

# THE DIFFUSER

Issue 7: Winter 2015



Amelia Witcoski

## The State of the Union Address

Ellery Marks, President

These semesters fly by so fast! AIChE ran into a couple speed bumps in the beginning of the semester with the unapproved state budget. But we plan to be back and better than ever with a jam packed spring semester filled with corporate sponsored general meetings, social events like paintball, mentor program fun, and of course, EOH! Our Officer Board is super excited to bring our members events that develop them both professionally and personally. If you have any event ideas, don't be afraid to reach out to us!

Thanks to our philanthropy chair, Molly McGiles, AIChE now has a new outreach programs. She and her committee have worked with other organizations to teach potential Illinois students and younger kids what chemical engineering is all about. She has even



### The Philanthropy Committee

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Learn how you can make a difference with other students like you!



### The Undergraduate Experience

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See what the freshmen and sophomore class have to say!



## Intramurals

### Connor Rachford

One of the social aspects of AIChE is bonding with other members through athletics. This happens in a variety of sports spread out throughout the year. AIChE will normally sponsor anywhere from 7-9 teams during the school year. This year, AIChE has competed in Flag football, Sand Volleyball, and Softball. Both the Flag Football team and the Sand Volleyball team finished their seasons with a 2-2 record. The Softball team took the Co-Rec championship with a final record of 5 and 1. For the spring semester, AIChE is looking to sponsor a men's basketball team, two co rec soccer teams, and a co rec broomball team. On top of this AIChE is hoping to bring athletics to its members outside of school intramurals. AIChE is looking to host an AIChE Super Bowl football game, as well as AIChE Olympics next semester. AIChE Olympics will be a day full of athletics where members form their own teams and compete against one another in a variety of sports and activities. We would love to see any member who is interested in making friends and having a good time come out and join us in any one of our sporting events.

# The Mentor Program!

Kevika Rustagi, Internal Vice President

This year, the mentor program kicked off with a trip to Curtis Apple Orchard! Underclassmen and upperclassmen were able to meet each other and learn a little bit more about the mentor program before joining a group, while also trying some delicious apple cider donuts. Mentor groups consist of both upperclassmen and underclassmen; the groups are designed to be a resource for chemical engineering students during the school year, where all members help mentor each other, no matter what year they are. It is a really great way to meet new people and also learn more about chemical engineering at U of I. For instance, our December monthly challenge was to meet up with your group at their favorite study spot on campus. Additionally, this year the mentor program continued a well-loved tradition: the Mentor Feast! It was a great hit and was a nice way for people to come together while enjoying a typical Thanksgiving meal before midterms and heading home for break. The mentor program is a great way to bond with other chemical engineers while balancing a stressful workload and trying to enjoy college... and of course, satisfying a mutual love for free food. I hope to see more people join the mentor program in the coming semester and really get everyone more involved in AIChE as a whole!





Molly McGiles

## The Philanthropy Committee

Human nature drives the philanthropy committee. Three big principles of human nature are out focus for the year: helping others, advancing humanity, and being the change. Starting off the year, AICHE developed an iHELP team. A group of students helped collect for a food drive on campus. In terms of community service, the committee has created a Volunteer Team. Signing up for this team doesn't commit you to anything, but gives us a group to go to when our volunteer sponsor, The Children's Orpheum and Museum, is in need of volunteers or when volunteering at a local homeless shelter. The committee plans to host an Earth Day event to help the community become more self-aware. To help advance humanity, the philanthropy committee has been travelling to local schools, elementary through

high school, and performing demos and giving presentations to encourage and explain more about chemical engineering. The committee has been requested at other engineering societies' OutReach events. We worked with young girls at a SWE event to teach chemical engineering principles with liquid nitrogen, led high school students in an exploration of plant design and energy, and plan to encourage 130 high school girls to think critically about chemical engineering in a hands on activity about packaging and plant design. "Be the change you want to see in the world" is a phrase that is almost being taken as a cliché. However, this phrase is a mantra for human nature. In order to be the change we want to see, the committee is raising money with various fundraisers to raise awareness and help students in need of mental support. School is difficult, especially with this major, and it can be a lot to handle. The committee has been working hard to develop an easily accessible mental health support system that should up and running by the end of the year! If you have any

### The State of the Union address (continued)

more outreach events in store, including an Earth Day workshop with Champaign-Urbana kids. Molly is also planning volunteer events at the Orpheum Children's Museum, so be sure to get on her volunteer list! In addition, Molly planned some really creative fundraising events, like the Cutest Baby Picture Contest, with proceeds going to the University of Illinois Suicide Prevention Program in honor of Rebekah Schiff-Berger, an AIChE member and friend.

Our Intramurals Chair, Connor Rachford, brought a big win to AIChE this semester. AIChE had three intramural teams this semester. We competed in flag football, sand volleyball, and softball. In flag football and sand volleyball, AIChE came out with a 2-2 record. In softball, AIChE brought home the championship title by making it to the playoffs and bringing first place home to 50 Noyes Lab! Though our teams might not always come out on top, we have an amazing cheering section at the intramural games and dedicated teams who love to compete together. Connor will be planning four more intramural teams: broomball, basketball, and two soccer teams. Make sure you look out for the sign ups and become a paid member to get priority sign up! In addition, Connor will also be hosting some more friendly competition with a winter football game and the return of AIChE Olympics.

Finally, sixteen students represented Illinois AIChE at the AIChE National Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. The sixteen of us had a great time exploring the city, attending workshops, and starting the party at the student bash! Illinois AIChE was also awarded the Outstanding Student Chapter Award for the fourth time, and we were honored to bring the award back home to Champaign-Urbana.

I am so honored to have been impacted by, and be able to lead, such an incredible organization. AIChE has truly made me into the person I am today, and I hope you will have a positive experience with it as well. I am confident in our Officer Board and can't wait to show you what amazing events we have in store now that the budget situation has been figured out. We are working to bring you the best events that will benefit you most as University of Illinois students. Make sure you sign up for volunteering, EOH, the mentor program, and keep your eyes on the update to take advantage of all of our programming! I can't wait to see you all at our events next semester!



### Chem-E Car

Ryan Sanders

As we've reached the end of another semester, I once again find myself amazed at just how much the Chem E Car team has accomplished in a relatively short amount of time. In the span of just a few short months, we have shown proof of concept for two completely new ideas for cars, made several large improvements on existing designs, and have yet another idea for next year's car well underway. In the past couple of years, Chem E Car has seen unprecedented growth in membership. This has made it necessary to make a few changes in how the team is run, which have been implemented over the course of the past couple semesters. The result has been the most efficient and effective team that I have been a part of. It has been a pleasure working with all of the old faces as well as new, and I thank everyone for their very hard work this semester. There is a lot of work yet to do, however, we have every reason to be optimistic about the final results. Now let's go win Regionals!



## How to be professional

Alex Senak

Over the last three years, I have gone to great lengths to listen to as many professionals as possible about how to best prepare for life after college.

As a member of the Hoeft Technology & Management Program, I have been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to speak with both engineering and business professionals at companies such as BP, Anheuser-Busch InBev, Abbott, Boeing, Capital One, eBay, John Deere, and Motorola Solutions. I've also had the opportunity to work for an established consulting firm, Sage Environmental, as an intern for both their Project Technical and their Executive Leadership Development Teams. This experience not only gave me a unique perspective on what it is like to work as a chemical engineer in the consulting industry, but also to analyze the metrics of success that drive decisions within a consulting firm's business model.

I've asked these individuals, who have ranged in experience from executives to entry-level, what skillsets are of the most importance for success within their companies. The general consensus is that the metrics of success within the college curriculum do not correspond to the metrics of success within industry. Therefore, as the chair of your AIChE Chapter, it is my objective to offer you a collection of workshops, seminars, and events that will develop the skills you need to succeed in your chosen industries. These skills range from how to sell a project, manage a team, and communicate efficiently because, remember, college may help identify people who are intelligent, but intelligence does not guarantee success. Thank you for your time, and the best of luck to you in your semester endeavors.

If you have any suggestions for the upcoming semester or would just like to talk, please email me at [senak2@illinois.edu](mailto:senak2@illinois.edu) or call me at 630-935-6006.

## The Undergraduate Experience

Michael Jorgensen, Sophomore

Hello everyone,

My name is Michael Jorgensen, and I'm currently the treasurer of AIChE. Being involved in AIChE has been a great experience for me. It's a nice break from classes and has allowed me to meet many other chemical engineers. I participated in Engineering Open House last year through AIChE, and it was a great experience to take on my own project. My favorite AIChE event that I have participated in has been the National AIChE Conference in Salt Lake City this year. I was able to meet many new people as well as bond with Illinois AIChE. The AIChE regionals and nationals conference is a great opportunity to see how large AIChE really is. These conferences are a lot of fun, and I recommend all of you to attend them.

Overall, AIChE is an RSO that I feel all chemical engineers should participate in. Whether you're on a committee or simply a general member attending events, AIChE will give you a great experience. With a rigorous fall semester this year, I have been able to receive advice from the upperclassmen that I've met through AIChE. Aside from the new friendships formed, AIChE is a great way to learn more about the chemical engineering field and learn what chemical engineers do on a daily basis. We have many events planned for next semester and I hope to see all of you next semester.



# The Undergraduate Experience

Elizabeth Tang, Freshman



When I was a senior in high school, I decided to visit UIUC through AIChE's overnight stay program. I figured it would be the perfect opportunity for me to not only see the campus, but also meet fellow chemical engineers. But beyond these, the program provided me with an inside look on the dorms, the classrooms, and most importantly the community and students that I would be surrounding myself with, ultimately leading to my enrollment.

Fast-forward about five months. Coming from California and feeling intimidated by the sea of unfamiliar faces, I found comfort in the first AIChE general meeting. Although I was unsure of many things, including how the buses worked and where my classes were, I knew for a fact that I wanted to be more involved with AIChE. As a result, I joined the officer board as the current freshmen representative. So far, this position has challenged me to foster a sense of unity within the class of 2019 chemical engineers, while also pushing me to

get to know each and every one of my peers.

In the short time that I have spent with AIChE, I have gained valuable advice from upperclassmen, met personally with companies such as Clorox and Dow Corning, grabbed lunch with professors in my department, visited an apple orchard, stuffed myself at the mentor program Thanksgiving dinner, lost my voice cheering for the AIChE softball team, and most importantly created lifelong friendships with some of the smartest, most compassionate and hilarious people I have ever met. I was also one of four freshmen who traveled to Salt Lake City for the 2015 AIChE National Conference; there I was able to expand my network and connect with ChemE's from across the country, while attending workshops held by professionals in my field. It was a great opportunity to tour the city, as well!

Over the next four years, I hope to grow and make more lasting memories with AIChE.

## Meet Our Sister Chapter!

"Olá" from our Brazilian sister chapter at the Universidade Estadual de Maringá! Illinois AICHE experienced many communication challenges with potential sister chapters in Egypt, Brazil, and Nigeria this semester. After meeting with a representative from Suez University at the National AICHE conference, Illinois was considered along with another school to be sister chapters. However, Illinois was not chosen due to the other school's closer proximity. Illinois AICHE did overcome many communication obstacles and re-established contact with Maringá, with whom we were past sister chapters. We are very excited for our combined events for the upcoming semester and to learn more about ChemE life in Brazil.

Thanks for reading! We cannot wait to see you this spring. Good luck with the next semester!

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