of ABET, limited to having an NCEES representative present at the ABET Annual Meeting, and vice versa. That is changing, and I'm confident that both organizations stand to benefit from this closer relationship.

A big step was made during the ABET Annual Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, in October, when the ABET Executive Committee met with NCEES representatives to discuss issues of mutual importance. One of these issues is ABET's decision to introduce dual-level accreditation, permitting engineering colleges to pursue accreditation for bachelor's and master's degree programs in the same discipline. This decision has factored in our deliberations, and the Committee on Uniform Procedures and Legislative Guidelines is charged with reviewing the *Model Law* and *Model Rules* to determine if any changes are needed in light of the ABET policy change.

To accomplish its goals, the Engineering Education Task Force relies on the expertise of various resources from other engineering organizations and societies. ABET certainly has a role to play in this, and I therefore added an ABET past president to the task force as a consultant. Bill Clark, P.E., the 2006–07

ABET president, attended the task force's two face-to-face meeting in this consultant role. In a separate role, he will address the Board Presidents' Assembly on Friday, February 20, to discuss the role and history of ABET and to provide an overview of the organization's current activities.

Another issue on the agenda during the Board Presidents' Assembly involves an emerging design method. Building information modeling, or BIM, involves the use of three-dimensional modeling of buildings. When employed, BIM replaces traditional drawings and is able to show spatial relationships of building components. BIM models, unlike drawings, can be read by computers. During the Saturday afternoon session for board presidents, Robert Matthews, P.E., a former Florida Engineers Board member, and Bill Nelson, P.E., of Camp Dresser McGee, will discuss this technology and issues with ensuring responsible charge. After their presentation, board presidents will deliver reports on activities in their states, and the floor will be opened for discussion.

To remain effective as a means of protecting the public, licensure must adapt in response to emerging disciplines and technologies. This requires cooperation with technical and professional societies, as evidenced by our partnerships with various societies in creating the Group II PE exams. Where there is appropriate demand for an exam in a particular discipline, it is necessary for the licensing body and the sponsoring society to move forward as quickly as possible in developing a licensure exam for that discipline. Certification can sometimes serve as an effective complement to a professional license, but it should not be a substitute for licensure, especially when the practice of that discipline affects the public.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Atlanta at the Board Presidents' Assembly, and I wish all of you safe travels and a productive 2009.

Henn Rebane, P.E.  
NCEES President

# UPDATE

## Council prepares for future needs of licensure

We are continually reminded that the Council must remain proactive not only in recognizing the changing needs of licensure but also in devising effective strategies to meet those needs. The work undertaken by Council members and staff is critical to anticipating challenges rather than responding to them after the fact.

The Engineering Education Task Force continues its work on the master's or equivalent requirement, which would raise the level of education required for engineering licensure. It is currently studying the potential educational, professional, regulatory, and economic impacts of implementing the requirement, as well as evaluating alternative solutions. The results of the task force's work will be presented to the zones at the interim meetings this spring.

The Computer-Based Testing Task Force is also addressing an issue that has potential long-term consequences. The task force issued a request for information (RFI) to vendors of testing products and services to determine whether a switch to computer-based testing is in the best interest of Member Boards and examinees. The RFI responses, which were received in January, provide information that will shed light on the logistics associated with this method of testing while also highlighting any financial or security-related concerns.

NCEES is focusing on the evolution of engineering disciplines. A Professional Activities and Knowledge Survey (PAKS) has been conducted for the combined 16-hour Structural exam, and the EPE Committee met during the last week of January to approve the new exam specification and determine how the exam will be administered. By April 2011, jurisdictions will have a single structural exam that provides a fair, cost-effective, and uniform means of measuring minimal competency in structural engineering.

NCEES continues to monitor the demand for new exam disciplines. Software engineering appears likely to receive the required support

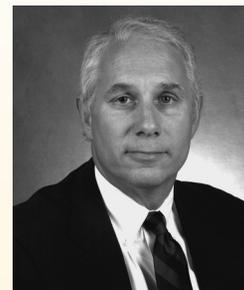
from 10 Member Boards. However, it does not yet have a technical society sponsor, which is also required to move forward. Other disciplines such as bioengineering are also receiving increased interest. The EPP and EPE Committees are reviewing exam development policies this year to ensure they properly address both emerging disciplines and splintering among existing disciplines.

### Enhancing exam security

NCEES is moving forward with preparations for an exam registration system. Approved by the Council in 2006, this online system will improve exam security and provide Member Boards with a more efficient means of accessing data such as score records and candidate information. At the MBA meeting in October 2008, administrators discussed the related needs of their boards, and NCEES will continue to consult with boards and their testing agents to address issues with software integration. NCEES staff has devised a timeline for software development, and the exam registration system should be ready for the October 2010 administration. The upcoming Board Presidents' Assembly will include a discussion of the actions Member Boards will need to take to implement the system.

### Strengthening the NCEES brand

Assembly attendees will also hear from representatives from the the Council's new marketing agency. Over the past few months, NCEES has been working with the agency to evaluate and find ways to strengthen the overall NCEES brand. EM2 representatives will provide an overview of these efforts, which will result in improvements to the Council's Web site and more effective licensure promotion and outreach campaigns that capitalize on the trusted reputation the Council has built over the last 88 years.



Jerry T. Carter  
NCEES Executive Director

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NCEES Executive Director

# 2009 NCEES Board Presidents' Assembly

Every two years, presidents and administrators from NCEES Member Boards gather at the Board Presidents' Assembly to discuss issues related to engineering and surveying licensure and to hear updates on planned and ongoing NCEES activities. This year, the meeting will take place February 20–21 at the Hilton Atlanta Airport Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia.

## Agenda

### Thursday, February 19, 2009

3:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

*Registration Desk Open*

6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

*Welcome Reception*

### Friday, February 20, 2009

7:00 a.m.–Noon

*Registration Desk Open*

7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m.

*Breakfast*

8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

*Orientation to NCEES—Structure, Policies, Services*

This session will provide an overview of NCEES, including the Council's history, leadership structure, committee process, and related issues. This is a voluntary session for attendees interested in learning more about NCEES.

Business Session

9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

*Presentation by EM2 on Branding/Marketing Efforts*

The Council's new creative agency will present information concerning an in-depth evaluation of current NCEES marketing practices and proposals for future branding/marketing efforts.

10:30 a.m.–Noon

*Using Robert's Rules to Conduct a Fair and Orderly Meeting*

NCEES Parliamentarian Jesse Binnall will present a workshop on how to properly apply *Robert's Rules* in conducting board meetings.

Noon–1:30 p.m.

*Lunch and Break*

1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

*Officer Reports*

Members of the NCEES Board of Directors will present updates on ongoing activities within NCEES, including Council finances, committee/task force activities, and related initiatives.

3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

*Law Enforcement/Security Update*

Law Enforcement Committee Chair John Greenhalge and NCEES Security and Compliance Manager Bob Whorton, P.E., will describe actions taken by various states to investigate issues of exam collusion and will provide an update on matters related to exam security.

4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

*Recent Actions to Enhance NCEES Services to Member Boards*

NCEES President Henn Rebane, P.E., will discuss recent actions taken by the NCEES Board of Directors and approved by the Council to enhance services provided to Member Boards.

4:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

*ABET*

ABET Past President Bill Clark, P.E., will provide a brief overview and history of ABET along with comments concerning ongoing initiatives.

6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

*Reception and Dinner*

**Saturday, February 21, 2009**

7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m.

*Breakfast*

8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

*NCEES Services*

NCEES staff will discuss services provided by NCEES along with any upcoming changes. This session will include Examination Services, Council Records, the Registered Continuing Education Providers Program (RCEPP), ELSEES, ADA issues, and the Center.

10:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

*NCEES Exam Registration System*

NCEES staff will discuss the development of a Council-approved system to require all future candidates to obtain an exam registration ID from NCEES prior to sitting for an examination. The session will also describe actions that will be required of Member Boards to implement this system.

11:30 a.m.–Noon

*NCEES Examinations at Foreign Sites*

Executive Director Jerry Carter will discuss the process used to evaluate requests to allow NCEES examinations to be offered at sites outside the United States and the measures taken to ensure the examinations will be administered in full compliance with NCEES policies.

Noon–1:30 p.m.

*Lunch and Break*

1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

*Concurrent Sessions (separate meeting rooms)*

The board presidents will convene for a presentation on Building Information Modeling (BIM) by Robert Matthews, a former member of the Florida PE Board, and Bill Nelson of Camp Dresser McGee (CDM). Subsequent to the presentation, the board presidents will provide state reports and conduct an open forum on issues of mutual interest. President-Elect David Whitman, Ph.D., P.E., will facilitate the session.

The MBA Networking Group will convene to address agenda items identified by the group. The session will be facilitated by MBA Networking Group leaders (Andrew Ritter, spokesperson; Charles Adams; Melinda Pearson, AIA; and Lesley Rosier-Tabor, P.E.).

6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

*Reception and Dinner*

**MISSION**

- ♦ Assist Member Boards in the promotion and promulgation of regulatory processes for engineering and surveying licensure which demonstrate high standards of knowledge, competence, professional development, and ethics.
- ♦ Provide to Member Boards services that promote uniform licensing procedures which emphasize quality education, examination, progressive qualifying experience, and continuing professional competency.
- ♦ Coordinate with domestic and international organizations to promote licensure of all engineers and surveyors.

NCEES Strategic Plan

# Exam reminders for 2009

Several changes have gone into effect and will impact NCEES examinations beginning this year.

The Electrical and Computer PE exam will no longer be a breadth and depth exam. Beginning in April, this exam will consist of separate exams for three subdisciplines: computer, electrical and electronics, and power. Candidates taking the Electrical and Computer PE exam will be asked to specify their subdiscipline when registering.

The specifications for the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam have changed slightly. The section on engineering mechanics has been separated into a statics subsection and a dynamics subsection. While the content of the exam will not be affected, FE exam score reports will provide more precise feedback on candidate performance on statics and dynamics beginning with the April administration.

NCEES is now offering an online practice exam for candidates preparing for the FE exam. These practice exams feature 90 questions (half the number appearing on the actual exam). The first 60 questions of

the online practice exam are drawn from the topics covered by the morning section of the exam, while the final 30 questions cover the candidate's selected afternoon discipline (chemical, civil, electrical, environmental, general, industrial, or mechanical). More information about the FE Online Practice Exam is at [www.ncees.org/fepractice](http://www.ncees.org/fepractice).

The approved calculator list for 2009 remains the same:

**Casio**—All fx-115 models. Any Casio calculator must contain fx-115 in its model name.

**Hewlett-Packard**—The HP33s and HP 35s models, but no others.

**Texas Instruments**—All TI-30X and TI-36X models. Any Texas Instruments calculator must contain either TI-30X or TI-36X in its model name.

The spring 2009 exam administration will be April 24–25. Member Boards should submit all exam orders by Monday, March 16.

# October 2008 pass rates

## Fundamentals of Engineering Principles and Practice of Engineering

FE exam pass rates reflect students/graduates of EAC/ABET-accredited engineering programs.

*All modules*

Examination Module	First-time takers (%)	Repeat takers (%)
Chemical	82	46
Civil	70	29
Electrical	67	29
Environmental	76	34
Industrial	66	27
Mechanical	81	32
General	74	29

*General exam only*

Examinee degree discipline	First-time takers (%)	Repeat takers (%)
Aeronautical	86	38
Agricultural	80	33
Architectural	77	39
Biological	83	13
Biomedical	69	100
Chemical	67	18
Civil	69	26
Electrical	53	25
Engineering Mechanics	53	17
Environmental	85	18
General Engineering	72	31
Mechanical	80	38
Mining and Mineral	65	33
Petroleum	64	43
Structural	75	41

Examination	First-time takers (%)	Repeat takers (%)
Agricultural	75	0
Chemical	79	34
Civil	60	25
Control Systems	73	28
Electrical and Computer	70	26
Environmental	73	43
Fire Protection	51	32
Industrial	79	32
Mechanical	70	38
Metallurgical and Materials	56	56
Mining and Mineral	80	59
Nuclear	35	0
Petroleum	73	47
Structural I	46	24
Structural II	59	29

## Surveying

Examination	First-time takers (%)	Repeat takers (%)
Fundamentals of Surveying	67	35
Principles and Practice of Surveying	63	22

## NCEES seeks volunteers for Chemical PAKS

NCEES is currently seeking licensed chemical engineers to participate in a Professional Activities and Knowledge Study, or PAKS, for the Chemical Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) exam. The results of this study will be used to determine the specifications for the exam.

Participants will complete an online survey about the tasks and knowledge required of a licensed chemical engineer with 4 to 6 years of experience. The survey can be completed in less than 30 minutes.

“PAKS are an extremely important part of the exam development process at NCEES,” said Director of Exam Services Tim Miller, P.E. “We rely on participation from licensees on these studies to help ensure that the exam reflects current professional practice.”

The Web address for the survey is:  
<http://vovici.com/wsb.dll/s/12d9g3a799>.

Responses will be collected until April 10, 2009.

Records growth persists during economic slowdown  
(continued from page 1)

United States who seek recognition to practice in foreign countries. USCIEP, or the United States Council for International Engineering Practice, exists to promote dialogue and recognition between NCEES Member Boards and foreign licensing bodies. With increasing interest in the International Registry, NCEES

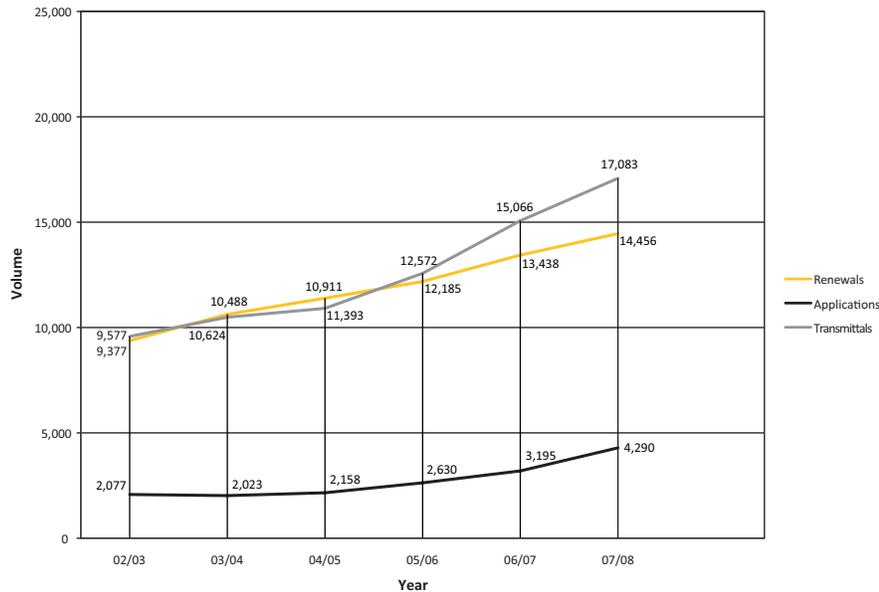
majority of exam candidates to register during the last few weeks of the registration period, which began in December and ends March 6.

A look at historical exam registration data reveals that exam numbers rose during and after the last two economic recessions, which took place March–November 2001 and July 1990–March 1991, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

During the 2001–02 fiscal year, the number of FE candidates rose 9.8 percent compared with the previous year, while PE numbers rose 3.8 percent. During the 1991–92 fiscal year, FE and PE exam numbers were up 8.3 percent and 6.6 percent, respectively, compared with the previous year.

While the general definition of a recession is two or more consecutive quarters of declining gross domestic product, the NBER simply defines it as “a period of significant decline in economic activity spread across the country, lasting more than a few months.”

## Records Program Activity



leadership decided to administer it through the Records Department.

### Exam registration remains strong

While it has not seen the surging numbers of the Records Program, exam registration has—at least thus far—shown little exposure to external economic factors. Since the beginning of the 2008–09 fiscal year, the number of exam registrations for the fundamentals and principles and practice exams has been relatively stable.

“Registrations for the April exam have been fairly steady,” said Pam Powell, the director of ELSEES, adding that the numbers taking exams last October were also similar to previous years. Powell noted that it is normal for the

“When there is a downturn in the economy, credentials become more valuable, and more people tend to pursue licensure,” said Executive Director Jerry Carter.

“Some of that has to do with people who have been working in jobs that are exempt from licensure requirements being laid off. These people then find themselves trying to use their education and skills in a market that requires licensure.”

*Doug McGuirt  
NCEES Editor*

# Chinese delegation visits NCEES headquarters

NCEES recently played host to international visitors when representatives from the Chinese Ministry of Construction came to Council headquarters in Clemson to meet with several key staff members. The meeting, which took place December 17, included discussions of licensure processes in the two nations.

In 1996, a delegation from NCEES visited China to discuss its licensure process. Since then, the Chinese have developed an exam similar to the Fundamentals of Engineering exam as well as several versions of a civil engineering exam, according to NCEES Executive Director Jerry Carter.

“They were interested in learning about some of the things NCEES is currently pursuing,” said Carter, who added that they had several questions about the licensure process, including whether passing an Architectural Engineering PE exam allows the individual to practice architecture and what makes a Model Law Engineer different from any other P.E.

Through its USCIEP division, NCEES continues to encourage international dialogue as well as assisting Member Boards and licensees seeking information about international agreements affecting engineering and surveying licensure.



President Zhao Chunshan (center) of the Chinese Practice Qualification Registration Center presents Jerry Carter with gifts commemorating the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.



NCEES staff members meeting with the Chinese delegation included, from left to right, Larry Li (second from left), Tim Miller, PE., Susan Whitfield, and Jerry Carter.

- Colorado** ♦ Dan C. Donegon, P.E., and Ronald K. Abo are new appointees to the board. The term of Peter D. Monroe, P.E., has expired. Cheri Gerou is no longer on the board.
- Florida PE** ♦ Bijay K. Panigrahi, Ph.D., P.E.; Paul J. Halyard, P.E.; H. Dann Wallis, P.E.; and Mary M. Young are new appointees to the board. The term of Henn Rebane, P.E., has expired.
- Georgia** ♦ The board's new fax number is (866) 888-9718.
- Illinois PE** ♦ The term of John M. McKinney, P.E., has expired.
- Maryland PE and PS** ♦ Pamela Edwards is the acting executive director for both boards.
- Nebraska PE** ♦ Krista L. Kester is a new appointee to the board. The term of William A. Tringe Jr. has expired.
- North Dakota** ♦ Wayne E. Larson, P.E., is a new appointee to the board. The term of Gary L. Arman, P.E., has expired.
- Ohio** ♦ Angela R. Newland, P.E., is a new appointee to the board. The term of Alan J. Olson, P.E., has expired. The Ohio Board's Web address is now [www.peps.ohio.gov](http://www.peps.ohio.gov).
- Tennessee PE** ♦ James O. Hastings Jr. is the new board chair. Harold P. Balthrop Jr., P.E., and Leslie Shankman-Cohn are new appointees to the board. The terms of Dana L. Miller and William J. Stockard, P.E., have expired.
- Virginia** ♦ James R. Boyd is a new appointee to the board. The term of Kenneth A. Schwartz has expired.

# Engineers encouraged to attend college fairs

**R**igorous. Heavy in math and science. Not for the faint of heart. No fuzzy, feel-good stuff on the syllabus.

For many high school students, these are the messages that accompany discussions of the engineering profession. While it is true that engineering requires strong math and science abilities, the stereotypes fail to mention the importance of imagination and problem solving in everyday engineering tasks.

The result is a poor understanding of what an engineering career really involves, not to mention a wide gender gap in which females with high math and science aptitudes are nevertheless drawn toward other professions.

Studies including one conducted by the Extraordinary Women Engineers Project—made up of a coalition of leading engineering associations with close ties to NCEES—indicate that these distorted perceptions of engineering are the result of a lack of first-person testimonials from actual engineers. The study found that high school girls with high math and science aptitudes are influenced most strongly by parents, teachers, counselors, and the mass media as they make career decisions. Without the opportunity to learn about engineering from actual engineers, these students are left with the old stereotypes.

To help correct this, the Engineer Your Life campaign was launched to encourage high school students, particularly girls, to pursue engineering studies in college. This national campaign is asking engineers to volunteer to attend college fairs throughout the country to talk with students about what engineering careers are really like.

The key focus of the campaign is to emphasize the creativity that is required of engineers and to demonstrate that engineering is a results-oriented career that allows professionals to see direct, tangible evidence of how their efforts improve the world around them.

When an engineer signs up to host a table at a college fair, he or she receives materials to distribute to interested students, including research on engineering schools and recommendations for coursework preparations. Signs and tables are also provided. Exhibit registration fees will be covered by the National Engineers Week Foundation and the Engineer Your Life coalition in partnership with the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC). NCEES, a longtime engineering society sponsor of EWeek, encourages participation.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to help debunk some of the myths about engineering and encourage students to consider it as a career option,” said NCEES President Henn Rebane, P.E.

Participating in Engineer Your Life can also help EWeek’s Million Hours Campaign reach its goal of one million hours of outreach activities in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education.

For more information about Engineer Your Life, including a link to information about college fairs, visit [www.engineeryourlife.org](http://www.engineeryourlife.org). Information about the EWeek and the Million Hours Campaign can be found at [www.eweek.org](http://www.eweek.org).

Send letters to *Licensure Exchange* editor at NCEES, PO Box 1686, Clemson, SC 29633 or [dmcguirt@ncees.org](mailto:dmcguirt@ncees.org).

Please include your name and state of residence on the letter. Letters may be edited for clarity, brevity, and readability.

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Upcoming  
**EVENTS**

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
February 19–21	Board Presidents' Assembly	Atlanta, Georgia
February 27–28	Board of Directors' Meeting	St. Petersburg, Florida
April 2–4	Central Zone Interim Meeting	Des Moines, Iowa
April 16–18	Northeast Zone Interim Meeting	Norfolk, Virginia
April 24–25	Exam Administration	
May 14–16	Southern Zone Interim Meeting	New Orleans, Louisiana
May 28–30	Western Zone Interim Meeting	Banff, Alberta, Canada
June 1	Board of Directors' Meeting	Banff, Alberta, Canada

Licensure  
**EXCHANGE**

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