



**For Immediate Release**

## **ASME Foundation Event Emphasizes Equity in Engineering— Increasing Opportunity for Those Underrepresented in Technical Fields**

*Philanthropic Impact Event highlights include launch of Community College Engineering Pathways pilot, presentation of Kate Gleason Award to an outstanding woman engineer*

**NEW YORK (Nov. 18, 2021)** — Recognizing growing demand for skilled technical workers and the imperative to increase equitable opportunity for underrepresented groups, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' (ASME) philanthropic programs aim to help develop a more diverse next generation of engineers. Earlier this week at the ASME Foundation's third annual Philanthropic Impact Event, the Society celebrated the programs and people who are empowering more diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession.



Keynote speaker [Chandrakant Patel, chief engineer and senior fellow at HP Inc.](#), who started on the path to an engineering career via community college, is an outspoken advocate for the role community colleges play in building tomorrow's diverse, career-ready technical workforce.

“To remain competitive in a global marketplace, U.S. companies will have to fill millions of available jobs with more diverse, better skilled technical workers who have two-year degrees or other certifications that are available through community colleges,” Patel said. “But these highly diverse, widely accessible institutions can’t meet this demand on their own—they need the private sector, government, and organizations like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers to step up with critical resources. This kind of collaborative approach can grow the skilled technical workforce we so desperately need to meet the demands of the future, while opening doors of opportunity to those who are underrepresented in engineering-related fields.”

[Patel's remarks](#) served as a backdrop to the official launch of ASME's [Community College Engineering Pathways](#) pilot program designed to bolster resources at two-year colleges to address significant future workforce needs. Six community colleges are participating in the pilot, which aims to align curriculum with the fast-changing needs of the marketplace; enhance community college resources for career development support; and establish networks with employers to place students in internships, apprenticeships, and jobs. Participating institutions include:

- College of San Mateo, San Mateo, Calif.
- Dallas College, Dallas, Texas

- New York City College of Technology/City Tech, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Niagara County Community College, Sanborn, N.Y.
- Red Rocks Community College, Lakewood, Colo.
- Valencia College, Orlando, Fla.

The keynote speaker was introduced by Mahantesh Hiremath, president of ASME, who announced that the ASME Board of Governors had recently voted to seed the ASME Foundation's \$50 million capital campaign, the Campaign for Next Generation Engineers, with a leadership investment of \$5 million over four years, including launch funding for the Community College Education Pathways initiative.



The virtual fundraising event also featured [remarks from Alba Colon Rodriguez](#), NASCAR pioneer and Director of Competition Systems at Hendrick Motorsports, and the 2021 recipient of ASME's prestigious Kate Gleason Award, which recognizes the contribution of distinguished female leaders in the profession. Born in Salamanca, Spain, Colon moved with her family to Puerto Rico at the age of three. With a deep interest in math and science, she pursued an engineering degree at the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez and was later hired by General Motors as a data acquisition engineer. In 2001, Colon began leading GM's most visible racing program as the Chevrolet Racing Program Manager for the NASCAR Cup Series, making her one of the most powerful women in the sport today.

According to the National Science Foundation, women make up half of the total U.S. college-educated workforce, yet only 15% of the engineering workforce and 9% of the mechanical engineering workforce and less than 14% are individuals from minority groups long underrepresented in the profession.

"Diversity in engineering not only reflects our changing demographics, a diversity of backgrounds and ideas drives innovation," says Kathleen Lobb, executive director of the ASME Foundation and managing director of ASME. "We are immensely grateful to [our donors](#) who make possible more equitable access to engineering education and the engineering solutions that benefit humanity."

The program also included an introduction to "Engineering Dreams," part of ASME's [STEM education collaboration with Discovery Education](#) to ignite a passion for problem-solving in K-12 students; field updates from some of ASME's largest-ever cohort of 50 [Engineering for Change Research Fellows](#) who are creating innovative solutions to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; and a spotlight on one of the [winning innovations at the 2021 ISHOW](#), a low-cost device by Project Prana that enables multiple COVID patients to utilize a single ventilator.

#### **About ASME**

*ASME helps the global engineering community develop solutions to real world challenges. Founded in 1880 as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ASME is a not-for-profit professional organization that enables collaboration, knowledge sharing, and skill development across all engineering disciplines, while promoting the vital role of the engineer in society. ASME codes and standards, publications, conferences, continuing education, and professional development programs provide a foundation for advancing technical knowledge and a safer world. In 2020, ASME formed the International Society of Interdisciplinary Engineers (ISIE) LLC, a new for-profit subsidiary to house business ventures that will bring new and innovative products, services, and technologies to the engineering community, and later established the holding company, Global Knowledge Solutions LLC. In 2021, ASME launched a second for-profit subsidiary, Metrix Connect LLC, an industry events and content platform to accelerate digital transformation in the engineering community and an agent for the Mechanical Engineering® brand of media products. For more information, visit [www.asme.org](http://www.asme.org).*



***About the ASME Foundation***

*The ASME Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, supporting an array of programs in three core pillars: engineering education, career engagement, and global development. With the goal of empowering tomorrow's technical workforce, the ASME Foundation advances equitable access both to professional opportunities and to engineering innovations that improve quality of life. For more information, visit [www.asmefoundation.org](http://www.asmefoundation.org).*

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