



The Pittsburgh Professional Engineer  
<http://www.PittsburghPE.Org>  
E-mail [PSPE@PittsburghPE.Org](mailto:PSPE@PittsburghPE.Org)

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June 2010

## State President Discusses New Continuing Education Law

State President Walter J. Poplawski, P.E., FNSPE, came to the Pittsburgh Chapter May meeting to present a “State of PSPE” informational session and discuss the recently passed Continuing Education Legislation, HB 975 requiring continuing education for all licensed professional engineers in Pennsylvania.

Answers to questions surrounding exactly how mandatory continuing education will work for Pennsylvania licensed professional engineers, geologist and land surveyors got a whole lot clearer this week as new legislation (House Bill 975) was enacted to clarify most of the particulars.

The Senate passed House Bill 975 unanimously on May 4th. The bill was not amended in the Senate, so it went directly to Governor Rendell for his signature. Governor Rendell signed the bill into law on May 12, 2010. The law will take effect in 60 days. PSPE spearheaded the effort to pass a bill which gives professional engineers more flexibility in meeting the CE requirements than was available under the previous law. Following is a recap of the most important details of the law:

- Licensees shall comply with the CE requirements during the 2009-2011 biennial renewal cycle.
- That means licensees will be asked to meet the requirements during the current cycle and may have their license renewal denied in September of 2011 if they have not met the requirements.
- Each licensee needs to obtain 24 PDH units during the current and future biennial (every 2 years) licensing periods.
- A PDH (Professional Development Hour) is defined as 50 minutes of instruction or presentation relevant to professional practice.
- The CE requirements can be met by attending educational courses, participating in distance educational courses, teaching, authoring published works or obtaining patents.
- There is no requirement that courses be preapproved by the State Registration Board, but the Board will have final authority to determine if a particular course is relevant or not.
- The rule of thumb is that courses must “maintain, improve or develop the professional’s skills or knowledge”.
- Courses in ethics and the law are acceptable subject matter for CE credit.
- Courses in practice building or office management are not acceptable subjects for CE credit.
- Up to 12 PDH units may be carried forward from one licensure cycle to the next.
- The Board may grant exemptions from meeting the CE requirements for reasons such as active military duty, physical disability, illness or other extenuating circumstances.
- Newly licensed individuals are exempt from the CE requirement for the licensure period immediately following initial licensure and registration.

While the Pennsylvania State Registration Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists has ultimate authority over what is considered acceptable education or activities, the new law places most of the responsibility upon the licensee. Within the parameters established in the statute, you will determine what courses or activities relate to your professional practice.

To access excerpts from the law pertaining to continuing education, click here: [http://www.pspe.org/pdfs/Edited\\_CE\\_HB-975.pdf](http://www.pspe.org/pdfs/Edited_CE_HB-975.pdf)

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## State President Recognizes Past Pittsburgh Chapter Presidents



State President of Walter J. Poplawski, P.E., FNSPE, came to the May meeting of the Pittsburgh Chapter for several reasons. One of the most important was to recognize our Chapter's past presidents who continue to serve our chapter with their guidance and support in attendance at meetings and various other community activities.

Present at the meeting were past Presidents: Joe Boward, Virginia Dailey, Jon Drosendahl, Fred Graham, Earl McCabe, Ed Permar, Tom Weber and Ed Witt.



Part of the evenings activities include a presentation to Dave Samek, our present Chapter President with his "Past Presidents' Plaque". Presented by Immediate Past President Tom Weber, Tom stated that Dave had to stay and finish out his term, even if he already had his plaque.



### 2009-2010 Chapter Officers

President – Dave Samek, P.E.	Executive Secretary – Jon Drosendahl, P.E.
President Elect – Joe Garlicki, P.E.	Treasurer - John Broscius, P.E.
Vice President – Brian Schull, P.E.	Financial Secretary - Reyman Branting, P.E.
State Director - David Briskey, P.E. 2008-2011	Immediate Past President – Tom Weber, P.E.

### 2009-2010 Chapter Directors

Kirk Thompson, P.E. 2007 – 2010	Virginia Dailey, P.E. 2009 - 2011
	Doug Beitko, P.E., 2009 - 2011



**Pittsburgh Chapter**  
*Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers*

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Dave Samek, P.E. President  
Joe Garlicki, P.E. President-elect  
Brian Schull, P.E. Vice President  
David Briskey, P.E. State Director  
John Broschious, P.E. Treasurer  
Jon Drosendahl, P.E. Executive Secretary  
Reyman Branting, P.E. Financial Secretary  
Tom Weber, P.E. Immediate Past-President  
Kirk Thompson, P.E. Director  
Doug Beitko, P.E. Director  
Virginia Dailey, P.E. Director

**BALLOT FOR 2009-2010**

**PRESIDENT-ELECT.....Brian Schull, P.E.**

**Write-In Candidate.....**\_\_\_\_\_

**VICE PRESIDENT.....Kirk Thompson, P.E.**

**Write-In Candidate.....**\_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTOR – TWO YEAR TERM.....Tom Weber, P.E.**

**Write-In Candidate.....**\_\_\_\_\_

**If you have a Write-In Candidate whom you wish to vote for (and that person has agreed to run for the office), please fax a copy of this ballot to the ESWP at 412-261-1606 by no later than 4:00 pm Wednesday, June 9, 2010. If no write-in votes are received, the Secretary will cast a ballot to elect the slate of officers shown above at our Chapter Meeting on June 10, 2010.**

## EDITORIAL ON THE GULF OIL SPILL

By Virginia Dailey, P.E.

I am sure we are all aware of the continuing disaster that is happening in the Gulf. 34 days ago, an oil platform, for reasons not yet clearly defined, exploded. It has caused not only tremendous loss of life, but probably one of the worst catastrophes in the history of the United States. And as of the writing of this newsletter, the disaster continues.

As an engineer, and as a registered professional engineer, I am appalled on several fronts. First, I am appalled that a company like British Petroleum would have, under its auspices, something as slip shod as the apparent lack of safety devices on the platform. I have to wonder if there was a registered professional engineer(s) working on and overseeing this project. Second, I am appalled that there is obviously not an "OH S#!%" plan for when or if such an event would ever happen. For the oil industry not to have in place, 100% of the time, a recovery/reaction plan for such a situation is not only unprofessional, it is unconscionable. No company is above the safety of every human being. That is part of what the Professional Engineers Creed requires.

I also find it extremely hard to believe that, after 34 days, there is not an engineer "out there" who hasn't come up with a good (if not many potential) solutions to this continuing devastating problem. We have a country that has some of the best minds in the world, and for BP to not avail itself of that wealth of knowledge and expertise, seems rather preposterous.

Below are some pictures from the following web sites: [www.bp.com](http://www.bp.com) and [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)



Send BP an email, with any and all suggestions for plugging this gushing fluid devastation. I know this can be done. I have faith in the creativity of the professional engineering mind, especially when a challenge like this one is in front of us.



# Apprenticeship Report

AIU Visit to Michael Baker Corporation

By: Andrew Lawniczak

Michael Baker Corporation, commonly referred to as just Baker, is a company that provides professional engineering and consulting expertise for public and private sector clients worldwide. This prestigious company was kind enough to open its doors to the AIU Engineering Apprenticeship Program and give us students a tour of their facility and their current project in the West End of Pittsburgh.

Baker employee and Civil engineer from Penn State, Ed Telega was our host for the visit. Ed expounded upon Baker Corporation and its history. Baker Corporation was founded in 1940, originally in a hotel in Rochester Pennsylvania. Baker focuses its markets in the areas of Aviation, Defense, Environmental, Facilities, Geospatial Information Technologies, Homeland Security, Municipal and Civil, Pipelines and Utilities, Transportation, and Water. This company first got its name by doing work for the military. However, they have broadened their cliental to public and private sectors. Baker now has more than 4,000 employees worldwide and is one of the top fifty design firms in the United States. Some of their foremost projects are the New River George Bridge in West Virginia, the Alaskan Pipeline, the Pittsburgh International Airport, Pittsburgh's North Shore Infrastructure, and the Missing Ramps Project and the West End Circle Project.

Dan Ference, Baker employee and civil engineering graduate from Penn State who went on to get a M.A. in Engineering Management, gave a presentation about Traffic Engineering. He talked about maintenance and protection of traffic, signing and pavement marking plans, redesignation of State Road 376, and traffic signal Design. Dan also explained the advantages of roundabouts and hinted that we might start seeing more of them in western Pennsylvania.

Heather Dodson is a graduate from the University of Pittsburgh and works in the Civil Site Development Department of Baker. She explained the company's projects involving green infrastructure. A major type of project in this department is low impact development (LID) projects. One example of a LID project is one that's purpose is to reduce runoff when a new facility with and lot of pavement is installed. These projects may include vegetation box filters, reforestation, pocket wetlands, dry wells, green roofs, bioretention cells, and many more.

Laura Volle is an employee in the Baker Structures department. She talked about the Hickory Street Bridge Design.

Our Visit ended with a presentation by Cyd Sedlar and a very interesting visit to Baker's West End Circle Project.

Thank you to Michael Baker Corporation and all of the engineers who presented during our visit.

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## 2009-2010 CALENDAR

### MEMBERSHIP EVENTS & MEETINGS

Date	Time	Description	Location
June 10, 2010	6:00pm	Installation of Chapter Officers, & Recognition of Apprenticeship Participants	ESWP

All BOD meeting are to held @ 5:30PM @ the ESWP Building pending further notice.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON: June 10, 2010

All BOD meeting are to held @ 5:30PM @ the ESWP Building pending further notice.