



For Immediate Release

ASME Foundation Wins Grant for Technical Workforce Development

ECMC Foundation Funding Helps Transition Underserved Students to Technical Careers

NEW YORK (April 23, 2024)—The ASME Foundation has been awarded an \$800,000 multi-year grant from ECMC Foundation to help underserved community college and CTE students persist to graduation and enter the technical workforce or transition to a four-year institution to complete a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering or related technical field. ECMC Foundation is a national foundation whose North Star goal is to eliminate equity gaps in postsecondary completion by 2040.

The ASME Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), the world’s premier professional society for multidisciplinary engineers. The two-year grant, Accelerating Engineering Pathways for CTE Students in a COVID-Changed World, expands ASME’s Community College Engineering Pathways program to a total 15 community colleges (including five minority-serving institutions) and helps implement and evaluate STEM-focused activities and resources, which include work-based learning programs and professional networks for underserved students.

“The ASME Foundation is proud to partner with ECMC to open doors of opportunity for underserved students seeking to transition from community college to high-paying, in-demand careers in engineering-related fields,” said Stephanie Viola, executive director of the ASME Foundation and managing director of ASME Philanthropy. “This significant grant advances our work to build the technical workforce for the 21st Century while closing the equity gap that leaves too many women, rural learners, and students of color behind.”

[ASME’s Community College Engineering Pathways](#) program connects community college and continuing technical education students to opportunities for specialized training, internships, apprenticeships, and jobs. At the same time, it provides resources to community colleges to expand their employer networks and align curricula to the needs of local and national employers.

A companion program, [HBCU Engineering Pathways](#), helps engineering students at historically Black colleges and universities expand their professional networks, participate in ASME student sections and activities, and connects employers to graduates of HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions.

“ASME’s project builds necessary capacity across existing successful engineering programs to improve student persistence, completion, and post-graduate employment outcomes,” said Anna Fontus, program officer at ECMC Foundation. “This project will generate new learnings on best practices in the field, and encourage increased collaboration between industry associations and community colleges”

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than three million technical jobs are currently unfilled in the United States. Contributing to the employment gap is a severe equity gap, with women representing only nine percent of U.S. mechanical engineers and members of BIPOC communities only 11 percent. The ASME Foundation's philanthropic programs in engineering education, career resources, and innovation support aim to correct these inequities by empowering more people from underrepresented groups to pursue technical careers.

About ECMC Foundation

ECMC Foundation is a national foundation whose North Star goal is to eliminate equity gaps in postsecondary completion by 2040 so that underserved learners have greater opportunity for social and economic mobility. The Foundation's mission is to improve higher education for career success among underserved populations through evidence-based innovation. ECMC Foundation makes strategic grants and program-related investments to support both nonprofit and for-profit ventures, guided by a strategic framework that aims to advance systemic change by removing barriers to postsecondary completion; building the capacity of organizations, institutions and systems; and transforming the postsecondary ecosystem. Learn more about ECMC Foundation by visiting www.ecmcfoundation.org and our parent company, ECMC Group, by visiting www.ecmcgroup.org.

About ASME Foundation

The ASME Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), 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.

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) II & III LLC, a new for-profit subsidiary to house business ventures that will bring new and innovative products, services, and technologies to the engineering community. For more information, visit www.asme.org.

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