### October 2024 Volume 28,

Issue 5

## Licensure **EXCHANGE**

An official NCEES publication for the exchange of information, opinions, and ideas regarding the licensure of engineers and surveyors

## Delegates decide licensure issues at the 103<sup>rd</sup> NCEES annual meeting

NCEES DELEGATES RECENTLY GATHERED FOR the 2024 annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois, on August 14–17 to discuss licensure issues and set Council policy. The following summarizes key actions taken at the annual meeting. Full details will be included in the official minutes, which will be published later this year.

### 2024-25 NCEES board of directors

NCEES installed its 2024–25 board of directors, with three new members.

Andrew Zoutewelle, P.L.S., of the North Carolina board, began his term as 2024–25 NCEES president. He replaces outgoing president Laura Sievers, P.E., who will remain on the board of directors as immediate past president. Other returning board members include Karl Tonander, P.E., as treasurer; Samuel Wilson, DBA, P.E., as Northeast Zone vice president; and James Kelly, P.E., as Southern Zone vice president. NCEES welcomed the newly commissioned Central Zone vice president Jason Suelter, P.E., S.E., and Western Zone vice president Aaron Blaisdell, P.L.S.

During the annual meeting, Elizabeth Beckett Johnston, P.E., of the Alaska board was elected to serve as the 2024–25 president-elect. For more information on the 2024–25 NCEES officers, visit ncees.org/governance.



Delegates participate in Friday's business session at the 2024 NCEES annual meeting in Chicago.

### 2024 annual meeting actions

The Council addressed more than 100 motions at the 2024 annual meeting. The following are some key motions adopted during the meeting.

ACCA Motion 1: This motion from the Advisory Committee on Council Activities (ACCA) added a position statement on professional ethics to the Manual of Policy and Position Statements to reflect the vision and mission of NCEES and the organization's standards for licensure applicants.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT



ANDREW ZOUTEWELLE, P.L.S.

NCEES PRESIDENT

Zoutewelle accepts presidency, outlines areas of focus for the year

Andrew Zoutewelle, P.L.S., of North Carolina, accepted the office of president on August 16, 2024, at the NCEES annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois. The following is adapted from his inaugural speech.

ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR YEARS AGO, OUR COUNCIL was founded in the city of our 2024 annual meeting—Chicago. It was 1920, the days of Al Capone and the Roaring '20s. There was a 17-story building—a high-rise back then—located at the corner of North Clark Street and West Randolph Street. It was called the Hotel Sherman, where in 1920, the Iowa Board invited the 10 state engineering boards in existence to meet. Only seven of those boards showed up, and they formed the Council.

For the last four years, I have looked forward to celebrating in Chicago where, if not for the COVID-19 pandemic, we would have celebrated on the actual 100th anniversary of our licensing Council. But I am grateful to have finally gathered in our Council's birthplace for our annual meeting 104 years later.

Now, we must turn our attention to continuing the work that began so long ago. So, what is our mission for this year? I propose we begin with the following:

- 1. The future of engineering licensure: How do we measure competency, particularly with the opportunity to expand international licensure? Do we understand the way our national and international counterparts measure competency?
- 2. The future of surveying licensure: Is now the time for NCEES to offer a pathway to non-boundary surveying? Are our boards ready to license surveyors who do not practice traditional boundary surveying



NCEES President Andrew Zoutewelle, P.L.S., speaks at the Awards and Installation Banquet on August 16 during the 2024 annual meeting in Chicago, beginning his 2024–25 presidential term.

but are innovators in the new arenas of drone-based LiDAR? Of underwater hydrography? Of geodetic surveying? Of engineering surveys? Of underground utilities and SUE? Conducting these tasks with a license assures public welfare and opens new doors for non-boundary practitioners to achieve a P.S., P.L.S., or L.S. license.

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NCEES CEO David Cox, NCEES President Laura Sievers, ECUK Chair John Chudley, and ECUK International Affairs Manager Dave Clark complete the ceremonial signing of the MRA as part of the 2024 annual meeting in August.

For more information on these motions and others that were adopted during the 2024 annual meeting, watch the State of the Council meeting from August 28, 2024. State of the Council recordings are available in the Board Resources section of MyNCEES (ncees.org/resources) under "State of the Council meetings."

- ACCA Motion 2: This motion amended Administrative Policy 12 to create a new Meritorious Service Award with Special Commendation to recognize associate members who continue to demonstrate distinguished service after receiving the Meritorious Service Award.
- Finance Motion 3: This motion amended Financial Policy 7 in an effort to provide a more balanced and equitable structure for NCEES membership fees.
- Finance Motions 4–5: These two motions pertain to the new NCEES Foundation. Motion 4 approved a \$100,000 contribution to the Foundation that can be spent in 2024–25. Motion 5 approved a \$3 million transfer to the Foundation that will become part of the Foundation's investment corpus, or basis. These funds are not available to be directly spent; instead, they are used to create investment income that can be spent in the future.

### MRA ceremonial signing

Earlier this year, a mutual recognition agreement (MRA) between the United States and the United Kingdom was finalized and approved by NCEES and the U.K. Engineering Council (ECUK). This agreement aims to provide a more direct path for licensed engineers to practice in each country and was built on the framework of the International Professional Engineers Agreement, of which both countries are members. The MRA acknowledges and upholds discipline-specific and jurisdictional requirements of the member boards that decide to participate.

As part of the 2024 annual meeting, NCEES staff, participating member boards, and ECUK representatives celebrated the MRA with a ceremonial signing of the agreement at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile on August 13, 2024. Representatives from 26 member boards participated.

### **MEMBER BOARD BRIEF**



PATTY MAMOLA, P.E. NEVADA STATE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS CONSULTANT

## The pivotal role of member board administrators: Insights from experience

OVER THE YEARS AT NCEES MEETINGS, I HAVE OFTEN heard, "The member board administrator is where the rubber meets the road." After becoming an MBA, I realized how true these words are. An MBA carries the historical knowledge of a board, is most familiar with a state's laws and rules, and has direct control over processes used to implement those laws and rules.

From my unique perspective as a licensed professional engineer, having served as a board member and then as an MBA, I have come to appreciate the crucial role that MBAs play in regulating the engineering and surveying professions. Historical knowledge provides context and helps guide the board, while the operational processes MBAs implement and oversee are fundamental to the regulatory system.

### The importance of processes in regulation

Processes used in application processing or licensing renewal are how a board actualizes statutes and regulations. These processes directly impact future licensees and the speed of the licensing process. In Nevada, after becoming an MBA, I found numerous institutionalized processes that created unnecessary hurdles. For example, Nevada decoupled the experience requirement from the administration of the PE exam but still required an abbreviated application form and board approval to take the PE exam early. Upon reevaluating the statutes and regulations, I realized this application and approval process was unnecessary. Eliminating it not only freed up staff time and reduced paper files but also saved future licensees significant time and effort.

Another impactful change was accepting only the NCEES Record for both initial and comity licensure applications. Nevada statutes required an application form, but they did not require it to be unique to Nevada. Recognizing the numerous

benefits for staff operations and prospective applicants, we decided to use the NCEES Record as Nevada's application form. Any statutorily required reportable biodata, such as child support or military service, is collected separately and electronically.

Using the NCEES Record highlighted the distinction of Model Law for some comity applicants. NCEES Model Law represents the gold standard for licensing U.S. engineers and surveyors. We realized Nevada's licensing processes did not distinguish between comity and initial licensure, yet we had a rule that distinctly addressed comity licensure. Examining our laws, rules, and processes revealed an unnecessary conflation of comity licensure rules with initial licensure laws.

Consequently, Nevada instituted a new expedited process for reviewing and approving comity applications, reducing approval time from over 75 days to less than five days and shifting the process from a board function to a staff function. This change alone benefits over 80 percent of comity applicants, enabling them to start working sooner in Nevada, thus benefiting both Nevadans and Nevada's economy.

### Streamlining and automating for efficiency

If a board desires positive changes in speeding up the licensing process or removing unnecessary hurdles, it should first examine its licensing processes to identify areas for streamlining or elimination. An MBA plays a key role in operational processes.

When I first became Nevada's MBA, there was a licensing specialist who had only been on staff for six months. She would frequently ask, "Do we have to do it this way?"

I would always reply, "Let's look at the laws and rules and see what they say." We almost always found a disconnect between the institutionalized processes and Nevada's laws and rules. With fresh eyes, an open mind, and a focus on reducing manual steps and simplifying the process for applicants, we eliminated some processes and, where possible, implemented new automated streamlined processes. This shift led to a culture of continuous improvement among staff, who now actively identify manual processes that can be automated or eliminated.

I have also heard from MBAs over the years, when talking about removing unnecessary barriers to licensure, "I can't convince my board" or "I need to change my law or rules." Institutionalized processes can be changed. To quote Andrew Ritter, the MBA from North Carolina, "Where there is a will, there is a way."

In conclusion, by leveraging historical knowledge and optimizing processes, MBAs can significantly enhance the effectiveness of regulatory boards—ultimately benefiting both the professions and the public.

Mamola is principal of PLM Group LLC and a consultant to the Nevada board.

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

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- 3. **Significant structures:** I believe there is room for our leadership in the area of catastrophe prevention. We should consider providing a model (or models) for defining significant structures and promoting the practice of critical tasks beyond design, such as oversight and inspection, by licensed professionals.
- 4. **Fraudulent certifications:** We need to examine fraudulent certifications and the sealing of professional reports and documents more closely. It is the Wild West in this digital world. Boards are seeing more and more fraudulent professional reports.
- 5. **Core competences:** Let us renew our energies to hone our exams, expand our professional records, evaluate educational credentials, protect our IT and AI security, understand our finances, and plan for our future. These are things we do every day. And they require fresh energy and vigilance to achieve our expectations of excellence.
- 6. Future engineers and surveyors: Let us find ways to engage and prepare our future engineers and surveyors. Statistics provided to me by my friend Jenna Carpenter of the American Society for

Engineering Education show that the number of 18-year-olds in the United States is falling, and that these numbers will not recover for decades to come. Yet our country and world will need engineers and surveyors more than ever. We must capture the imaginations of these young people to enter our profession.

These are some themes I have incorporated into this year's charges. I am bringing these to you, our member board members, as a starting point. Where we go together will be up to you.

It will be a busy and productive year. Thank you in advance for your enthusiasm and dedication to our mission. I would like to thank our retiring CEO David Cox, again, for his leadership, our incoming CEO (and former COO) Davy McDowell for his insight and encouragement, Immediate Past President Laura Sievers for her mentorship and friendship, and Past President Chris Duhamel for his wisdom and support.

Please stay in touch with me throughout the coming year. See you soon.

### HEADQUARTERS **UPDATE**

## **Incoming CEO McDowell** reflects on his NCEES career, looks forward to the future

NEARLY 25 YEARS AGO, I STARTED WORK AT NCEES as a technical assistant, now called an exam development engineer. My very first day of work was a meeting with the PE Chemical exam committee. I watched eight chemical engineers spend two days writing questions, reviewing questions, assembling exams, and debating if certain questions were too difficult or too easy. Their passion for the exams, their knowledge that they freely gave to NCEES, and their desire to put together the perfect exam got me hooked. I knew I was in the right place at the right time in my life.

Looking back on that group of eight, (several of whom have received the NCEES Distinguished Examination Service Award), I remember how they brought me into the fold, even trying to teach this agricultural engineering graduate the basics of chemical engineering.

Over the next 25 years, I would witness the exams go from essay format with 10-part multiple-choice questions to no-choice, then all multiple-choice questions, and now to computer-based testing with alternative item types. I could probably write 100 articles on all the changes and interesting things I have observed while working at NCEES. Throughout those changes, NCEES has maintained the integrity of what the exams are supposed to do: accurately measure competency.

As I step into the role of CEO, I know I have big shoes to fill. I want to thank the previous NCEES CEOs I have worked under for their mentorship and friendship: Betsy Browne, Jerry Carter, and David Cox. I have learned something from each of them. I also want to thank the many volunteers who have been instrumental in my professional career development.



Incoming NCEES CEO Davy McDowell, P.E., speaks at the 2024–25 board of directors meeting during the 2024 annual meeting in Chicago.

I have one last very important group to thank, and that is my family. My wife and I were blessed to have three girls—all engineering graduates, by the way—who shared me with work. That might sound odd, but in 25 years at NCEES, I have worked 301 weekends (I have a spreadsheet—the engineers and surveyors are probably not shocked—that started back in 1999). That is nearly six years of weekends! But I am not complaining. Working with so many talented people and furthering the organization's mission together has made the time away well worth it.

While the passion of the exam committees motivated me to stay at NCEES all those years ago, it is the staff that makes it easy to come to work each day. I have heard previous CEOs brag to other groups and to the Council that we have a great staff, and I wholeheartedly agree.

At this past annual meeting in Chicago, someone asked me about my "big plans" for NCEES. My first point was simple: We have super staff members who know what they are doing. I plan to stay out of the way and let them do their thing all while watching for opportunities for us to improve and provide better services to boards, licensees, and examinees.

If you have questions or ideas on what NCEES can do to further its mission of advancing licensure for engineers and surveyors, by all means, reach out. I look forward to beginning this next chapter together.

### ENFORCEMENT BEAT



### **BOB HERBERT**

ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF LICENSURE FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS CHIEF SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR

## Takeaways from the 2024 annual Law Enforcement forum and training

LAST YEAR, THE COUNCIL PASSED A LAW ENFORCEMENT Committee motion to fund one person from each member board to attend the Law Enforcement Program (forum and workshop) at the annual meeting. This year, 30 member boards utilized this funding. The Law Enforcement Committee wants to extend an invitation to any future delegate attending the annual meeting to attend the forum and workshop. The information provided in these sessions is invaluable and great for networking with other member boards.

This year's Law Enforcement Forum had 63 registered, and 95 attended the session. There were 121 registered for the Law Enforcement workshop, and a total of 96 attended the six hours of training. We greatly appreciate the funding and the response to this year's training.

The forum included a presentation on the "Work for Hire Marketplace." This presentation provided information concerning various online platforms, including Fiverr, Freelancer, Guru, PeoplePerHour, and Upwork, that are providing an avenue for possible forgery/fraud and the unlicensed practice of engineering and land surveying services for unsuspecting clients. The forum's discussion laid out issues currently being investigated. This problem appears to be getting worse, and with the advance of artificial intelligence (AI), there is considerable concern for the safety of the public in not getting the expected services provided by a licensed professional. Forum participants also took part in roundtable discussions of law enforcement topics. These discussions were shared with the group to better understand how others may handle these situations. This was a very productive session for all those who participated.

In the forum, typically we will give a status of the Enforcement Exchange database, which allows member With the advance of artificial intelligence (AI), there is considerable concern for the safety of the public in not getting the expected services provided by a licensed professional.

boards to enter disciplinary actions taken against violators and to review disciplinary actions taken by other jurisdictions. This year, it appears that there are still several state boards that have not supplied information for several years. This is concerning because information on disciplinary actions taken by member boards is vital to the health and safety to the public—a mission that we all profess to uphold. If any board does not have the means or ability to upload their disciplinary actions to Enforcement Exchange, please contact NCEES for assistance.

The Law Enforcement Workshop was a success this year; the program that was offered, "Applying Investigation Tools and Techniques to a Regulatory Investigation," was presented by Tim Randall of the Public Agency Training Council (PATC). Randall has a very distinguished background as a criminal investigator, a role he performed for 21 years. As a lead investigator and supervisor, he conducted and assisted in hundreds of criminal and internal investigations. Randall also served as supervisor of the Operations of Professional Standard Division and was responsible for recruitment, hiring, and background investigations.

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### NCEES launches new FE practice exams

NCEES STAFF HAVE DEVELOPED NEW INTERACTIVE FE practice exams to better support candidates during exam prep. The online practice exams successfully launched on June 4, 2024.

Each FE interactive practice exam is comprised of 50 questions that were inactivated from NCEES' live question bank. With an enhanced format that better aligns with computer-based testing, the practice exams can be timed and offer feedback to candidates.

Within the first three weeks of launch, more than 1,000 exams were purchased, with FE Civil being most popular. Public Affairs Marketing and Outreach teams are actively advertising the new publications through conferences and social media. As of the end of August 2024, more than 6,000 practice exams have been purchased.



**New FE practice** exams purchased (through August 2024)

6,000+

## NCEES furthers mission through ongoing outreach initiatives

THIS YEAR, NCEES HAS CONTINUED THE WORK OF several of its outreach initiatives, including the following partnerships with the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

### **ACEC** scholarships

In 2023, the board of directors approved a partnership with the ACEC to create an NCEES scholarship program that will award annual \$5,000 scholarships over the next three years to an engineering or surveying student in each state.

For the first round of these scholarships, NCEES awarded \$245,000 to students in 48 states and the District of Columbia in partnership with the ACEC Research Institute in August 2024 for the 2024–25 academic year. NCEES CEO Davy McDowell, P.E., and NCEES President

Andrew Zoutewelle, P.L.S. will attend the ACEC 2024 Fall Conference on October 20-23 in New Orleans, Louisiana, to recognize the scholarship winners.

### ASCE 2024-25 National Education Sponsor

NCEES is the 2024 National Education Sponsor for the ASCE. So far, this partnership has helped support ASCE's IMAX film Cities of the Future and provided opportunities for NCEES to reach ASCE's student members through webinars, student-focused competitions, and on-campus chapter activities. The NCEES board of directors has committed to this sponsorship through 2025.

"NCEES is a longstanding, trusted, and valued partner of ASCE with an aligned mission of advancing engineering excellence and safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the public," said ASCE Executive Director Tom Smith. "ASCE and NCEES make a formidable team, and I know we can accomplish great things together."

# OUTREACH

The following are recent and upcoming NCEES outreach activities to promote engineering and surveying licensure. For the latest outreach news, follow NCEES on Facebook, LinkedIn, and X, formerly known as Twitter. Visit ncees.org for links to its social media pages.

### Baja SAE

NCEES promoted engineering licensure and the FE exam at the Baja Society of Automotive Engineers student competition, which challenges engineering student teams to design, build, and race durable off-road vehicles, in Holly, Michigan, on September 11-12, 2024. NCEES is the official registration sponsor for all SAE student competitions.

#### **FFA National Convention**

NCEES will participate in the 97th Future Farms of America National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 23–26, 2024, to promote surveying licensure.

#### **SAME Conference**

NCEES will participate in the Society of American Military Engineers 2024 Federal Small Business Conference (SBC) in New Orleans, Louisiana, on November 20-22, 2024.

### **SWE Conference**

NCEES will participate in the Society of Women Engineers conference, WE24, in Chicago, Illinois, on October 24-26, 2024.

### P.E. and P.S. Profiles

Cam Lowe, R.P.L.S., P.L.S., discusses his work as a registered professional land surveyor in the Houston, Texas, area where he was born and raised. Lowe is an active member of the Texas Society of Professional Surveyors (TSPS) at the local and state levels, and he was named the TSPS 2021 Young Surveyor of the Year by his peers. To read this profile and others, visit ncees.org/ licensure/success-stories.

### ENFORCEMENT BEAT

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The workshop covered criminal investigations and the applied sciences that can be used in civil or regulatory investigations. The subject matter included modern scientific techniques, such as forensic science, scene management, evidence collection, interviewing skills, statement analysis, and case management.

The Law Enforcement Program was attended by board investigators, attorneys, members, and board administrators. We look forward to additional member boards utilizing this service to send their investigative staff to the annual meeting.

Herbert is chief special investigator for the Alabama board and chair of the 2024-25 NCEES Committee on Law Enforcement.

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c.	Total paid distribution (sum of 15b 1, 2, 3, 4)	0	0
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I certify that all information stated above is true and complete. Sara Ann Grant

### MEMBER BOARD

## **NEWS**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### CONNECTICUT

Susan Mattern is a new appointee. Kenneth Peterson is no longer a member.

#### **GEORGIA**

Andrew Heath is a new appointee. Russ Pennington is no longer a member.

### **LOUISIANA**

Susan Richard is a new appointee. John Plaisance is no longer a member.

### **MARYLAND PE**

Tracey Clark is a new appointee.

### **MASSACHUSETTS**

Edward Englander and Nancy Gould are new appointees. Maurice Pilette and Shannon Slaughter are no longer members.

### **MINNESOTA**

Marcus Hampton, Gerald Jones, Laura Anna Kamin-Lyndgaard, and Andrew Portis are new appointees. Daniel Cermak, Margaret Parsons, Graham Sones, and Paul Vogel are no longer members.

### **NEBRASKA PE**

James Brisnehan is a new appointee. Alan Wedige is no longer a member.

### **NEBRASKA PS**

Thomas Tremel is a new appointee. Jerry Hain is no longer a member.

#### **OREGON**

Jakki Carter is a new appointee. Daren Cone is no longer a member.

### WASHINGTON

Maureen Jackson is a new appointee. Ivan VanDeWege is no longer a member.

### **ASSOCIATE**

The NCEES board of directors approved the following associate members at its August 2024 meeting. Delaware: Tashana Branch; Georgia: Justin Cotton; Oklahoma: Darin Raibourn

### **EMERITUS**

The NCEES board of directors approved the following emeritus members at its August 2024 meeting. Colorado: Wendy Amann; Iowa: Laura Sievers; Minnesota: Paul Vogel; Ohio: David L. Cox; Pennsylvania: Michael Brinkash;

Virginia: Doyle Allen

### October 3-4

PE Structural Exam Meeting

### October 4-5

PE Civil Exam Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

### October 9-10

Single-day CBT exam administrations

### October 11-12

PE Industrial and Systems Exam Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

PE Mechanical Exam Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

### October 17-18

Board of Directors Meeting Madison, Wisconsin

### October 25-26

Exam Audit Committee Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

### November 1-2

FE Committee Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

### November 13-15

PE Structural Committee Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

### November 15-16

PE Control Systems Committee Meeting Greenville, South Carolina

## 2024-25 NCEES BOARD OF DIRECTORS/OFFICERS

Andrew Zoutewelle, P.L.S. *President* North Carolina

Elizabeth Beckett Johnston, P.E. *President-Elect* Alaska

Laura Sievers, P.E.

Immediate Past President

Iowa

Karl Tonander, P.E. Treasurer New Mexico

**Jason Suelter, P.E., S.E. Central Zone Vice President** Nebraska

Samuel Wilson, DBA, P.E. Northeast Zone Vice President District of Columbia

James Kelly, P.E. Southern Zone Vice President Virginia

Aaron Blaisdell, P.L.S. Western Zone Vice President Washington

Davy McDowell, P.E. Chief Executive Officer South Carolina

### Licensure **EXCHANGE**

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## Square are you?



Gregorio Castro, a member of the Northern Mariana Islands board; Cathy Gogue, a member of the Guam board; Paul Santos, P.L.S., a member of the Guam board; Troy Nieson, a staff member of the Wyoming board; and Zenon Belanger, P.E., a member of the Guam board, wear their Square bandanas on a river cruise during their visit to Chicago for the NCEES annual meeting, which was held August 14–17, 2024.

NCEES has launched a new initiative featuring the all new Square bandana, which features the NCEES logo. NCEES members and staff are encouraged to take pictures with their Square on personal or business trips to help spread licensure awareness around the world.

Submit your Square photos—including your name(s), member board, and location details—to outreach@ncees.org for a chance to be featured in *Licensure Exchange*.

## Square photo submission tips



- Make sure your photo is high-resolution
- Include your name(s), member board, and location details
- Send your submission to outreach@ncees.org