

# CEE @ Illinois



News from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



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## [Illinois Researchers Respond to Earthquakes](#)

CEE researchers responded to the earthquake in Haiti by serving on two field missions to study the effects and learn how better engineering practices and preparedness could have minimized loss of life and property damage. Assistant Professor Scott Olson served as a member of a Geo-engineering Extreme Events Reconnaissance team that studied ground failures such as liquefaction and landslides. Professor and Head Amr Elnashai and CEE graduate structures student Amanda Lewis participated in a Mid-America Earthquake Center field mission. A study trip to Chile is also planned. [More on the earthquake response](#)



## [High-Speed Rail a New Focus for Illinois Railroad Engineering Program](#)

High-speed rail is the next big thing in railroad engineering in the United States, and the University of Illinois' Railroad Engineering Program is assuming a leadership role in bringing the latest information about this hot topic to students, fellow educators, and the industry. This semester, an expert from Taiwan is teaching, at Illinois, the first university-level class in high-speed rail to be offered in the country. In addition, a major international rail conference will be held on the U of I campus in April, featuring high-speed and intercity passenger rail as its primary focus. [More on the high-speed rail class and conference](#)



## [Alumnus Jon Khachaturian Elected to National Academy of Engineering](#)

CEE alumnus Jon E. Khachaturian (BS 78) was elected to the National Academy of Engineering "for developing innovative, safe, reusable, and economical heavy lifting systems to advance the international marine industry." Khachaturian is the founder, president and chief executive officer of Versabar in Houston, Texas. Election to the National Academy of Engineering is among the highest professional distinctions for an engineer. In the 1980s, Khachaturian carved out a niche for himself by inventing a patented system to lift unwieldy loads—including toppled off-shore oil rigs—safely and cost-effectively. [More on Khachaturian's award](#)



## [Professor Mark Rood Wins Environmental Educator Award](#)

The Air & Waste Management Association has chosen Professor Mark J. Rood, the Ivan Racheff Professor of Environmental Engineering, as the 2010 recipient of their Lyman A. Ripperton Environmental Educator Award. Established in 1980, the award recognizes distinguished achievement by an educator in some field of air pollution control. It is awarded to

an individual who, "by precept and example, has inspired students to achieve excellence in all their professional and social endeavors" and those who possess the ability "to teach with rigor, humor, humility, and pride." [More about Rood and the Ripperton award](#)



### [Professional Development Fair Draws a Crowd](#)

Hundreds of CEE students turned out on February 26 to meet with recruiters from nearly 60 companies at the department's Professional Development Fair. The annual event, held in Newmark Lab, connects CEE students with potential employers for internships, summer jobs and permanent positions. As always, many of the recruiters were department alumni. Ken Floody (BS 83) of Ingenii LLC, the president of the CEE Alumni Association, was on hand to critique student resumes, and a continuous queue of students kept him busy until two hours after the fair had ended. [More about the Professional Development Fair](#)



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