

OPEA 2011 awardees stress love of profession, service, teamwork

By Connie Mucklestone



2011 OPEA award recipients, from top left: Anton Davies, PhD, P.Eng., FCAE; Stephan Matusch, P.Eng., MBA; Michael E. Charles, PhD, P.Eng., FCAE; Doug Perovic, PhD, P.Eng.; Nils Voermann, P.Eng., MBA; Mohamed Attalla, PhD, P.Eng.; Robert Bryant, P.Eng.; and David Zingg, PhD, P.Eng. From bottom left: Elizabeth Edwards, PhD, P.Eng.; Anna Dunets Wills, P.Eng.; Milica Radisic, PhD, P.Eng.; Alourdes Sully, P.Eng., president and chair, OSPE; David Adams, P.Eng., FEC, president, PEO; and Helen Wojcinski, P.Eng., FEC, chair, Professional Engineers Awards Committee.

Public service, the value of teamwork, and the fun and range of opportunities afforded by an engineering career were the recurring themes in the remarks of the 11 recipients of the Ontario Professional Engineers Awards, November 12 at the International Centre in Mississauga.

“Engineering skills can be used for multi-million-dollar projects, but also to give a family a leg up,” noted Citizenship Award recipient Anna Dunets Wills, P.Eng., project engineer, rePlan Inc., honoured for her work in developing best practices for international organizations in developing nations. Gold Medal recipient Michael Charles, PhD, P.Eng., professor emeritus and dean emeritus, faculty of applied science and engineering, University of Toronto (U of T), credited the opportunity to join the faculty at U of T for opening up “many opportunities for public service.” Charles was cited for outstanding achievements in engineering and academic leadership during a career of more than 50 years.

On the teamwork theme, Engineering Medal recipient Robert Bryant, P.Eng., senior technical advisor, Union Gas, honoured for a long career dedicated to advancing engineering standards for the petroleum and natural gas pipeline industry, said his achievements represented “a whole bunch

of really good teams.” Similarly, Nils Voermann, P.Eng., MBA, global managing director, technologies, Hatch Ltd., noted: “Most significant human endeavours are made by a team working together rather than by an individual working alone.” Recognized for engineering that has enhanced the safety, environmental performance and productivity of metals smelting operations, Voermann also called mentoring junior colleagues “among the most useful and rewarding things we can do as engineers.”

Several awardees remarked on their love of the profession, with Engineering Medal recipient Elizabeth Edwards, PhD, P.Eng., saying: “It’s strange getting an award for having fun.” Edwards was recognized for research aimed at removing industrial pollutants from soil and water. For his part, Engineering Medalist Douglas Perovic, PhD, P.Eng., called his job in nanoengineering research at U of T “the greatest job in the world,” while David Zingg, PhD, P.Eng., honoured with the Engineering Medal for research in computational fluid dynamics that has increased competitiveness of Canada’s aerospace industry, said he didn’t feel deserving of an award for “getting up in the morning and doing something I love.”

Also receiving awards were:

- Milica Radisic, PhD, P.Eng., associate professor, Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering, U of T (Engineering Medal, Young Engineer), for her international leadership in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine;
- Mohamed Attalla, PhD, P.Eng., FCSCE, assistant vice president, McMaster University, and adjunct professor, University of Waterloo and Ryerson University (Engineering Medal, Management), for construction management that made the Toronto District School Board a leader in innovative building infrastructure management;
- Anton Davies, PhD, P.Eng., FCAE, vice president, Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin Inc. (Engineering Medal, Management), for his firm’s evolution into an internationally recognized business with staff in 11 locations around the world; and
- Stephan Matusch, P.Eng., MBA, owner/president, Ionic Engineering Limited (Engineering Medal, Entrepreneurship) for transforming a one-person operation into a multi-million-

dollar international company with employees in northern and southern Ontario.

Recipients' full citations are available at www.peo.on.ca/awards/OPEA/2011/2011OPEA.html.

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP

Noting the evening's theme of "Engineering of Ontario's resources" in her pre-dinner remarks, Alourdes Sully, P.Eng., president and chair, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE), said: "From the railways on which we travel, to the forests and provincial parks we visit and the precious metals that are mined for the jewellery we wear, engineers extract from the ground and provide technology and stewardship of the land." She also commented on "100 years of engineering service to Parks Canada, which is celebrating its centenary. In celebrating the achievements of 11 of Ontario's outstanding professional engineers, we celebrate individuals who have devoted their careers to innovative thinking and improving the lives of others."

Focusing his remarks on the award recipients as professional engineers, PEO President David Adams, P.Eng., FEC, said: "By becoming professional engineers, they have all demonstrated a commitment to enhancing the quality of life, health, safety and well-being of Ontarians, and demonstrated their dedication to protecting the environment. The P.Eng. title they carry indicates to the broader public that their work

is technically competent, based on sound professional ethics and adheres to the standards of practice that are the hallmark of professional engineering."

The Ontario Professional Engineers Awards is a joint program of PEO and OSPE.

The pre-presentation part of the program also included a video address congratulating award recipients from Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, and brief remarks from MPP David Zimmer, LLB, parliamentary assistant, minister of municipal affairs and housing and minister of aboriginal affairs, and former parliamentary assistant, attorney general.

In his keynote address, Sam Marcuson, vice president, Vale Canada Limited, spoke about "sustainable innovative leadership," and urged the profession to "create new engineering leaders, leaders capable of innovating sustainable solutions." Calling the past obsolete and the future beckoning, he said: "Adventurers who take on the sustainability challenge will find their endeavours replete with surprise, frustration and joy" as they intensify "efforts that protect the environment and promote the common good, while shedding practices and beliefs that do not. These leaders will create enterprises of which they can be proud, pay back to Mother Earth what is owed and give future generations a world that is environmentally, socially and economically sound and sustainable."

For information on the OPEA program and nominating an outstanding professional engineer, visit: www.peo.on.ca/awards/OPE_Awards.html.

RESULTS ARE IN ON VOTE to terminate PEO-OSPE Agreement

By Michael Mastromatteo

THE RESULTS OF A VOTE of PEO members to terminate the PEO-OSPE Agreement have been certified and released by the independent referendum agent.

The vote was held November 1 to December 2, with members voting by a mail-in ballot or electronically via the Internet or telephone. Over 26 per cent of members voted in the referendum. The full results, along with the results of the vote in 2000 to create the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) and enable PEO to amend By-Law No. 1 to help finance OSPE for three years, appear on the right.

On December 2, OSPE filed a Motion in Court for an injunction saying that 50 per cent of PEO's total membership must vote to terminate the agreement. OSPE also requested an order preventing PEO from publicly expressing its views as to the implications of the recent vote. On December 14, however, OSPE withdrew the injunction and offered to work with PEO "in the future to build a positive relationship."

The certified results from the independent referendum agent are posted at www.peo.on.ca/peo-ospe_referendum.html.

YEAR	2011*	2000**
PEO members eligible to vote	74,962	69,000
Total votes cast	19,995	14,950
Percentage of members casting ballots	26.7	21.7
Votes for***	15,878	12,047
Percentage voting for	79.4	80.6
Votes against	4,097	2,903
Percentage voting against	20.5	19.4
Spoiled	20	86

* 2011 referendum to terminate the PEO-OSPE Agreement

** 2000 referendum to create the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

*** Votes for means:

In the 2011 referendum—"the agreement be terminated"

In the 2000 referendum—"agreeing to create a separate professional organization dedicated to advancing the interests of members, and promoting the profession and amendments to the PEO By-Law No. 1 to enable PEO to help finance the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) for three years."

VOLUNTEER service pins unveiled

By Zalina Alvi



The new volunteer pins for five, 15, 20 and 25 or more years of service alongside the FEC 10-year service pin (middle) and existing P.Eng. pin (far right).

A NEW INITIATIVE TO RECOGNIZE the efforts of PEO’s hard-working volunteers through the awarding of service pins was rolled out in late 2011. More than 900 members volunteer their time on PEO council, chapters and committees or task forces every year.

The pins are the result of a mandate to create a volunteer recognition program, spearheaded by a subcommittee of PEO’s Advisory Committee on Volunteers. To qualify, an individual must be a current volunteer with PEO and have accumulated five, 10, 15, 20 or 25 years of service based on records held by PEO. Service can be punctuated by leaves of absence for work, family or personal reasons, though no service credit will be provided for the leave. Volunteers who serve on more than one council, chapter or committee can count only the actual years served—if a volunteer serves on a chapter and a committee at the same time, for example, only one year is counted.

The service pins are modelled after PEO’s existing P.Eng. pins, with the pin for each milestone having a corresponding number and colour scheme. The Fellow of Engineers Canada (FEC) pin, with a service criterion of 10 years, will be awarded instead of a 10-year PEO pin. For at least 25 years of service, volunteers will receive a special, numberless sterling silver pin with a square shape and design similar to the numbered pins.

Whenever possible, PEO’s service pins will be presented at functions and meetings the volunteer is already attending. Councillors and committee members will receive their pins at regularly scheduled council or committee meetings; pins will be presented to chapter members at designated chapter events. All recipients will also be recognized on PEO’s website and at PEO’s AGM, if in attendance.

The first of the new volunteer service pins were presented at a dinner preceding the Chapter Leaders Conference on November 12, 2011.

For a full list of 2011 volunteer service pin recipients, please visit www.peo.on.ca/volunteering/ServicePins.html.

Increase profession’s profile, Tory tells chapter leaders

By Connie Muckleston



Personal career-branding coach Diana YK Chan presents a mini workshop on how to magnify chapters’ marketability. Photo: Georg Kralik.

If engineers want to get noticed—and they should—they just need to “show up,” advised John Tory, corporate director, broadcaster and chair, Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance.

Keynote speaker at PEO’s Chapter Leaders Conference, November 12 in Toronto, Tory said engineers “will be a huge part” of Canada’s economic future, but also wondered if what they do is well-known enough to enable them to play the broadest possible role. “My sense,” he said, “is that you haven’t done as well as law, medicine and accounting to ensure membership in the profession isn’t seen as a career-limiting pigeonhole.”

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Noting an ad that day in *The Globe and Mail* associating doctors with children and mental health issues, he urged the profession to undertake similar public relations and advertising initiatives. The result of not making such an investment, which Tory likened to the cost of a cup of coffee for each member for six months, “is the loss of the opportunity for broader influence,” he said.

The former MPP and Ontario Progressive Conservative party leader also advised the profession to “start early” to raise awareness so that it can attract the “best and brightest to engineering.” He said the sum of attracting the best and brightest plus a broader public knowledge of the profession would be a higher value placed on engineers’ services.

Sophisticated PR campaign aside, Tory said engineers can build recognition for the profession “simply by showing up”—as speakers at the local Rotary Club or at schools’ career days, for example. “Show up in the community,” he added, “because you can’t be involved if you’re not there.” And don’t wait to be invited to speak to community groups or to volunteer, he advised, instead strategically call organizations to offer yourself.

As for PEO’s Government Liaison Program, Tory said, it is well done, noting that “showing up is 90 per cent of the game. Unions, people against things, are down at Queen’s Park every day, or the people they pay to be there,” so the profession needs to be present as well, having contacts with people involved in all political parties and treating them with respect.

REACHING OUT TO ENGAGE

Tory’s remarks complemented the day’s introductory remarks by PEO President Dave Adams, P.Eng., FEC, who noted the vital role chapters can play in raising public awareness of PEO in their communities.

Tory’s comments also amplified the morning plenary presentation of personal and career-branding coach, speaker, trainer and consultant Diana YK Chan, whose mini workshop on Magnify your Marketability aimed to provide chapter delegates tools to increase engagement of PEO members through volunteering and participation at events.

To retain volunteers, she said organizations must value the role of volunteers, define rules and expectations for them, create clear assignments, make volunteers feel they belong and recognize volunteer contributions.

Lunchtime keynote speaker John Tory, corporate director, broadcaster and chair, Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance, urged the profession to take on larger public relations and advertising initiatives.



To attract and engage volunteers, she advised “reaching out to the world”—the conference theme—by using a “5 Ds” marketing framework, comprising “discovering” who you are, “defining” your brand, “developing” your marketing strategy, “determining” who does what, and “delivering” your message. Working the framework through a series of brainstorming questions, she said, will lead to the “5 Cs” of marketing success: “clarity, consistency, concrete plan, commitment, and a compelling reason to act.”

Following Chan’s presentation, delegates had a choice of three breakout sessions, repeated in the afternoon, on chapter needs and how PEO can help, chapters’ potential use of social media to reach out and grassroots strategies chapters can use to gain involvement. The results of the sessions were presented at a closing plenary, followed by concluding remarks by PEO President-elect Denis Dixon, P.Eng., FEC, who noted a strong need for both a regulatory body and an advocacy organization in engineering, and pledged PEO’s continuing support of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers in the latter role.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY requirements part of BUILDING CODE UPDATE

By Michael Mastromatteo

ONTARIO ENGINEERS involved in construction and building permit activities must now adhere to new energy efficiency and occupancy requirements, following recent changes to the Ontario Building Code (OBC).

As of January 1, 2012, building permits for proposed construction projects must comply with enhanced energy efficiency requirements, part of the Ontario housing ministry’s roadmap to energy efficiency in the building and construction trade.

A second building code update, which also came into effect January 1, requires that inspections be made and permits issued prior to anyone occupying new residential buildings of specified sizes.

In a statement issued by the housing ministry’s building and development branch, the changes are said to provide several “compliance

paths” allowing affected professionals to incorporate the latest changes into their practice. Effective January 1, however, compliance with the EnerGuide 80 performance standard will be mandatory.

The energy efficiency changes apply to houses and certain residential buildings intended for occupancy on a continuing basis during the winter months.

The changes also apply to part 3 residential and commercial buildings, and call for energy efficiency levels to be at least 25 per cent greater than the standards outlined in a 1997 national energy code for buildings.

Regarding occupancy permits, the changes apply to residential buildings of three or fewer storeys with a building area not exceeding 600 square metres.

The housing ministry recommends professionals consider enrolling in technical training courses on building code energy efficiency requirements. The courses have been developed by the housing ministry and are offered through such stakeholder groups as the Ontario Building Officials Association and the Ontario Home Builders’ Association.

Bernie Ennis, P.Eng., PEO director, policy and professional affairs, says the updates clearly relate to the housing ministry’s objective to infuse the building code with energy efficiency opportunities. “The changes that are effective January 1 are new ones specifically meant to make buildings more energy efficient,” he says.

According to the housing ministry, Ontario is becoming the Canadian leader in using the building code to regulate energy efficiency in new buildings. The ministry says no other Canadian jurisdiction has a building code energy efficiency requirement for large buildings that meets or exceeds the national model standard by a factor of 25 per cent.

The housing ministry says the amended building code provides flexibility for designers and builders in meeting the code’s energy efficiency requirements without compromising other objectives related to more efficient energy use.



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EMPLOYERS CONTINUE to remain cautious in 2011

By Jayna Koria and Annisa Au

WITH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC uncertainties, salary increases by employers of engineers in Ontario were below the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the second year in a row.

This observation is one of several findings in a recent survey conducted by Mercer (Canada) Limited for the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE). Compensation data for more than 14,400 engineers across six engineering responsibility levels and 14 job types was collected from 140 organizations in both the private and public sectors. The 2011 survey reflects data for engineers working in organizations of all sizes, across a broad array of industries located in 17 metropolitan areas in Ontario.

PAY INCREASES CONTINUE TO REMAIN BELOW CPI

Results of the 2011 OSPE employer compensation survey show that year-over-year median base pay increased for all engineering responsibility levels, with increases ranging from 0.9 to 2.7 per cent. However, growth for all levels was below Ontario's CPI for the same period (June 2010 to June 2011).

As seen in Figure 1, base pay increases were highest for entry level engineers A and B (1.9 per cent and 2.7 per cent, respectively) and lowest for the more experienced level F engineers at 0.9 per cent. In contrast, the opposite was seen in 2010 where the highest median base pay increases were seen at the most senior engineering levels. These results may indicate that employers of engineers acknowledge the need to maintain competitive entry level rates if they want to keep engineers in Ontario rather than lose them to companies in western Canada that may have bigger pockets to lure new talent.

HISTORICAL TREND NARROWING

Over the last few years we have seen engineering salary increases at some historical lows and, as previously outlined, in any given year increases appear to be intentionally targeted to certain levels. However, if we look back at the overall trend for the working level engineers (levels C to E), it is interesting to note that fluctuations seem to

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FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2011 OVER 2010 IN MEDIAN BASE SALARY BY RESPONSIBILITY LEVEL

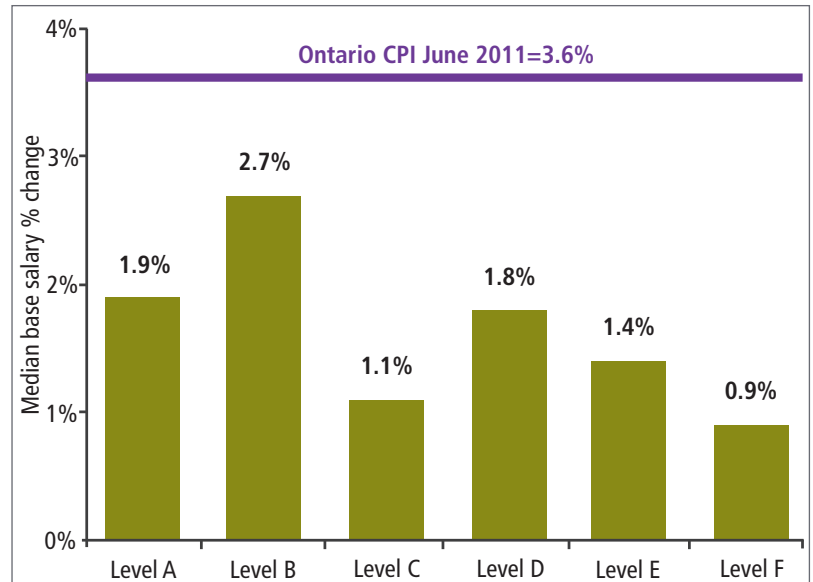


TABLE 1. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN MEDIAN BASE SALARY OVER 10 YEARS

Engineering level	% Change in median base salary – Core sample									
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
All	2.4	2.0	3.6	-1.8	2.1	3.4	2.8	3.0	1.4	2.3
Level A	-3.8	0.0	-2.0	3.3	2.0	2.9	4.5	1.8	-0.6	1.9
Level B	-4.1	0.3	2.1	3.6	0.0	2.2	3.0	1.5	1.4	2.7
Level C	0.9	2.7	1.9	2.3	2.7	2.4	2.7	1.8	0.8	1.1
Level D	1.4	0.6	5.3	2.3	2.5	2.8	4.3	2.0	1.3	1.8
Level E	1.1	1.1	3.1	2.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.1	2.6	1.4
Level F	0.6	0.3	2.2	4.4	5.1	3.6	2.2	1.8	2.9	0.9
CPI Ontario	1.2	2.5	2.4	1.9	2.4	1.6	2.8	0.0	1.6	3.6

Note: 2004 figures represent the percentage increase in median salary for common core participants over 2003; 2005 figures represent the percentage increase in median salary over the 2004 total sample; 2006-2011 figures represent the percentage increase in median salary for common core participants over the prior year; CPI figures represent the Consumer Price Index for Ontario as of June 2011.

2011 COMPENSATION AT A GLANCE:

- pay increases continue to remain below Ontario's CPI
- historical trend narrowing
- industry choice matters

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Advertorial

Self-employment has a lot of advantages. However, being your own boss also means fending for yourself.

That's because you have to look after a number of details that most employees take for granted. The biggest drawback, according to over two-thirds¹ of surveyed self-employed individuals, is the lack of access to medical coverage and insurance.

Without an employer's group insurance benefits, you are left to your own means when it comes to protecting yourself, your assets and your family. For instance, if an illness or accident prevented you from working, how would your family cope without the financial support usually provided by an employer?

But this doesn't mean those who work for themselves are completely left on their own. There are insurance policies that can help protect you.

Out-of-pocket costs per household² (Annual, excluding health insurance premiums)

\$515 Drugs

\$385 Dental

\$234 Vision

\$106 Health care practitioners
(Other than physicians, dental and vision care professionals)

Extended health insurance

A safety net to guard against illnesses and unexpected medical expenses not covered by the government is crucial for the self-employed.

With no employer to provide supplementary coverage, you would have to pay out of your own pocket for prescriptions, diagnostic services, chiropractors, physiotherapists, semi-private or private hospital rooms, out-of-Canada emergency medical care, ambulances and more. Dental costs could also include examinations, x-rays, cleaning, fillings, crowns, root canals and dentures.

If your spouse doesn't have coverage at work, your out-of-pocket medical expenses can get even bigger, especially if you have children. Private health insurance can be more affordable than you think. Plus, you may be able to deduct the cost of your health insurance premiums from your business income.³

Disability insurance

It is far more likely that you will become disabled before age 65 than die. In fact, disability strikes working people far more often than premature death.

How will you and your dependants survive without any source of income? Where will the money come from if you're unable to work?

Disability insurance provides a source of income if you should become ill or injured and can't work. These plans provide monthly benefit payments, based on a percentage of your monthly earnings, while you are disabled and unable to perform your occupation.

Unlike employee disability plans that end when you change jobs, an association-sponsored disability plan is not only portable — some also provide coverage between jobs so you can continue to receive benefits if you become disabled within 12 months of your employment ending.

Look for a disability plan that offers coverage for different types of disability, such as total disability, partial disability, residual disability (you are able to return to your regular occupation but in a limited capacity), and catastrophic loss. And remember that as long as you pay your own premiums (not your partnership), your monthly disability benefits may be tax free.³

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Affordable coverage is available for professional engineers through the Engineers Canada-sponsored plans. This allows you all the benefits of a group plan (e.g. lower cost) so you can focus on your recovery, not on the bills.

¹ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada: 2006 Survey of Self-Employed Individuals: Perceptions of Benefit Coverage, May 2006.

² Canadian average household annual spending (Source: Statistics Canada, 2009 Survey of Household Spending, December 2010).

³ Contact Canada Revenue Agency for details.

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smooth out over time and all levels see very similar increases when looked at over a four-year period (Figure 2).

When we look at the four-year trend for salary increases, we would expect to see increases of roughly 10 to 12 per cent; however, this trend has been steadily reducing. This year we are seeing a constant four-year increase for levels C to E of 6 to 7 per cent. As uncertain economic conditions continue, it will not be surprising if we see smaller increases in the near future.

INDUSTRY CHOICE MATTERS

The difference in pay across primary industries can be significant. When looking at working level engineers (levels C and D), of the five primary industries shown in Figure 3, the non-durable manufacturing industry (including oil and gas companies) is the highest paying industry for Ontario engineers in 2011, consistent with previous survey findings. The difference in pay from one industry to another can be significant and is most noticeable between the non-durable manufacturing industry and high-tech/electrical products/telecom industry for level D engineers, where the disparity in average total cash is as much as 20 per cent. However, not all industries show such a discrepancy. For example, there is very little differentiation between engineers in the consulting, durable manufacturing and high-tech/electrical products/telecom industries, whether looking at level C or level D engineers (Figure 3).

Now in its 58th year, the employer compensation survey of engineers in Ontario helps establish meaningful criteria for levels of engineering responsibility for the benefit of both engineers and employers of engineers, and provides current data with respect to actual compensation levels for engineering work.

The survey results are available in PDF format for both employers and OSPE members. In addition to the PDF, the survey results are presented in an online format through Mercer

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN AVERAGE BASE SALARIES FOR LEVELS C TO E OVER THE PERIOD 2008-2011

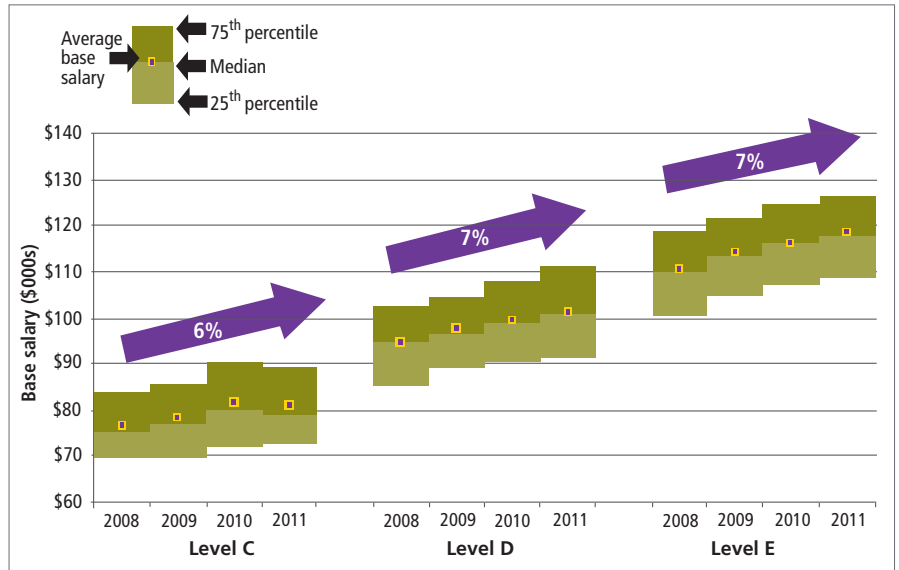
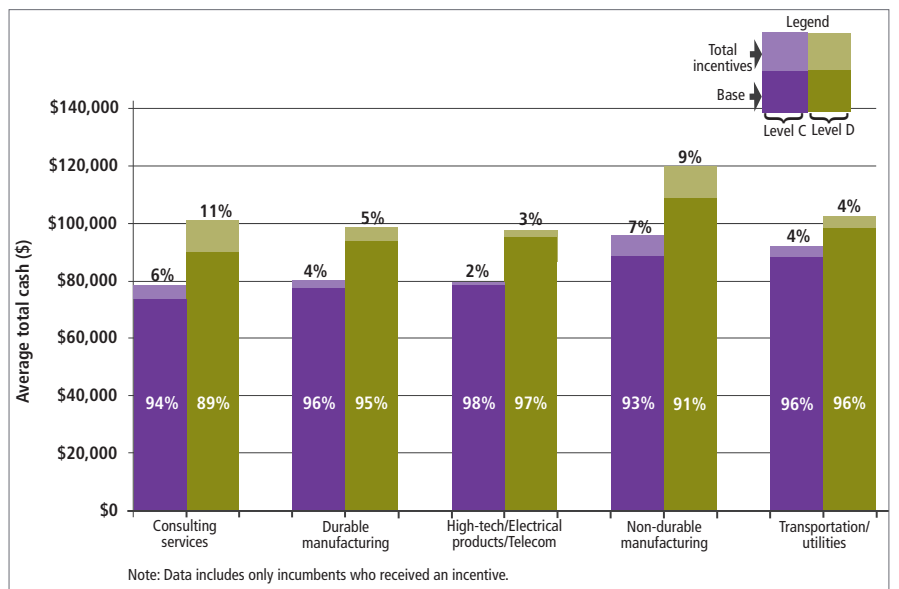


FIGURE 3. AVERAGE TOTAL CASH COMPENSATION FOR LEVELS C AND D BY PRIMARY INDUSTRY



PayMonitor, allowing employers to effectively assess their organization's competitive position and analyze market data.

As in previous years, the design and implementation of the survey were overseen by an OSPE advisory committee comprising representatives from industry, as well as the engineering and human resources communities. The committee ensures the survey remains a current and reliable resource on compensation for engineers. A list of committee members is provided in the published report.

Employers and OSPE members can order the 2011 OSPE employer compensation survey by contacting Mercer at www.imercer.ca/ospe, 1-800-333-3070 or info.services@mercer.com.

OSPE members can access a complimentary copy of the member market compensation summary online at www.ospe.on.ca.

Jayna Koria and Annisa Au are with Mercer (Canada) Ltd.

[NEWS]

REFERENDUM, BUILDING COSTS add spice to town hall meetings

By Michael Mastromatteo



PEO President David Adams, P.Eng., FEC, introduced Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion as a special guest at the November 7 PEO town hall meeting.

THE REFERENDUM ON terminating the PEO-Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) Agreement and the costs associated with renovating PEO's headquarters at 40 Sheppard Avenue West dominated debate at a series of PEO town hall meetings held throughout November and early December.

Dubbed "Straight Talk," the four town hall meetings, held in PEO's West Central, East Central, Western and Eastern regions, allowed President David Adams, P.Eng., FEC, to update members on current issues.

A Northern Region town hall, originally scheduled for November 3 in Thunder Bay, was cancelled due to insufficient registration.

The November 7 West Central Region town hall, held in Mississauga, included a guest appearance by Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion, who offered to act as moderator when the discussion grew particularly heated.

At the East Central Region town hall November 16 at PEO, discussion was facilitated by John Glover, P.Eng., FEC, vice-chair, East Toronto Chapter. Attendance at the event was so large that some attendees had to be accommodated in an overflow room, where they could watch and hear the proceedings in the main hall via a video link, and pose questions via email.

The meetings were informal in nature with Adams sounding out participants on eight topics he had listed on the town hall invitation. Among the listed topics were: PEO-OSPE relations; PEO governance



OSPE President and Chair Alourdes Sully, P.Eng., at the November 7 meeting.

Councillor-at-large Michael Hogan, P.Eng., FEC, urged financial restraint at each of the recent town halls.

changes (in particular the council-directed versus member-directed options for choosing PEO presidents); PEO's role in developing public policy and offering technical advice to government; and membership's thoughts on emerging disciplines within the profession.

Also discussed were the concept of including in the regulations an Engineer of Record in Ontario, potential changes to engineering undergraduate education and PEO's revenue raising and spending priorities.

However, most discussion centred around the referendum then in progress to terminate the PEO-OSPE Agreement, spending on PEO's headquarters and the Engineer of Record concept.

OSPE executives were prominent at both Toronto-area town halls and peppered Adams with questions and comments about the referendum (see the vote results, p. 9).

At all the town halls, PEO Councillor-at-large Michael Hogan, P.Eng., FEC, presented a PowerPoint analysis he had developed of spending to renovate the PEO offices, and called for greater fiscal restraint at PEO.

Hogan also raised an issue of lieutenant-governor appointees to PEO council often voting almost as a block on controversial issues, including the building purchase and the proposal to have future PEO presidents elected from within council, rather than by members. The election of the president will now be the subject of a vote by members, in conjunction with PEO's 2012 council elections (see Viewpoint, p. 20 and 21, also In Council, p. 24).

Despite some concerns about the potential for duplication of OSPE work, most town hall participants appeared to support PEO continuing its government relations and policy development efforts. Members were also enthused about developing an Engineer of Record regulation (see In Council, November/December 2011, p. 68), but were of mixed views about a suggestion to add an additional year of study to the engineering undergraduate curriculum.

Facilitator for the November 30 Western Region town hall in London was Brian Breukelman, P.Eng. That event included a welcoming address by Andy Hrymak, PhD, P.Eng., dean of engineering, University of Western Ontario (UWO), and an opportunity for members to tour the Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel Laboratory on the UWO campus. Facilitators for the December 8 Eastern Region town hall in Ottawa were Chantal Chiddle, P.Eng., and Roger Toutant, P.Eng.

VOLUNTEERING AND AWARDS TO GO ONLINE

By *Zalina Alvi*



New and existing PEO volunteers will soon be able to access all the resources and tools they need in one online hub. A new website—to be rolled out over the winter—will list available volunteer opportunities for which people can apply online, and feature profiles of recognized volunteer achievements, a social media presence and event listings. A similar website will streamline the nomination process for PEO awards and be an archive of past award recipients.

PEO is supported by more than 900 volunteers on council, the chapters and committees or task forces, without whom it cannot function. Together, the websites will offer a range of tools for volunteers and an extensive database with historical information on PEO volunteer achievements.

New and existing volunteers will be able to learn about and apply for positions in chapters, committees and task forces directly through the site. Volunteer profiles will be posted on a rotating basis to highlight the range of contributions made by PEO volunteers.

Through the awards program website, users will be able to create, edit and submit nominations, as well as supporting documentation, while having

access to an archive of past award recipients and information on award descriptions, eligibility criteria and contacts. The site will also help the designated parties review and process the nominations.

Development of the online volunteering and awards sites began in January 2011 with staff and volunteers working with an external software developer. A user acceptance testing team began testing in August 2011; public access is planned for the first quarter of 2012 through www.peo.on.ca.

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WE, THE ENGINEERS OF ONTARIO, HAVE A SERIOUS PROBLEM

By Diane Freeman, P.Eng., FEC, and Chris D. Roney, P.Eng., BDS, FEC

OUR CURRENT system of electing the president has, far too frequently, resulted in presidents who were ineffective, ill-prepared, out-of-touch or ill-informed. Though we have no doubt that all were well meaning, putting the wrong person into this important role results in **harm to the reputation, stature and advancement of our profession**. Though we have had some truly fantastic presidents over the years, far too many times we have failed to elect an effective president—we can't afford to let that happen.

One of the most important roles is to be the face and voice of the profession to the public, the government, universities and other external stakeholders. How we are perceived as a profession often comes down, in large part, to the ability and credibility of our leaders. It takes years of effort to build relationships and develop trust, respect and goodwill with those we hope to influence and impress, but all that is **lost in an instant** when we put forward a weak, ineffective, or out-of-touch president as our spokesperson. **We can't afford to keep doing this.**

Our current system of electing the president is misleading, both for the candidates and for the members. Often we see candidates for president run on a platform of grand promises. Our members make their decision regarding whom to support based on those promises, unaware that **the president is but one vote**

around the council table. **The president does not have special powers or authority** to advance his or her own agenda or policies. Instead, the authority for determining the policies and strategic direction of our profession is established by the collective wisdom of the entire council of 29 men and women.

More often than not, **the presidents themselves do not understand their role**. They believe they have a mandate (even though, due to our typically low voter turnout, a successful presidential candidate typically garners only about 8 per cent support of the membership). Some think they can push that mandate through without bothering to get council on-board, and this inevitably leads to conflict. This has happened many times and the result is a virtual paralysis of council. This is **preventing our profession from dealing with the important strategic issues** facing our members. Our profession's role, authority and stature in society are eroding as a result. It is counter-productive, **it damages our profession**, and it must be stopped.

We live in the engineering-driven technology age—engineering touches our society in more ways than ever before; so ask yourself: Why doesn't the engineering profession have a stature in society greater than others, such as medicine and law? Why are engineering services and expertise treated like a commodity to be

HOW WE ARE PERCEIVED AS A PROFESSION OFTEN COMES DOWN, IN LARGE PART, TO THE ABILITY AND CREDIBILITY OF OUR LEADERS.

bought and sold at the lowest price? Though there are many reasons, with no simple answers, we mostly have ourselves to blame. It takes effective strategic direction, leadership and image. **We can't afford to keep doing things the way we've done them since 1922—the status quo isn't working.**

What you are being asked to vote on is to change to a system where the council will **elect the president from among the elected councillors**. This does not in any way diminish your democratic rights to elect your leadership—on the contrary, **it improves the quality of the democratic governance of our profession.**

You will still have the **same number of elected members of council** and **the president will still be an individual who was elected by the members.**

This is a well-established and successful democratic model that is widely used. It has been highly recommended to us by experts in the field as **the gold standard for effective governance**—PEO deserves no less! In fact, all of the other regulatory bodies in Ontario that report to the attorney general select their president (or equivalent) in this manner. It ensures the president has the confidence of the council and must earn and maintain that respect by acting fairly and responsibly. Council is in a far better position to know whether the individual it selects has the vitally important skills and attributes necessary to effectively represent the profession to the government, universities, and other important external stakeholders, as well as to our own members.

So please, for the sake of our profession, I urge you to **vote for council appointing the president from among the elected members of council.** ☒

For more information, please visit the following website: www.cises.ca. Σ

MEMBERS OF A MATURE, SELF-REGULATED PROFESSION ARE CAPABLE OF ELECTING THEIR OWN PRESIDENT

By Denis Dixon, P.Eng., FEC, and Roydon A. Fraser, PhD, P.Eng., FEC

SINCE 1922, Ontario's professional engineers have elected their top officers and the majority of their council. It's tradition, basic democracy, and a clear and strong form of *self-regulation*. It has served the public and PEO members exceedingly well. And a scan of our sister professional engineering associations across Canada reveals that having members directly elect the president is the *engineering way*.

Direct election of our officials allows the membership to express their preferences and desires. Furthermore, when members elect the president it improves significantly the flow of ideas and suggested initiatives from members to PEO council. An appointed president could not be dislodged by a democratic vote by the members. Direct election requires candidates to lay out their platform prior to election and, if they renege or perform poorly, they

can be rebuked in the next election. An appointed president could ignore criticism, claiming his or her policies are best for the masses likely to be phrased as being best for the profession.

What about "new blood"? Direct election allows candidates from among 75,000 PEO members, including dedicated committee and chapter leaders. Appointment from within council's 17 elected members taps a very small pool, and is likely to preserve orthodoxy, especially when one considers that the pool of possible council-elected presidents will likely be even smaller, given many councillors will likely not have the additional time available to accept the increased responsibilities of the presidency.

When the president is elected by the *members*, not appointed by the council, he or she is not subject to pressure from cliques or factions on council, making

WHEN MEMBERS ELECT THE PRESIDENT IT IMPROVES SIGNIFICANTLY THE FLOW OF IDEAS AND SUGGESTED INITIATIVES FROM MEMBERS TO PEO COUNCIL.

it harder to centralize and concentrate power there. Members electing the president limits power centralization. And do not forget that our council is already perilously close to losing *self-regulation* with more than one-third (41 per cent or 12 of 29) of councillors appointed by government.

Strong self-regulation requires that members elect the president. A strong self-governed engineering profession must be defended. The erosion of self-governance is often slow, but once lost it is virtually impossible to re-acquire. Σ