

The Dodecahedron



A note from our President

Dear AAIE Members,

Spring has arrived, bringing with it the promise of warmer days, blossoming flora, and a surge of activity within our academy and department. We are excited to share several key updates with you.

Preparations are in full swing for the 2025 AAIE Banquet and Annual Meeting this month, where we will welcome a distinguished group of new members. The Historian Committee, under the dedicated leadership of Mandy Robinson, continues its invaluable work in compiling the rich history of our academy as we approach our 40th anniversary.

We recently celebrated the remarkable career of John English with a heartfelt retirement reception. Dean Needy and department head, Dr. Chase Rainwater honored John with a memorable “Top 10 John English” moments presentation, reflecting his profound impact on our department, college, and community.

A significant development this year is the renaming of our undergraduate degree. The new name is “Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering and Operations Analytics” (BSIEOA). This change underscores the evolving landscape of industrial engineering, where analytics plays an increasingly crucial role. The updated program is designed to equip our students with the necessary skills to tackle complex problems, optimize processes, and drive real-world impact through data and technology.

The annual Department Liaison Committee meeting, held in March, provided a valuable forum for discussion and feedback. This committee, comprised of AAIE officers, industry leaders, and peer university professors, plays a key role in shaping the department’s direction.



Ross Tompkins
AAIE President

One focus of the meeting was the importance of student space. Student spaces, both academic and social, are crucial at universities as they foster a sense of community, support student wellbeing, and contribute to a positive learning environment, ultimately impacting department enrollment, student success and retention. The department is delighted to announce the creation of a new study area, fostering collaborative group studies and individual support with teaching assistants. Plans for additional student spaces are also underway.

We eagerly anticipate further updates from the department as well as sharing opportunities to engage in the academy through our committees. I look forward to seeing you all at the banquet later this month.

Spring 2025

AAIE
Officers

Ross Tompkins
President

Jenni Kimpel
President-Elect

Amanda Furr
Secretary

Carol Wolf
Treasurer

Mandy Robinson
Past President

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Scholarship News

Your AAIE is Making a Difference in the Lives of IE Students

We are approaching the halfway point of The Red Coat 40th Anniversary Challenge. There is both significant success and remaining opportunity to share. What started last Spring as a \$130,000 Red Coat Matching Pool is now a \$138,000 Fund designed to span the 2024-25 & 2025-26 fiscal years, culminating with the Academy's 40th Anniversary in April 2026.

From July 1, 2024 through March 2025, AAIE Scholarship donations total \$120,000. Red Coats, the Academy's past Presidents, have donated \$80,000 with an additional \$40,000 coming thru donations from the remaining membership. Several Red Coats decided to make donations up front to act as seed money to get the Campaign rolling and establish a target for the Membership to match. "Embrace the Challenge" and take advantage of the opportunity to effectively double the impact of all donations. The Academy has approximately 195 active members, and 30 of those are Red Coats.

Individual Scholarship donations (\$120,000 YTD) range from \$50 to \$25,000, with a median of \$1,000. In most recent years I would have been very happy to celebrate the \$120,000 and start thinking about next year. However, when I see 30 Red Coats throwing out the challenge with \$80,000 in donations, I can't help but wonder where we can go if the remaining 150+ members respond with their support. While large donations are always helpful, every donation is important. Over time they add up, and all have an impact.

I am extremely happy to inform you that in 2025 we will recognize 6 new John Imhoff Fellows and 5 new Named Scholarship donors. In addition 17

(precedent setting number) Academy members with existing Permanent Named Scholarship will see the size of their scholarships increase due to their continuing support of the Scholarship Program. Almost without exception all 24 of these members have established, on their own, a plan to make regular annual Scholarship donations. Many members reached these levels by scheduling monthly or quarterly donations.

The four Scholarship Endowments were valued at \$4,010,000 on July 1 (see chart below), the start of the fiscal year, and reached \$4,130,000 in the 4th quarter. Market volatility has brought back values close to \$4,000,000 at last look, but Endowments are supporting \$150,000+ in new Scholarships annually. This year AAIE is planning on \$180,000 in new awards. While this is a bit of an anomaly, since funds that were not spent in recent years due to travel constraints, will be used for new John Imhoff Global Studies students. I think this shows the overall strength of the AAIE's Scholarship Program very well.

As a way of saying Thank You, John White has given more than 50 Scholarship donors signed copies of his latest book, "Why it Matters", based in part on "Leadership Practices and Principles", the highly esteemed course he designed and taught at the UofA. John would like to see the number of books he sends double by year end!



Bob Etien
Scholarship Chair

"We will recognize 6 new John Imhoff Fellows and 5 new Named Scholarship donors."



As a reminder, it is quick and easy to donate on line. Go to <https://aaie.uark.edu/> and hover over the Giving tab, then choose the scholarship account you want to support. This should auto-fill the account information so that you only need to enter your dollar amount, personal and payment information. For most members a check might be convenient, but transfer of

appreciated stock might be more advantageous for others. If you are the age where you take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA, you might find a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a better tax value. Please check with your tax advisor if you have questions.

Your AAIE is truly Making a Difference!

<u>Year</u>	<u>AAIE Endowments</u>	<u>Donations</u>
2010-11	\$1,305,000	\$41,500
2016-17	\$2,060,000	\$153,000
2018-19	\$2,600,000	\$187,000
2019-20	\$2,760,000	\$141,800
2020-21	\$3,800,000	\$122,500
2021-22	\$3,570,000	\$86,200
2022-23	\$3,645,000	\$105,800
2023-24	\$4,014,000	\$107,700
March,2025	\$4,090,000	\$120,000 YTD

Supporting \$150,000+ in Scholarships

“Endowments are supporting \$150,000+ in new scholarships annually.”

ANNUAL DONATION REMINDER

Check payable to: University of Arkansas Foundation
Mail to: AAIE Dept of Industrial Engineering
 4207 Bell Engineering Center
 University of Arkansas
 Fayetteville, AR 72701

OR

Online at: <https://aaie.uark.edu/giving>

Don't forget to ask if your company offers matching donations!

From the Department...

Dear AAIE Members,

I hope this message finds you well. As we approach our annual AAIE banquet, meeting, and picnic on April 11th and 12th, I'm excited to reconnect with many of you and celebrate the successes of AAIE!



It has been a busy and productive time here in the Department of Industrial Engineering. Recently, we hosted our Liaison Committee meeting, a gathering of industry professionals, academic peers, and dedicated AAIE members. This meeting is always an important one, as it allows us to engage in meaningful discussions that contribute to our ongoing efforts to improve and evolve. The feedback and insights provided by the committee were incredibly valuable, and the resulting report will serve as a roadmap to help us continue our pursuit of excellence and work toward Chancellor Robinson's goal of "150 Forward." It is through collaborative efforts like these that we make significant strides toward shaping the future of industrial engineering at the University of Arkansas.

Additionally, we recently celebrated the remarkable career of our own John English at his retirement reception. It was a heartwarming event filled with memories and gratitude as we gathered with



both current and former colleagues, as well as John's friends and family. Sharing stories and recognizing John's outstanding contributions to the department and the university was truly special. An added bonus was seeing many of you there!



Dr. Chase Rainwater
Department Head

On another note, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Karen Jewell, who was the I.E. featured speaker in the College of Engineering's "HERoes of Tomorrow" seminar series. Karen's presentation was nothing short of inspiring, and she had a profound impact on our students. Her passion, wisdom, and



commitment to advancing women in industrial engineering resonated deeply, and I have no doubt that her words will continue to motivate and empower the next generation of engineers. We are thankful for her time and dedication to inspiring our students.

It is hard to believe the spring semester is already winding down. Along with the AAIE events, we are busy planning our annual Student Awards Banquet, Capstone Symposium, and Graduation Reception. The [Capstone Symposium](#) will be held on April 30th at the Fayetteville

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"The resulting report will serve as a roadmap to help us continue our pursuit of excellence and work toward Chancellor Robinson's goal of '150 Forward.'"

Town Center and is open to the public. We would love to see our alumni there! Our seniors have been working diligently all year and I know you will be impressed with their work.

I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your ongoing support and efforts to advance our department. Your continued involvement and dedication to the success of the Department of Industrial Engineering plays a crucial role in helping us achieve our goals. Together, we are building a stronger, more dynamic department that is well-equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AAIE events this month. It will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our shared accomplishments and discuss the exciting future that lies ahead.

Again, I hope to see you soon, whether at the AAIE banquet and meeting, Capstone Symposium, or in the halls of Bell Engineering as you are popping by to say hello! In the meantime, take care!

Chase Rainwater

*AAIE Banquet Friday, April 11, 2025
Annual Meeting, April 12, 2024
Fayetteville AR*

“Together we are building a stronger, more dynamic department that is well-equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.”

From the Historian

The Historian Committee is excited to share the results of the Student Competition for a 40 year logo. With multiple submission and input from the board, Tamara Ellenbecker worked to merge two of the designs together for our 40th Anniversary AAIE logo incorporating Alumni Achieving & Inspiring Excellence! As we move towards our 40th Anniversary next April, we are excited to tell the stories of our members who make this organization and its history so incredible and impactful!



*Mandy Robinson
Historian Chair*



Study Abroad!

From Chicago to Darmstadt: Industrial Engineering Across the Globe

Meet Jacob Holmes; Jacob is in the midst of his year with a coop and study abroad experience and is a recipient of the John L. Imhoff Global Studies scholarship. Jacob shares his valuable cultural and professional experiences while studying in the “City of Science:” Darmstadt, Germany.

Dear AAIE:

I am happy to share a bit about my current experiences in the International Engineering 5-Year Program, where I am in the study abroad portion of my fourth year! This year, I have completed an 8-month coop with United Airlines and begun a 6-month study abroad program in Darmstadt, Germany (about 20 minutes south of Frankfurt by train).

In the coop portion of this year, I interned in the Transformations and Process Optimization department at the United corporate headquarters in Chicago, IL, conducting operations analytics, process change management, and serving as an internal consultant for the organization. I was able to specifically work on two major projects: preparing the baggage recovery process at United to comply with an upcoming Department of Transportation mandate and increasing the throughput of the San Francisco Maintenance Base engine rebuild program. These experiences were invaluable in gaining professional industrial engineering experience, understanding what my future career could look like, and making new relationships.

Since the beginning of March, I have been enrolled at the Technical University of Darmstadt, taking German courses, German

engineering courses, and a couple of French courses (for my French major). I have wrapped up my first intensive German course, where for the past month I spent about 3.5 hours every day in class and 2-4 hours completing homework and studying further to improve my German speaking skills.

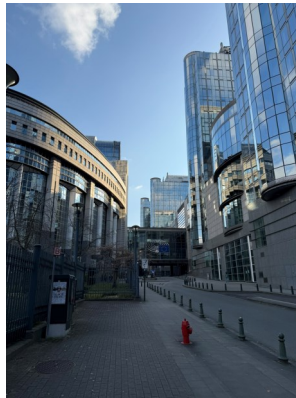
Additionally, I have been fortunate to travel over the weekends to a couple of

destinations so far: Cologne for their famous Karneval celebration, Brussels for a concert where I was brought on stage by the artist, Frankfurt to have some Kansas City barbecue with fellow Arkansans, and the Frankenstein Castle ruins. I am happy to complete this initial portion of my study experience, because I will now have a couple of weeks before the “Summer Semester” begins in late April to use to my advantage, whether that is traveling, spending time with newfound colleagues and friends, or practicing my

German with locals and other language learners. I cannot wait to explore more of Germany and other European countries!

Following this period, I will take a full courseload that will expand my

knowledge in value-added network management, climate and environmental standards management in corporations, German of course, and French literature. I am excited to see how the courses at a German



“These experiences were invaluable in gaining professional industrial engineering experience, understanding what my future career could look like, and making new relationships.”

university function compared to those at the University of Arkansas!

I also spend time outside of class connecting with individuals across the community. I am becoming involved in



the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), who organizes events that connect international and local students through social, cultural, and educational events. They have hosted tours to learn about the airside of the Frankfurt Airport, hikes on a nearby mountain to the infamous Frankenstein Castle, and weekly get-togethers around Darmstadt to get to know new people and share intercultural experiences. I look forward to organizing events within the organization and learning more about this intercultural exchange.

Overall, I am glad to have begun my time in Germany and look forward to broadening my experience in the German language and international engineering

standards. This opportunity will allow me to further pursue my goal of working internationally with industrial engineering and connecting with professionals globally.



I am thankful to be reflecting about the impact of this experience and how it will benefit my future, rather than worrying about making it happen, so I want to thank the Arkansas Academy of Industrial Engineering for my Imhoff Global Studies scholarship. It has been key to making my participation in the program a reality. This experience will last me a lifetime and benefit me daily! For that, I greatly appreciate your intentional generosity and the support of the wonderful UARK IE faculty and advising teams to help me accomplish my goals in the department.

Beste Grüße and merci mille fois,

Jacob Holmes

“I greatly appreciate your intentional generosity and the support of the wonderful UARK IE faculty and advising teams to help me accomplish my goals in the department.”

Board of Directors/Committee Chairs

Position	Name
President	Ross Tompkins
President Elect	Jenni Kimpel
Treasurer	Carol Wolf
Past President	Mandy Robinson
Secretary	Amanda Furr
Membership	Cristin Groce
Mentor Circles	Jeff Hardcastle
Historian	Mandy Robinson
Global Studies	Bryan Hill
Scholarship	Bob Etien
Publications	Jessica Smith, Alex Andelman

Meet the 2025 AAIE Inductees!

Jake Wofford, 2010

JB Hunt, Vice President Operations



Additional Education:

- University of Denver, M.S. Transportation 2020

Personal:

- Living in Redondo Beach, CA
- Married to Sarah with 2 children (Hudson 5, Harlow 3)
- Interests include surfing, volleyball, snowboarding, fitness, chasing kids and calling the Hogs

Other:

- Currently leading JB Hunt's rail intermodal drayage operations on the West Coast
- Awarded UofA College of Engineering Early Career Award; Member of Cal State Long Beach Corporate Mentor Program

Becca (Carlson) Luetjen, 2010

JB Hunt, Sr Director Engineering



Additional Education:

- Walton College of Business, MBA 2012

Personal:

- Living in Fayetteville, AR
- Married to Doug with 2 children (Maddox 6, Stetson 3)
- Interests include cooking, Razorback sports, running, enjoying the outdoors and traveling

Other:

- 13 years JB Hunt: Currently the relationship lead between tech & internal functions (sales, marketing, customer experience), Logistics Engineer and areas of focus in network design, automation, software development, engineering management
- Walton College of Business Dean's Alumni Advisory Board: 2021 – Present
- JB Hunt Engineering Tech Dev Program Steering Committee: 2021 – Present
- At UofA: Studied in Italy, Greece and South Africa. Outstanding IE PM Sr Design Class 2010, Alpha Phi Mu President 2009, ASG & Student Alumni Board

William “David” O’Mara, 2004

GoDaddy, Director of Product Marketing

Additional Education:

- Walton College of Business, MBA 2005
- University of Arkansas, Mathematics Minor 2004

Personal:

- Living in Phoenix, AZ
- Interests include golf, fitness and wellness hacking, challenging hikes, international travel, skiing, Razorback sports, and getting back to AR to visit family and friends

Other:

- Industries of Experience: Tech, Health and Wellness, Multi-Level Marketing, and CPG in both Large Corporations and Startups
- MBA Alumni Board Member Walton College of Business: 2023-Present

Yisha Xiang, 2009

Associate Professor, University of Houston

Personal:

- Living in Houston, TX
- Married to Albert with 2 children (Alice 12, Irene 8)
- Interests include reading, tennis, hiking, movies, and traveling with family

Other:

- Mentored several PhD students who have gone on to academic and industry positions in top organizations
- Led multiple projects funded by federal agencies and industry companies, contributing to the advancement of decision intelligence with applications in manufacturing and healthcare
- Served as the President of the IISE Quality Control & Reliability Engineering division and Chair of the INFORMS Quality, Statistics, & Reliability Section, fostering collaboration among global researchers



Demond Dortch, 2002

AVP & Chief Mechanical Officer, BNSF Rail

Additional Education:

- Texas Christian University, MBA
- Six Sigma Black Belt

Personal:

- Living in Fort Worth Texas
- Married to Tawa with 2 children (Kadrian & Cole)
- Interests include playing golf, chess, racquetball, tennis, pickleball, coaching and attending youth sporting events

Other:

- 23 years with BNSF Railway, currently responsible for system-wide advances in reliability, efficiency and productivity across the BNSF Mechanical Division
- BNSF Employee of the Year
- BNSF Best of the Best Safety Leader
- Board Member Freedom Church
- Youth Basketball Coach

**Connect on LinkedIn**

AAIE has a group on Linked In—use this QR code to join the discussion online!



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