



**For Immediate Release**

## **Women Engineers Honored as Trailblazers and Changemakers at ASME Foundation Gala**

**WASHINGTON (March 31, 2025)** —The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) has awarded the 2024 Kate Gleason Award to Patricia Brackin, Ph.D., director of the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology’s engineering design program and an ASME Fellow. Established by the ASME Foundation in 2011 in memory of the first woman to become a full member of ASME, the award recognizes the contribution of a distinguished female leader in engineering.

Sonya T. Smith, Ph.D., chair of the ASME Foundation, presented the award to Brackin at the Foundation’s third annual celebration of its progress toward empowering next generation engineers, a VIP event entitled “[Reinventing the Future – Women Engineering Change](#),” on March 20 in Washington. (See captioned event photos below.)

Brackin helped develop Rose-Hulman’s Home for Environmentally Responsible Engineering program, a living and learning experience for students interested in sustainability and humanitarian engineering. She also spent 11 years as director of the Institute’s Operation Catapult program, helping to introduce high school seniors to the wonders of science and engineering. A member of Rose-Hulman mechanical engineering faculty since 1995, Brackin earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nuclear engineering from the University of Tennessee and a doctorate in mechanical engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology. She worked as a design engineer with the Chicago Bridge & Iron Company and has spent an academic sabbatical leave as a project engineer with Eli Lilly and Company.

Melissa Williams, general manager of Shell Oil’s trading operations products and former president of Shell Marine, was the keynote speaker for the fundraiser. In her remarks, she emphasized, “Now more than ever, we need to combine technical expertise with business practicality and critical thinking” to meet “growing energy demand and the post-COVID world.” She shared her personal engineering journey and encouraged attendees to “remember the importance of continuous learning, adaptability, and building strong networks” to “drive innovation while creating inclusive environments that empower everyone to succeed.”

Susan Ipri-Brown, ASME’s 143<sup>rd</sup> president of its Board of Governors, presented ASME Dedicated Service Awards to four exemplary honorees: Robin Coger, Ph.D., Carolyn Winstead Meyers, Ph.D., Sonya T. Smith, Ph.D., and Tahira Reid Smith, Ph.D. The Honorable Aruna K. Miller, the 10<sup>th</sup> Lieutenant Governor of the State of Maryland who also earned an undergraduate degree in civil engineering, was a special guest speaker. Other speakers included ASME Executive Director/CEO Tom Costabile, P.E., FASME, and Stephanie Viola, executive director of the ASME Foundation and managing director of programs and philanthropy for ASME. Award-winning journalist Michelle Miller, a national correspondent for CBS News and co-host of CBS Saturday Morning, served as the event’s emcee.

Attendees included current and prospective donors to The ASME Foundation's [Campaign for Next Generation Engineers](#), ASME's \$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 opening doors of opportunity for young people to pursuing engineering careers and advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

"This year marks our third-annual Reinventing the Future event celebrating the promise of next generation engineers," said Viola. "The ASME Foundation has made it our mission to increase access to a rewarding technical career – access for everyone with the ability and the drive to be a professional problem-solver. Engineering touches all our lives in so many ways, and tomorrow's engineers will make life better for all of us."

#### ***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](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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Pictured above, left to right: Amanda Garofalo; ASME CFO William Garofalo; David Miller, First Gentleman, State of Maryland; The Honorable Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor, State of Maryland; Michelle Miller, CBS News national correspondent; and ASME Executive Director/CEO Tom Costabile



Left to right: Sonya T. Smith, Ph.D. (Chair, ASME Foundation Board of Directors; Executive Director, Research Institute for Tactical Autonomy (RITA) UARC / Professor, Mechanical Engineering, Howard University); Patricia (Patsy) Brackin, Ph.D. (2024 Kate Gleason Award Honoree | Professor, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology)





Dedicated Service Award Recipients, left to right: Tahira Reid-Smith, Ph.D. (Professor, Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Design, Penn State University); Sonya T. Smith, Ph.D. (Executive Director, Research Institute for Tactical Autonomy (RITA) UARC / Professor, Mechanical Engineering, Howard University; Chair, ASME Foundation Board of Directors); Carolyn Meyers, Ph.D. (President (former/emerita), Jackson State University); Robin Coger, Ph.D. (Professor of Engineering, East Carolina University)