

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ontario Professional Engineers Foundation for Education Introduces 2025/26 Board of Directors

Toronto – September 11, 2025 – The Ontario Professional Engineers Foundation for Education (the Foundation) is pleased to introduce its 2025/26 Board of Directors, a dynamic group of leaders whose collective expertise, passion, and dedication will guide the Foundation's mission to be a leader in providing scholarships to the next generation of engineers at all Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) accredited schools in Ontario.

"We are thrilled with the calibre of individuals on our Board," said Sandra Ausma, President of the Foundation. "Their diverse backgrounds and proven track records will be instrumental in guiding our organization towards achieving our strategic goals and ensuring we continue to provide scholarships to deserving engineering students long into the future."

2025/26 Board of Directors

Sandra Ausma, Ph.D., P.Eng. - President. Sandra joined the board in 2019 and brings a wealth of experience and an enduring passion for engineering education. Sandra is also a director of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) and has served two terms as an elected councillor for Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO). With more than 30 years of experience across academic research, consulting, policy development, and government, Sandra continues to inspire through her volunteerism.

Melissa Pryszlak, MBA, P.Eng., PMP. - Vice President. Melissa is an industrial engineer and supply chain leader with two decades of experience. As Vice President of DC Operations at Pet Valu, she drives modernization and automation in the grocery retail sector. Her background in manufacturing and passion for transformative change bolster the Foundation's operational excellence. Melissa joined the board in 2024 and is also the Foundation's Fundraising Chair.

Nicholas Burgwin, M.A.Sc., P.Eng. - Treasurer. Nick combines technical innovation with a steadfast commitment to engineering education. Prior to joining ISOPLUS Group in 2024, he managed Innovation and Commercialization at Toronto Metropolitan University, and co-founded Fibos Inc., a start-up focused on fiber-optic sensors and cybersecurity for small businesses. As well, Nick is an OSPE director. Nick has been a Foundation board member and Treasurer since 2022.

Ashley Gismondi, MPA. - Secretary. Ashley applies her expertise in regulatory compliance and public administration to her role at PEO and as Foundation Secretary. With prior experience at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, Ashley brings a deep understanding of the policies governing self-regulating professions. Appointed to the Board in 2020 and elected Secretary in 2021, Ashley has played a pivotal role in shaping the Foundation's communication strategy through her role as Chair of Communications and Marketing.

Réjeanne Aimey, MBA, P.Eng. – Past President. Réjeanne is a mechanical engineer whose career spans the automotive, nuclear, and tax consulting industries. A champion of inclusion and innovation, Réjeanne is the Past President of both the Foundation and the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, and a founding director of Black Engineers of Canada. Her advocacy for STE(A)M, equity, and diversity is matched by her commitment to harnessing the power of diverse engineering talent for societal prosperity. Réjeanne joined the Foundation board in 2021.

Bill De Angelis, MBA, P.Eng. - Director. Drawing on extensive public and private sector experience, Bill supports young engineers as a mentor at Metrolinx and through leadership roles in professional associations. He has served as President of the Water Environment Association of Ontario and Chair of ACEC-Ontario. Bill's insights into the challenges faced by new graduates inform his guidance and board contributions since joining in 2023.

Paul Kitson, MBA, P.Eng. – Director. Paul is recognized for strategic leadership in real estate development. With nearly two decades of experience and expertise in governance, succession planning, and market analysis, he brings an invaluable perspective to the Board. His commitment to community engagement reflects the Foundation's values of innovation and social responsibility. Paul joined the board in 2025 and has stepped into the role of Governance Chair.

John Leslie, MBA, P.Eng. – Director. John is the owner of JL Solar & Renewables. His firm has contributed to nearly 400 solar projects, and John's advisory roles have extended across power, mining, and risk management sectors. Board service at BTY Group and project leadership at Altus Group and SNC-Lavalin highlight his global perspective and commitment to sustainable engineering. John joined the board in 2025.

Márvio Vinhaes, M.Sc., P.Eng., C.Dir. – Director. With 35 years in electrical utilities, Márvio leads Hydro Engineering at ENWIN Utilities Ltd. His mastery in technical innovation and governance is complemented by advanced studies from the University of Manchester and York University. Márvio's board service extends into the not-for-profit sector, where he pursues continuous learning and sectoral advancement through collaborative projects. Marvio has been a volunteer with the Foundation for several years and joined the board in 2025.

Oliver Xiao, P.Eng. – Director. Oliver is a bilingual professional engineer with diverse expertise in R&D, infrastructure, not-for-profit management, and industry leadership. Active in both PEO and OSPE, as well as the American Concrete Institute (Ontario Chapter), Oliver's work in technical sales and committee leadership underscores his commitment to the development and integration of Ontario's engineering community. Oliver joined the board in 2023.

The Board of Directors plays a crucial role in overseeing the Foundation's operations, providing strategic direction, and ensuring sound financial management. The addition of new board members will further strengthen the organization's capacity to fulfill its mission.

About the Ontario Professional Engineers Foundation for Education

The Foundation is an independent registered charity that has provided more than \$4.35 million in scholarships and assisted more than 4,200 engineering students in their academic journeys since its inception in 1959. Currently, the Foundation provides \$159,000 to 106 students at Ontario's 16 accredited engineering schools annually.

Strategic Priorities for 2025/26: Building a Brighter Future

The Foundation's strategic plan reflects its steadfast commitment to Ontario's future engineers, guided by three pillars: financial support, organizational excellence, and community engagement. For 2025/26 this translates into diversifying our fundraising and donation channels, increasing the scholarships that we distribute, increasing brand awareness across the engineering community and continuing our good governance journey.

"As Ontario's engineering community faces evolving challenges" said Sandra Ausma, President of the Foundation, "from climate change and infrastructure renewal to technological innovation and public health—the Foundation stands resolute in its support for tomorrow's leaders. Every scholarship awarded, every initiative launched, and every partnership forged brings us closer to a future where well-educated, ethical, and forward-thinking engineers drive progress for all."

Mission:

The Foundation is a registered charity dedicated to providing financial assistance to engineering students in Ontario.

Vision:

To become the charity of choice for the engineering community by delivering impactful scholarships that inspire students to shape the future of engineering.

Together, we are building a stronger, brighter, and more resilient future for Ontario—one engineer at a time.

Contact Information

For more information about the Ontario Professional Engineers Foundation for Education, the 2025/26 Board of Directors, or ways to get involved, please visit our website (www.engineersfoundation.ca) where you can find our most recent annual report and a link to a 2024 Engineering Dimensions article about our 65 years of history. As well, you can reach out to us directly by email (info@engineersfoundation.ca).

Sandra Ausma, President
President@engineersfoundation.ca
www.engineersfoundation.ca

###