



For Immediate Release

ASME Foundation Honors Industry Leaders While Raising Support for the Next Generation of Engineers at “Optimism Engineered” Gala

NEW YORK (April 22, 2024) — The ASME Foundation, the philanthropic arm of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), convened more than 250 industry and community leaders and STEM advocates to celebrate the promise of a diverse engineering workforce at its “Optimism Engineered: Empowering Future Visionaries” GALA 2024, held April 11 at the Mandarin Oriental, New York.

Highlights of the event included two award presentations and several inspirational speakers. The Foundation presented its Next Gen Award to [Sylvia Acevedo](#), for her “exemplary work in engineering and technology, extraordinary leadership in bringing diversity to STEM, and commitment to advancing young women in technology fields.” Acevedo is a former CEO of Girl Scouts of America and former NASA Engineer, an author, entrepreneur, investor, thought leader and speaker on topics ranging from education and STEM to demographic trends, and leadership. The Excellence in Industry Award was presented to [Autodesk President and CEO Andrew Anagnost](#), whose career spans more than 25 years of product, business, and marketing experience focused on driving strategy, transformation, and product development, and who was recognized for his “commitment to advancing engineering and next generation engineers, for support of equity in engineering and sustainability for the world.” Gala attendees also learned more about the Autodesk-sponsored ASME E-Fest Extended Reality Challenge, in which engineering students developed and tested sustainable solutions to clean up the oceans using Autodesk’s Fusion design software.

“With this first-ever major industry event, the ASME Foundation celebrates its progress toward our philanthropic goals of equity in engineering and sustainability for the world,” said ASME Executive Director/CEO Tom Costabile. “It’s gratifying to see so many of our committed members, donors, and partners step up in support of our mission to advance engineering for the benefit of humanity.”

Attendees included current and prospective donors to The ASME Foundation’s [Campaign for Next Generation Engineers](#), ASME’s five-year, \$50 million capital campaign to support its philanthropic work. The Foundation funds ASME’s array of high-impact programs in education, workforce development, and innovation support aimed at increasing equity in the engineering profession and advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

“Optimism Engineered is more than a slogan; it’s an affirmation of our belief in the promise of diverse next generation engineers to innovate solutions to our most urgent sustainability challenges,” said Stephanie Viola, executive director of the ASME Foundation and managing director of ASME Philanthropy. “Publicly acknowledging engineering visionaries with prestigious ASME Foundation

awards, and raising funds to drive our philanthropic programs, are just two of the ways we're empowering tomorrow's engineers to build a better future for all of us.”

Autodesk and the Kenneth & Hazel Roe Family Fund were Changemaker sponsors of this event. Innovator and Accelerator sponsors included Accuris/KKR, Ansys, Focused Wealth Management, and King & Spalding LLP.

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.

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.

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Pictured above, left to right: Autodesk President and CEO **Andrew Anagnost**, recipient of the ASME Foundation Excellence in Industry Award; **Sylvia Acevedo**, former CEO of Girl Scouts of America, former NASA Engineer, and recipient of the ASME Foundation Next Gen Award; and ASME Executive Director/CEO **Tom Costabile**



Pictured above: **Keith Roe**, third-generation ASME member, past president of ASME, and current chair of the ASME Foundation Philanthropy Committee, introduces GALA 2024 host **Michelle Miller**, award-winning journalist and co-host of CBS Saturday Morning.,



Pictured above, left to right: **Abby Jo Sigal**, executive director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Talent and Workforce Development; ASME Executive Director/CEO **Tom Costabile**; and **Ariel Marroquin**, a student at New York City College of Technology (City Tech).