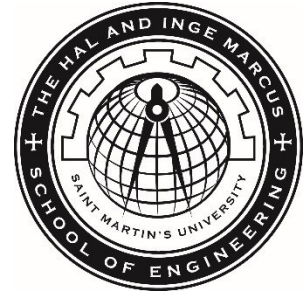




Saint Martin's  
UNIVERSITY



# CORNERSTONE

The Hal and Inge Marcus School of Engineering

Nov-Dec 2024



## LIVE WITH GRATITUDE

It's the time of year we think about being thankful and grateful. After all, it's not just about feasting, although that's a good part from my perspective. It's a positive response – appreciation – for the good things (blessings) in our lives. Though no one's life is perfect providing everything we need or want, we all most certainly have plenty to be thankful and grateful for. For example, I'm thankful I can wake up everyday, get vertical, and still have the gray matter, manual dexterity and strength to be able to work. I'm thankful for my beloved spouse who loves and supports me every day. I'm grateful for my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. I'm thankful for all the wonderful and supportive friends I have. I'm grateful that our one vehicle with over 100,000 miles on it is still in great shape and working well. I'm thankful that although I have my share of aches, pains and issues, I am generally healthy and free from debilitating illness. I have enough money to keep a roof over my head, food on the table, and provide a little to support my crafting obsession. I am also truly grateful for the amazing colleagues I have to work with here at Saint Martin's University. I am truly blessed. We ALL have so much to be thankful for! Count your blessings, not your trials. Challenges are good. Changes are good. They help us grow as humans and without growth, we merely exist, not live. Live your best lives – learn something new every day – and be thankful and grateful for your many blessings. Have a great holiday season and may you and yours continue to be blessed now and always!

## WATCH FOR MORE INFO VERY SOON!

**Engineering Banquet February 21st 530-8PM Norman Worthington Conference Center**

The Engineering Banquet every February is our HIMSE premier annual event! Socialize, network, learn about this year's senior design projects, hear an amazing guest speaker, and have a great dinner. Watch for emails and check our webpage in January for more info and how to buy tickets! Plan to come!

## DEAN'S CORNER



Finals are almost done as I write this, and students are departing for the Christmas break. There is an air of excitement as students, staff, and faculty anticipate spending time with their loved ones.

There are also some changes to report on campus. **Dr. Tanya Smith Brice**, who served 18 months as Provost/VPAA, has left the university. We are still working through options to handle the provost's duties for spring semester. Dr. Smith Brice helped the university improve its assessment culture and began a discussion of reimagining the academic structure of the university. HIMSE joins the rest of the SMU community in wishing her well in her future endeavors.

The Engineering Advisory Board, at my request, is holding a series of meetings to make recommendations for the next five-year plan for HIMSE. I am grateful for their efforts and their long-term stewardship and program support. I will share their recommendations when received.

Important discussions, led by **President William Brownsberger**, are also taking place on campus about strengthening our commitment to mission and identity. The Benedictine Institute has proposed some specific measures which are being staffed. I see these efforts as enabling SMU to improve the integration of our mission across all our university activities. I will also share those developments as I receive them.

The HIMSE faculty and staff stay in close contact with our students. The attention to detail on the progress of students, I think, distinguishes us from our peer competitors in the region. As I watch faculty assist students to register, help them prepare for finals, and celebrate their successes, I am reminded about what makes HIMSE special: our people. We have wonderful students who will make a difference when they graduate, and who are inspired by capable and committed faculty. Our students and faculty are in turn supported by loyal and generous alumni. That multi-generational team is our secret sauce!

Please continue to share your alumni news with us. Your stories enrich our newsletter!

Karen and I join the rest of the faculty and staff of the Hal and Inge Marcus School of Engineering in wishing you and your families a joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year. In particular, I hope to see many of you at our Engineering Banquet on February 21. Additional information is available on the preceding page and keep an eye on our webpage as details are finalized.

Best wishes,

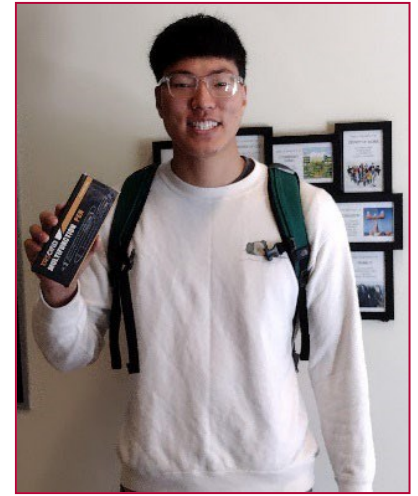
**David H. Olwell, Ph.D., Professor and Dean  
Hal & Inge Marcus School of Engineering**

## CONTEST – WIN A PRIZE!

The question from the September newsletter was-- **What is the name of the world's fastest supercomputer, as of JUNE 2024?** The answer was **Frontier**. The answer was sent in by CS student **Immanuall Lee**, pictured at right with his multifunction pen set prize!

The question for this issue is: **What "magician of iron" engineer designed the skeletal framework for the Statue of Liberty?** First correct answer wins a prize! Remember to send your answer to [engineering@stmartin.edu](mailto:engineering@stmartin.edu)

**Good luck – answer in the next edition of *Cornerstone*!**



## SWE CONFERENCE 2024

**Dr. Shahlaa Al Wakeel** (SWE Chapter faculty advisor) and four students attended the late October national Society of Women Engineers (SWE) 2024 Conference in Chicago, Illinois. The conference was an excellent platform for students to connect with a diverse group of women from various institutions and companies. During the event, students had the chance to participate in interviews with numerous organizations, which opened doors to internships, full-time positions, and opportunities for advanced education.

Organizations like the US Army PEO IEW&S, Cornell Engineering, Teledyne Technologies, and CNH Industrial were represented, providing insights into potential career paths and recruiting for available positions. Additionally, universities, including the University of Kansas, George Washington University, and the University of Nebraska, shared information about advanced degree programs, allowing students to explore further education options. Overall, the conference was a valuable experience for networking, professional development, and career advancement. In the photo above, our attendees were (from left to right): **Sahar Yousofi, Tia Taitingfong, Dr. Al Wakeel, Nada Alattar, and Danielle Miller.**





## BROOKSOURCE MAKES A GENEROUS DONATION

As part of their 11 Days of Giving Initiative in November 2024, Brooksource and the Eight Eleven Group generously gave our Washington Veterans to Technology (WAV2T) program a \$5,000 donation. We certainly appreciate outstanding partnerships with these groups whose unwavering support helps us to serve even more members of the veteran and transitioning servicemembers communities.

Pictured l to r: **Dr. David Olwell** (HIMSE Dean), **Mr. Trevor Yarnall** and **Mr. Zachary Wheeler** (Brooksource)



## MORGAN MISEK ADDRESS NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STUDENTS



Submitted by **Mrs. Leslie Washko** (ME318 New Product Development faculty)

On Thursday, November 7th, **Morgan Misek** of Trxstle (pictured at left) spoke to students in the New Product Development class. He has been collaborating with students in the Engineering Entrepreneurship classes since 2019 and generously shares his time and his story of how his mechanical engineering education and experience developed into an opportunity to develop and patent products that serve fly fishermen and mountain bike enthusiasts.

Morgan's LinkedIn page personal comment states, "I am a creative problem solver at heart. Whether it is a complicated design goal or overcoming the challenges of operating a business, my satisfaction comes with well thought out, well executed solutions." And it is that attitude that enabled him and his partner **John Smigaj** to found Trxstle in Olympia. As noted on their website <https://www.trxstle.com/>, in 2013 they were working as lead design engineers for a company building locomotives and rail equipment. But, in 2015, the company shut down. The entire staff had to find new jobs. So, making the best of an unfortunate situation, John and Morgan decided to become their own bosses. This was Trxstle's start.

Morgan answers questions posed by the students about his experience such as, "What materials did you try in your initial design prototypes?", "What challenges did you face during the testing phases of the product?", and "How do you manage the logistics of outsourced components?" Our students learn a lot about the realities of being an engineer/entrepreneur and appreciate Morgan Misek giving us his time.

## CONGRATS ON INTERNSHIP

**Charles Ganu**, BSME student, has accepted an offer to intern for Trane Technologies for Summer 2025. Charles said, "I am excited to learn, grow, and collaborate with such an inspiring team." Congratulations, Charles!

## JBLM STAFFER GETS AWARD

**Isabell “Izzy” Van Patten**, JBLM Program Coordinator, was recently awarded Distinguished Staff Member at the 2024 Military Academic Achievement Awards at JBLM. Ms. Van Patten noted: “Thank you to my husband, **Alexander Otero**, for always being supportive, the Saint Martin’s University community for giving me the resources to succeed and of course my students! They inspire me every day and are the reason I strive to be better.” Congratulations, Izzy, and well deserved!

Photo at right: (l to r)  
Alexander Otero and Ms.  
Isabell Van Patten



## FIELD TRIP TO KENWORTH

(gleaned from **Christopher Keating**’s LinkedIn page- pictured with fellow students who attended. Christopher is in back row, second from the right) “Had a great time visiting the Kenworth Truck Company. I learned how well they’ve managed to get this down to a science producing about 1 truck every 30 minutes out of just one factory. These trucks not only look top of the line inside and out, but I can tell they are built to last, judging by the abundance of workers on the floor, the stillness of the assembly line, and what the workers had to say about the process. Keep it up PACCAR. Thanks for the tour.”

## FACULTY NOTES – NOTED FACULTY

**Dr. Shahlaa Al Wakeel** (pictured at right) attended the Engineering Mechanics Institute Conference on Probabilistic Mechanics and Reliability in Chicago, Illinois. She served as a member of the Fluid Dynamics Committee for the conference. Per Dr. Al Wakeel, “Being part of the committee allowed me to actively collaborate with its members, engaging with fellow professionals to help shape the future direction of the conference.”

**Dr. Rico Picone** just recently had an article he co-wrote published in the latest volume of the Journal on AI Policy and Complex Systems. This open access journal article is the result of a collaboration with professors at Brown University and the American College of Financial Services that started at the [Trustworthy AI Forward: Reimagining the Future of AI for National Security](#) workshop put on by DARPA/NSF. **READ ARTICLE**





## OUR ALUMNI AND WHAT THEY'RE UP TO

**Daryl Salhus**, BSME '20, was promoted to Senior Test & Development Engineer at the Paccar Technical Center in Mount Vernon, WA. Congratulations, Daryl!

**Joe Phinazee**, BSME '20, was promoted to Senior Program Manager at Amazon! Great work, Joe!

**Realani Rulona**, BSCS '22, recently started a new position as a Mechanical Engineer at M2X Energy Inc ! Nicely done, Realani!

**Melissa Roth**, BSME '17, recently attended the International Symposium on Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Automation in Space in Brisbane hosted by CSIRO. It was exciting to present an update on [Off Planet Research](#)'s simulants with increased magnetic response and how iron in lunar regolith affects various technologies, including beneficiation for ISRU operations, dust mitigation/removal, filtration systems, and electromagnetic effects on wireless devices. According to Melissa, "Not only did CSIRO - Australia's national science agency- put together a great conference, the team rallied on Day 4 in the rain to take us all on an incredible tour of their facilities. Throw in seeing what geopolymers from the tailings (remnants) of regolith extraction might look like and 103 (!) koalas from a side trip to the Koala Sanctuary, and it was a memorable trip!" Sounds amazing, Melissa!

## CONTINUE THE COMMUNITY WITH LINKEDIN

Don't forget to join our LinkedIn groups to continue to keep the community vibe alive. All SMU staff, faculty, students, monastic members, alumni, and community supporters are welcome to join these groups.

**[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE ENGINEERING GROUP](#)** (civil and mechanical engineering)

**[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE COMPUTER SCIENCE GROUP](#)** (computer science and information technology)

## CALENDAR AND EVENTS

- Dec 9-13 Semester Final Exams
- Dec 14 Conferral date for fall graduates
- Dec 16-Jan 12 Winter Break (faculty and students)
- Dec 23-Jan 5 Winter Break (staff – only essential staff on duty)
- Dec 17 Final grades due for Main, 09, and 11 terms
- Jan 1 HOLIDAY – New Year's Day (campus closed)
- Jan 9 University Convocation for faculty and staff
- Jan 11 Residence Halls Open
- Jan 13 Classes begin for Spring Main, 08, and 10 terms
- Jan 17 Add deadline for Spring Main
- Jan 20 HOLIDAY – Martin Luther King Day (campus closed – no classes)
- Jan 21 Add/drop deadline for Spring 08 and 10 terms
- Jan 24 Drop deadline for Spring Main

## CONTACT US – PLEASE!

If you are one of our alumni and have anything to share, please email us at [engineering@stmartin.edu](mailto:engineering@stmartin.edu). To unsubscribe from this list or to update your contact information, please use the same email address.

