

Issue 2, May 2024



EAN Connections

Greetings EAN Community:

Congratulations on making it through the spring semester! More importantly, congratulations and thank you for all your efforts in getting us the Network to a new record of reaching 44,974 K-12 students with 42 Engineering Ambassador Programs. Wow!

As more news, I have accepted the position as Dean of Engineering at the University of Michigan starting August 1st. While this has been a difficult decision because of leaving Penn State, the University of Michigan's College of Engineering has provided me with an exciting opportunity. With these changes, we would like to announce that Dr. Lori Miraldi will take over being the new Director of the Engineering Ambassadors Network while Mindy Heggen will remain as the Associate Director. Please join me in welcoming Lori as the new Director!

Finally, I want to wish all of you a wonderful summer. I look forward to hearing more great news about the Network in the years to come.

Sincerely,
Karen A. Thole
Distinguished Professor
Department of Mechanical Engineering
The Pennsylvania State University

About Engineering Ambassadors Network:

The Engineering Ambassadors Network (EAN) is a professional development organization for university students with a K-12 STEM outreach mission. Our dual

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Puerto Rico, we are a united force dedicated to making a lasting impact. Since our beginnings in 2010, we have introduced engineering and STEM concepts to over 400,000 K-12 students.

In this Newsletter:

1. [Fall 2024 Regional Workshops](#): Announce upcoming workshop dates.
2. [Spotlight on an EA Program](#): Get to know one of our exceptional Engineering Ambassador programs and their inspiring initiatives to make a real difference.
3. [Quotes from our Graduating Ambassadors](#): Hear directly from our Engineering Ambassadors as they share their thoughts, experiences, and insights.
4. [Network Impact and Demographics](#): Explore our impact and the diverse demographics that make up our vibrant Engineering Ambassadors Network.

Connect and Share:

We encourage you to share this newsletter with your students, administration, management, and colleagues. Let's amplify our reach and continue making a positive impact together!

Visit our [website](#) to learn more about us and how you can get involved. Connect with us on social media; we love engaging with our community and hearing your thoughts.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We're excited to have you with us!

[EAN Fall Communication Training Workshops](#)

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This coming fall, we will have three regional workshops:

Northeast at RPI - Sept. 13-15

Southeast at FAMU/FSU - Oct. 11-13

Midwest at UMN - Oct. 18-20

More details will be posted on our website as they become available on our [website](#).

[Engineering Ambassador Program Spotlight](#)



Institution: Penn State University

What is unique about your program?

The Penn State Engineering Ambassadors Program is the inaugural EA program, co-founded in 2009 by our outgoing EAN Director, Karen Thole, and Michael Alley. Over the past 15 years, we have stayed focused on our two-fold mission:

- Developing our Engineering Ambassadors into the leaders and confident communicators.
- Inspiring the next generation of engineers through our K-12 outreach.

We are a College of Engineering program rather than a student organization. This has led us to become a highly valued program by our College's leadership. This has also afforded us the opportunity to have a required communication and professional development class associated with the program that all new Engineering Ambassadors enroll in upon acceptance to the program.

What do outreach events look like for us?

A typical outreach event includes taking four to six Engineering Ambassadors on an all-day visit to a K-12 school. During the day we engage the students in a short presentation on an engineering topic to set up a longer hand-on activity related to the topic. Some of our greatest hits include Engineering the Olympics, Movie Magic, and, brand new to our repertoire, Coding Robotics! We typically interact with middle school students, but sometimes engage with younger or older K-12 students. Throughout our outreach efforts, we are intentional about prioritizing events with schools that are under-resourced and students who are under-represented in engineering.

What is new for our program?

We were fortunate to receive an alumni gift and endowment from David and JoEllen Sallack to support outreach to rural communities that are further from our central Pennsylvania campus. Penn State has a unique system of 20 commonwealth campuses located across Pennsylvania. The Sallack's generous gift has allowed us to expand our outreach model to engage with students from rural areas near some of our other Penn State campuses. This year we partnered with two of these campuses to create Engineering Discovery Days aimed at hosting students from surrounding schools for an exciting day of engineering and career exploration. We are looking forward to adding to these campus events in the next academic year.

What are we looking forward to for Fall 2024?

cohort along with some of our returning members to RPI for the Northeast EAN Training Workshop in September. We are also looking forward to our annual EA Retreat in October. This overnight retreat is an important time to bond as a group and develop collaboration skills and confidence through team challenge and high ropes courses.



[What are LEAD Mentors saying?](#)

LEAD Mentor positions were created for the fall 2023 workshops. Their roles are to: Listen, Encourage, Advocate, and Develop. They played an integral role in making the workshops a success and assisted in training 161 new EA's at the four regional workshops. Applications for fall 2024 LEAD Mentors will open in July.

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"I learned how to be a flexible leader and provide feedback to a variety of people at different experience levels. As a lead mentor, you will not only get to help junior EAs improve their skills, but you will work and learn from the other mentors. You can show off your presentation skills and be a role model for the junior EAs!"

Veronica, UConn

"Being a lead mentor made me more confident in my presentation making skills. Being able to critique presentations gave me a new way of viewing presentations. This helped me in creating and editing presentations in our catalog. I would recommend anyone to become a mentor because it's a great opportunity to meet with engineering ambassadors from across the network. I met amazing peers from all over the country at these conferences!"

Julia, PSU



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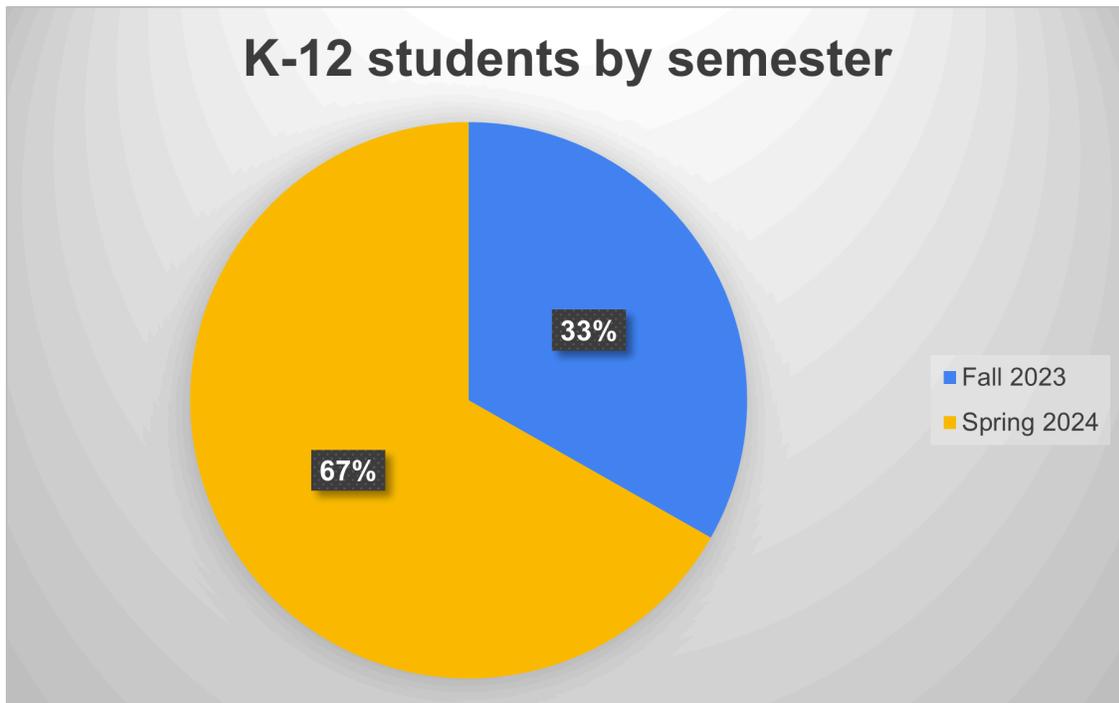


My favorite part of being a lead mentor was helping junior EAs develop their presentations and learn from all of them about the cool topics they chose. I was able to give feedback and advice to the groups but I also learned new ideas and styles to present information from them. Being a lead mentor is a great opportunity to develop your assertion evidence skills and help junior EAs become better communicators.”

Liya, UConn

[Spring 24 Network Impact](#)

Spring 2024 was a busy semester for all the engineering ambassadors! As Karen mentioned, we reached 44,974 K-12 students during the academic year with 30,033 in spring alone! The final academic year impact reports will be available soon. Check the [website](#) for more details as data is added.





The Best Practices and Membership committee has finalized the handbook for all current and new schools to use! The goal of the handbook is to provide advisors 24/7 access to resources to help their programs thrive. Multiple universities collaborated to identify the key areas to focus on over the last few years. The committee met monthly to work on each chapter line by line. The handbook is compiled of seven chapters that cover topic areas from recruitment to budgeting, events and training, operations to marketing, and assessments. Once the handbook was completed a repository was developed to provide additional resources and examples from many universities for schools to refer to. Programs are now able to access items like sponsorship packets, offer letters, recruitment practices, and budget breakdowns with ease. Many new programs have reported that the handbook has helped them instrumentally to get launched and run successfully.

The committee pivoted their focus this Spring to Network mentorship. There are currently 6 mentoring schools and 10 mentee schools working together to provide new programs additional support. The pairs meet monthly to discuss areas they would like to work on and go over chapters of the handbook in greater detail. If a program has questions at any time they can reach out to their mentor for help. The committee looks forward to

Network from coast to coast.

[A Note from Our Sponsors](#)



RTX, a founding sponsor of the Engineering Ambassadors Program, remains committed to the expansion of the Engineering Ambassadors Network (EAN) as part of its \$500M corporate social responsibility initiative [ConnectUp](#).

With more than 185,000 global employees, RTX pushes the limits of technology and science through industry-leading businesses – Collins Aerospace, Pratt & Whitney, and Raytheon. Building an equitable tech and engineering workforce is a key pillar of change to which RTX is committed. Engineering Ambassadors help us build toward this future talent pipeline by pairing professional development opportunities for college-age engineering students with STEM outreach programs that inspire students K-12, especially students from historically underrepresented groups, to consider a future career in engineering.

The development of Ambassadors as future engineering leaders, the alignment to RTX's corporate values, and our societal impact partnership have made Engineering Ambassadors strong candidates for internships and full-time positions at RTX. Interested candidates are encouraged to consider RTX [career opportunities](#).

Pro tip: when applying, please select "Nonprofit partner - Other" on the first question of the application so we can connect your candidate profile with EAN!

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