

PURDUE STUDENT ENGINEERING FOUNDATION ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

March 2026 ISSUE



LETTER TO OUR ALUMS

Written by Mikalah Wiles

We are over halfway through the semester, and things are busier than ever! 2026 has been a whirlwind so far, with a new class of PSEFers, Exec, and Directors. We have hit the ground running with another successful semester of Purdue for Me, and Introducing Purdue Days, where we have had the privilege to connect with thousands of future Boilermakers and their families!

In this edition, we are excited to share what has made this year special so far. We will first introduce our new members, Exec, and Directors, and take a closer look at the traditional (and new!) events during Spring Retreat. We close out this newsletter by highlighting a few PSEFers who are doing incredible work this semester on and off campus!

As always, we are incredibly grateful for the support of our alumni, and your legacy continues to shape everything we do today! We look forward to keeping you connected with PSEF's journey and hope to see many of you back in West Lafayette in the future!

Boiler Up!

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EXEC & DIRECTORS 2026

2026 EXEC

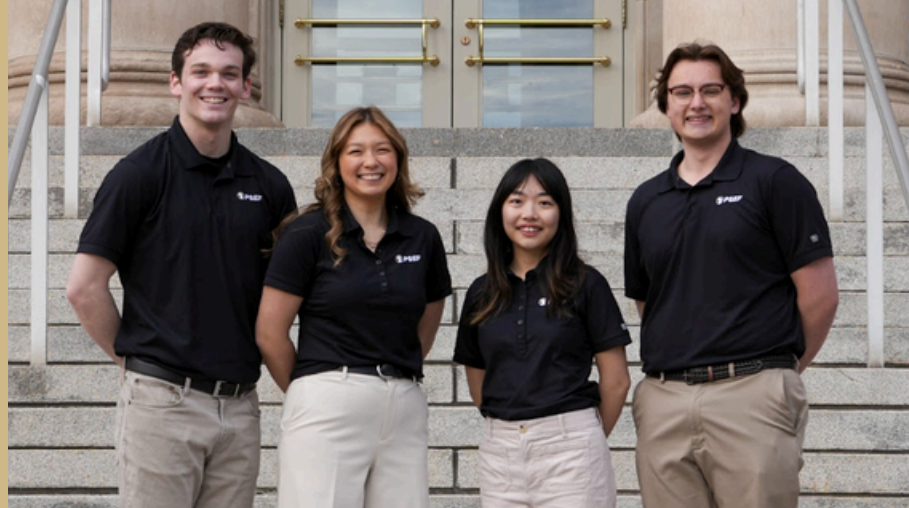
Pictured from left to right:

Brian Schmidt

Alexis Lee

Rika Chang

Sam Altenburger



President: Alexis Lee

Alexis is a Junior in Aerospace and Aeronautical Engineering from Seattle, WA. She is excited and grateful to give back to an organization that has completely changed her college experience. She is also excited to continue interacting with prospective students and sharing her story! Lexi's fun fact is that she has 37 flight hours!

VP Communication: Rika Chang

Rika is a Junior in Electrical Engineering from Austin, TX. She is ready to organize events that can give the organization meaningful experiences and lasting memories. Her childhood dream was to be an OBGYN by day, and a popstar by night!

VP Personnel: Sam Altenburger

Sam is a Sophomore in Mechanical Engineering from Carmel, IN. He is looking forward to making sure our new members' experiences are great and encouraging them to get involved in the organization the same way he wanted to when he was a freshman! Sam's fun fact is that he had to have an emergency beauty surgery (a rhinoplasty) after breaking his nose!

VP Finance: Brian Schmidt

Brian is a Junior in Mechanical Engineering from Philadelphia, PA. He is excited to give back to PSEF and further progress the organization toward its long-term VPF goal of financial independence. Brian did a triathlon 2 summers ago and is training for another in August!



2026 Directors

Outreach: Ayrton Desai

APEX: Calvin Schur & Tim Malloy

Member Development: Nina Fischer

Public Relations: Luke Allen

Industrial Relations: Mikalah Wiles

Tech: Brandon Kang

NEW MEMBERS SPRING 2026

Tanvi Sajja

Year: Freshman

Major: Electrical

Hometown: Dallas, TX

Involvements: AXO, VIP - SoCET



Emily Kurichi

Year: Freshman

Major: Aerospace

Hometown: Woolwich Township, NJ

Involvements: Women in Engineering, Society of Women Engineers



Kate Foley

Year: Freshman

Major: Biomedical

Hometown: Arlington Heights, IL

Involvements: KDTN, Reinventing the Interface of Inclusivity, IM sports, Women in Engineering LC



Bruki Kassahun

Year: Freshman

Major: Mechanical

Hometown: Danville, IN

Involvements: ASME Aero, DreamOn3, PSD



Mimi Aspi

Year: Freshman

Major: Aerospace

Hometown: Brookline, MA

Involvements: Japan Student Assoc., Purdue Space Program, Women in Aerospace



Sanyam Shekhar

Year: Freshman

Major: Industrial

Hometown: Frisco, TX

Involvements: Boilermaker Consulting, UG Research, EPICS



Carman Stanton

Year: Sophomore

Major: Electrical

Hometown: Port Jefferson, NY

Involvements: Club Tennis, Jazz Band, IEEE_MTTs



Arya Bhangale

Year: Freshman

Major: Mechanical

Hometown: West Windsor, NJ

Involvements: Purdue Thandava, VIP Humanoid Robotics, Women in Engineering



Bobby Feeney

Year: Freshman

Major: Biomedical

Hometown: Glenview, IL

Involvements: IM sports, EPICS



Anna Price

Year: Freshman

Major: Mechanical

Hometown: Cincinnati, OH

Involvements: Women in Engineering, Society of Women Engineers, Greek Life



SPRING RETREAT RECAP

Our members are experts at thinking on their feet and answering tough questions during tours, but how can they handle the pressure of PSEF Family Feud? We found out in early February, during our Game Show themed Spring 2026 Retreat!



We headed back to the First Method United Church this semester, and spent the evening getting to know our 10 new members through a few fun activities. We kicked things off by playing sheet drop to learn names, followed by PSEF parents gifting their new members custom shirts decorated with their interests. Next, it was time to eat Chipotle for dinner together, after Sam (VPP), chopped our burritos in half with his machete. After dinner, each committee took the stage to perform a skit and officially welcome their new members to the team.



Next, Rika (VPC) introduced some exciting game show themed activities, including Family Feud and Minute to Win It games. These new activities were a big hit, giving our members a chance to bond, strategize, and answer PSEF-themed questions. After a long night of fun and games, we ended retreat by counting New-Mem socks before heading out for a late-night trip to IHOP to celebrate our incoming class of PSEFers.



CO-OP FEATURE



Michael Bertaux is a Senior in Mechanical Engineering from Noblesville, IN. He is currently working in Louisville, Kentucky as a Quality Engineer at GE Appliances, focusing on the refrigeration product line. His role involves working closely with external suppliers to ensure that all parts meet strict quality standards and stay within specification. Through this, he's getting a firsthand look at how engineering decisions directly impact manufacturing and product performance. Outside of work, Michael has been staying active by playing in a local soccer league with other interns and is looking forward to attending the Kentucky Derby, one of the most iconic events in the region!



Meanwhile, in Austin, Texas, Drew Novak is working at Firefly Aerospace as a Composite Structures Manufacturing Engineering Intern. His work centers around carbon fiber components used in rockets and spacecraft, including structures like rocket barrels, pressurized systems, struts, and solar panels. Drew has had the unique opportunity to contribute to the Alpha rocket program and even witness a launch in person, while also working on future developments like the Eclipse rocket and Blue Ghost lunar lander. One of the most exciting aspects of his role has been knowing that the parts he helps build may one day be used in space or on the moon. Outside of work, Drew has been taking advantage of his time in Texas by exploring Austin and traveling to places like Big Bend National Park and nearby beaches.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SHELBY BRITTON

From a young age, Shelby has been passionate about rocketry and taking advantage of opportunities to learn more about the aerospace industry. As a sophomore in Aerospace Engineering at Purdue, Shelby has spent two years on Purdue Space Program (PSP) Liquid's team and began working as Project Manager this January.

Throughout this role, Shelby has overseen the design, production, and testing of the CraterMaker Special (CMS), a major project that's been developing over several years. She's been consistently dedicating 20+ hours weekly to support the team's efforts. Recently, PSP Liquids took the CraterMaker Special to the Mojave Desert in California for launch!



In addition to her PSP and PSEF involvements, Shelby spent last Summer as a Propulsion Engineering Intern at Firefly Aerospace in Cedar Park, Texas. This Summer, Shelby will be interning at SpaceX on the Starship Stage 0 Propellant Systems team!

