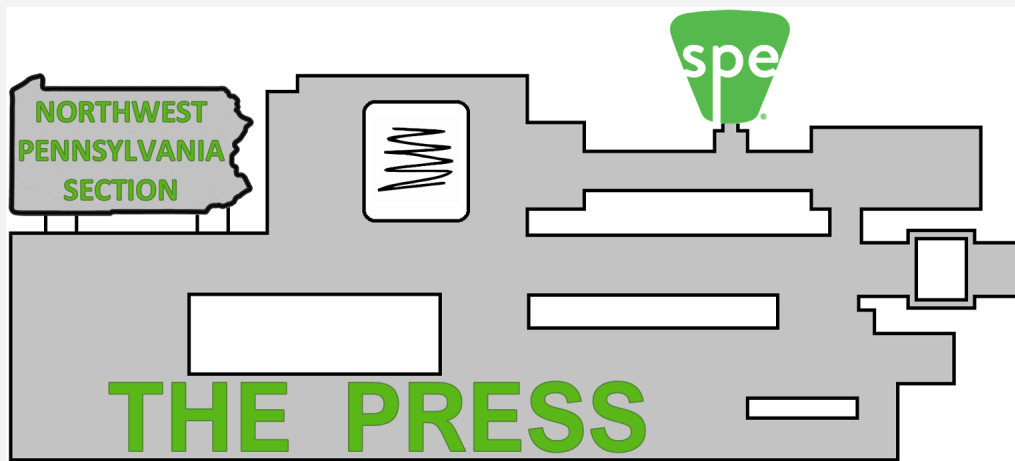




NWPA SPE serving Northwestern Pennsylvania since 1945



# Spring 2025 Newsletter

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NORTHWESTERN  
PENNSYLVANIA  
*Since 1945*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bruce Buchman 2024-2025

Hello,

Good things are coming!

We will be having a plant visit next month at Accudyn Products, Inc. (see details in the newsletter).

The golf outing is scheduled at Whispering Woods for the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, so get your clubs out and head for the driving range.

There are more scholarships now available. If you are a member with a child or grandchild in college—you qualify! This is a member benefit you do not want to miss.

Locally, the SPE Student Chapter attended a speaker series talk last month titled "The Three Legs of a Successful Circular Program: Environment, Financial, and Social Impact." The speaker, Kurt Duska, Consultant, discussed the key factors that contribute to a successful recycling program, offering valuable insights for students interested in recycling. What a great way to contribute to the student's education.

And finally, please consider joining the board, there are many positions available. We need some new faces on the board, some of us are holding multiple positions, so some extra help would be appreciated. Elections are coming up so please let one of the Board members know of your interest. With a few new Board members, no position on the Board would take a lot of your time. Plus, it's a great bunch of people to work with.

Bruce Buchman



## NWPA SPE RECOGNITION AT ANTEC '25



SPE greatly appreciated the opportunity to acknowledge the SPE Northwestern Pennsylvania Section's generous support and partnership at the ANTEC Honors & Awards Luncheon. NWPA SPE Board member, Lynzie Nebel, receives award from Dr. Matthew Harthcock, SPE Foundation Chair.

*The SPE NWPA Section is proud to be recognized at the Patron Level by the SPE Foundation's Ambassador Giving Society during #ANTEC2025 in Philadelphia. This honor reflects the SPE NWPA Section's contributions to STEM Education for a Sustainable Future, inspiring future generations to build on our important work in the plastics industry. @SPE: Inspiring Plastics Professionals*

Thank you for all you do. We look forward to more good work together!



## NWPA SPE LEADERSHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*These are the NWPA SPE members that steer your chapter. Please consider joining them to keep the chapter moving forward, explore more technical opportunities, revitalize the section and decide where to support the future of our industry.*

*Feel free to contact anyone on this list directly.*

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***If you are interested in joining the Board to have an input on the direction of our Section, please contact any member listed here directly.***





## SECTION NEWS

### More Plastics Scholarships

NWPA SPE donated \$2,500.00 to the Mike Sepe Memorial Scholarship at SPE. These funds were raised during the golf outing. Thank you golfers and sponsors! This scholarship is fully funded and students can apply for it when they complete the SPE Foundation scholarship application.

### New Plastics Scholarships

After contributing to the Jon Meckley scholarship and the Mike Sepe scholarship, both endowed at SPE, NWPA SPE leadership decided we might as well establish our own scholarship with SPE. This month we signed the articles of agreement and sent in our first check for \$10000.00 to officially endow the NWPA SPE Section Scholarship for students studying plastics. This is year one of a five year endowment until we reach a minimum of \$25,000.00 and fully fund the scholarship. These are also funds raised through the golf outing. Once funded, the scholarship will pay out every year in perpetuity. Student would apply through the SPE Foundation scholarship application.

### More Plastics Education in our area.....

The American Injection Molding Institute (AIM) and Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest) announce a strategic partnership to develop a concentration in Plastics Injection Molding under the PennWest Associate of Applied Science in Applied Technology (AAS-AT) degree. This program is scheduled to launch in the fall of 2025. Penn West includes Edinboro, California and Clarion Universities.

*Save the Date!*

A poster for a golf outing. The background is a blurred image of a golf course with trees and a golf cart. The text is centered and reads: 'Save the Date!', '2025 NWPA SPE GOLF OUTING', 'Thursday August 14, 2025', 'Whispering Woods Golf Club', 'Register @ 10am, Golf @ 11am', '18 Holes with Cart, Gifts, Raffles, Grilled Lunch, Steak Dinner, Refreshments, Contests and Prizes', and 'Registration opens June 9'.

**2025 NWPA SPE GOLF OUTING**

**Thursday August 14, 2025**

**Whispering Woods Golf Club**

**Register @ 10am, Golf @ 11am**

**18 Holes with Cart, Gifts, Raffles, Grilled Lunch, Steak Dinner,  
Refreshments, Contests and Prizes**

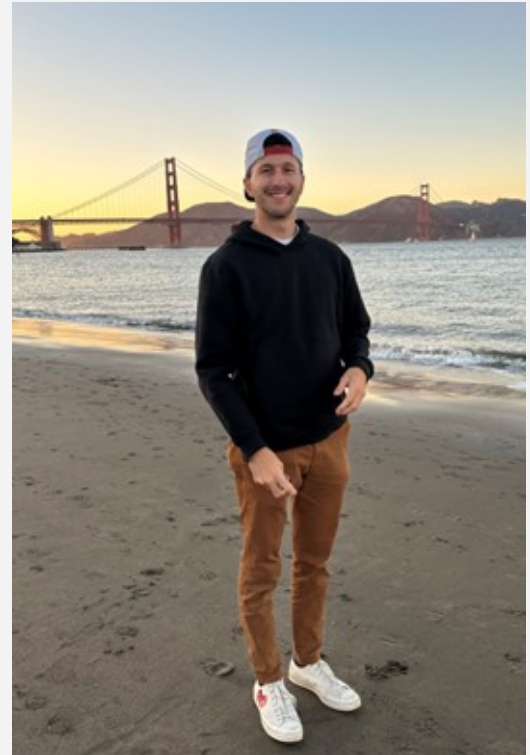
*Registration opens June 9*

## SPE STUDENT CHAPTER

### SENIOR CO-OP EXPERIENCE

My name is Nick Frederick, I am a senior at Penn State Behrend Studying Plastics Engineering Technology and will be graduating this December. I have been on Co-Op for the past 6 months at Tesla in Fremont, California. I will be working here until June as part of the Materials Engineering team within the energy business. I have been able to vastly expand my knowledge about materials while working at Tesla, and have been on projects involving adhesives, pottants, elastomers, thermoplastics, epoxies, and much more. My main role is to develop test methods to qualify and validate new materials, as well as doing failure analysis and troubleshooting on reliability failures. I have gained extensive hands-on laboratory experience involving numerous instruments such as DSC, TGA, DMA, Instron, FTIR, and much more. One of the coolest aspects of my experience has been the fact that I have been able to diversify my background of materials and am now knowledgeable about much more than just thermoplastics.

Another advantage of being on Co-Op is that I have been able to explore the West Coast. I have travelled to Yosemite, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, and other places up and down the coast of California. Being able to get out and explore new places by hiking and sight-seeing is amazing. I have also developed numerous connections throughout the Bay Area and started friendships with students from all over the world who are also working at tech companies in the Bay Area.



Behrend prepared me well for this role, and my unique academic experience helped me stand out and secure the job, as well as thrive as an employee. The ability to combine hands-on learning and academic knowledge is a foundation of the PLET program, and I don't think it can be found anywhere else. With Tesla being my second Co-Op, I could not recommend taking extended internships more. These job opportunities allowed me to get fully integrated within my team and make a real difference and allowed me to learn the ins and outs of the companies. I think all students should do Co-Ops; even though they will graduate at a later date, as the job experience is invaluable.



## SPRING PLANT TOUR



Committed to zero defect manufacturing and flawless delivery, Accudyn specializes in highly engineered injection molding for customers around the world.

From management to operators on the manufacturing floor, the Accudyn team blends top tier plastics engineering, system driven manufacturing processes and certified quality systems to exceed customer expectations. It is the power of a great team that enables Accudyn to consistently deliver dynamic solutions in injection molded products.



Accudyn will be hosting the NWPA SPE for a plant tour on Thursday April 24, 2025 starting at 5.30. If you are interested in attending the plant tour, please sign up at the link. Reservations are required by April 18, 2025.

SPE Plant Tour of Accudyn Products, Inc. at 2400 Yoder Dr, Erie, PA 16506 at 5.30pm.

*RESERVATIONS OPEN 4/1/25 BUT ARE LIMITED.* Make your reservations here: [Accudyn Tour](#)

NWPA SPE Members: \$20

Non-members: \$25

SPE Student Members: \$10



## SPE STUDENT CHAPTER NEWS

### **SPE Blow Molding Competition: 19 years in first place!**

Penn State Behrend students Troy Johnson, Nick Frederick, and Myranda Findlay were awarded at the SPE Blow Molding conference in Atlanta Georgia for their first place win in the student design contest. This was the 19<sup>th</sup> year in a row that Behrend took first place. The team had to present their design in front of an audience along with the second and third place winners.



### **Bowling with Professors**

A group of students from the student club members gathered for a fun-filled evening of bowling with their professors, creating a relaxed environment outside the classroom. The event provided a unique opportunity for students and faculty to bond, allowing for meaningful conversations away from academics. Professor Brian Young had a high score of 182!



### **PEXCO**

In March, during a general club meeting, PEXCO will be presenting to the students. PEXCO, a leading plastics manufacturer specializing in the extrusion of space and high-performance polymers, will discuss their company, recent technological advancements in the extrusion industry, and current job opportunities.

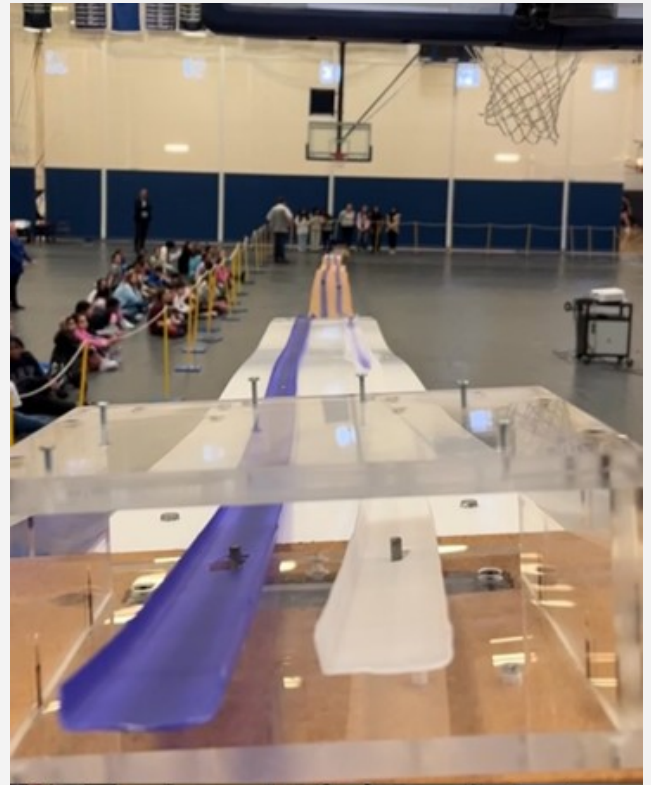


# SPE STUDENT CHAPTER NEWS—OUTREACH

## Car race

For a technical elective class, PLET students took designs for racing cars from a local elementary school, where they created a CAD model, and 3D printed them. The elementary students traveled to Behrend to race those cars down a track, with the help of the PLET students and faculty.

This year Diehl Elementary school participated.



## Preview Day

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, at Penn State Behrend's Preview Day, many of the student club members volunteered to give tours, talk to students, and provide demonstrations on the injection molding machines. Preview Day was for high school students that have accepted Behrend as their school but were still deciding on a major.

## STEAM Fair

Club members and faculty volunteered at Behrend's STEAM fair on February 17<sup>th</sup>, engaging with local elementary students to spark interest in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. They led a demonstration using a small thermoformer, showing the kids how it shaped plastic parts and discussing the stresses that occur within the newly formed material. The hands-on experience allowed the students to see the real-world applications of engineering principles while fostering curiosity in these important fields.



## SPE STUDENT CHAPTER NEWS

### End of Semester Gathering

The club members along with professors celebrated the end of the fall semester with a gathering at Erie Brewing Company, where everyone came together to unwind. It provided an ideal opportunity for professors to chat with the graduating seniors, offering advice and sharing memorable moments before they left campus. Everyone bonded over delicious food and drinks, strengthening friendships and reflecting on the experiences that made the semester special.



### Fall Graduation

Club members attended Behrend's fall graduation ceremony to cheer on two of their senior PLET friends as they reached this significant milestone. The event offered a chance for everyone to celebrate their achievements and reflect on the memories made throughout their time together. Kyle Trim (Left) is working at Beaumont Technologies in Erie, PA, and Troy Johnson (Right) is at Honda in Marysville, Ohio.

### Speaker Series

Kurt Duska speaks to the Behrend engineering students about The Three Legs of a Successful Circular Program: Environment, Financial, and Social Impact."







## RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

### RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR NWPA MEMBERS

NWPA SPE is offering our membership the opportunity to access student research at no cost. Behrend Senior Research Projects are designed to give upper-class students 12-18 months to research a topic of interest to your company. The timeline typically includes a 3-semester progression where students will perform a literature review relevant to their project topic, perform design and testing, and compile a final report. The students interface with project sponsors at whatever level is required, generally via regular meetings. Sponsoring a senior design project is a low-cost and low risk way to investigate those back-burner projects you never seem to have the time or resources to get done.

NWPA SPE will fund up to three research projects for our members to work with Plastics Engineering Technology students at Penn State Behrend. Projects can be in any plastics related area such as materials, processing, design, compounding, product development and more.

All submissions must be submitted by a member of the NWPA Section of SPE who is going to act as the primary contact. Project Sponsors are responsible for providing detailed instruction on expectations and deliverables and provide regular feedback and guidance to their student group. Senior project applications normally have a fee assessed with them. However, for the three winning SPE member projects, NWPA SPE will pay the application fee. NWPA SPE will not cover the NDA fee for sponsored projects. To apply, submit a brief outline/proposal of your project idea to [nwpa.spe@gmail.com](mailto:nwpa.spe@gmail.com), along with your contact information.

*Student Chapter SPE*  *NWPA SPE*  
*Connect your research ideas now!*

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## SCHOLARSHIPS

The latest SCHOLARSHIP applications are now available on our website at [nwpa.4spe.org](http://nwpa.4spe.org).

The Northwestern Pennsylvania Section S12 of the Society of Plastics Engineers is pleased to announce the **NWPA SPE SECTION SCHOLARSHIP**. This scholarship is intended to reward outstanding high school students planning to attend an accredited Plastics Program such as Plastics Engineering Technology, Plastics Engineering, Materials or Polymer Science. Other disciplines may be considered based on their relationship to SPE and the Plastics Industry. This is a one-time monetary award of up to \$500. One award will be given in each of our three service area counties: Erie, Crawford and Warren County, PA. The application deadline is JUNE 7, 2025.

The Northwestern Pennsylvania Section S12 of the Society of Plastics Engineers is pleased to announce the **NWPA SPE MEMBER'S SCHOLARSHIP**. This scholarship is intended to reward outstanding students with a one-time monetary donation up to \$1000 to be used to further their education. This Award is available only to NWPA SPE member's children or grandchildren who are planning to or currently attend college or secondary education trade school. The application deadline is July 31, 2025. If you, or a local SPE member you know, has a know, has a qualifying child or grandchild, we encourage you to apply.

Applications and further information are available on-line at <https://nwpa.4spe.org>



# Innovation and Emerging Plastics Technologies Conference 2025 at Penn State Behrend



The *Innovation and Emerging Plastics Technologies Conference 2025* is a must-attend event for professionals in the plastics industry, featuring a dynamic blend of presentations, interactive tutorials, and valuable networking opportunities. Set for June 11–12, the conference offers an in-depth look at the latest trends, technologies, and best practices shaping the future of plastics manufacturing. A key highlight will be the keynote address by Bryan DeBois, Director of Industrial AI at RoviSys, who will discuss how cutting-edge AI technologies are tackling the pressing issue of knowledge loss due to the retirement of experienced workers. This session will emphasize the urgent need for innovative solutions to preserve and transfer critical expertise within the industry.

Whether you're looking to expand your technical knowledge or gain insights into the latest industry trends, the *Innovation and Emerging Plastics Technologies Conference 2025* is the perfect opportunity to enhance your expertise and connect with peers.

**For more details and to register, visit the [Innovation and Emerging Plastics Technologies Conference](#).**

As a bonus, members of the NWPA SPE Section will receive a \$75 discount off the registration. That alone will almost pay for your annual membership! Contact the Conference via the website to receive your discount code.



**NWPA SPE SOCIAL  
Feb 27, 2025**

**LAVERY BREWING**

NWPA SPE members gathered for a late winter get-together at Lavery Brewing. It's a nice time to talk plastics and anything but plastics. SPE buys the eats and you buy the drinks so it's a win-win for all.