Rutgers School of Engineering

MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE DINNER

October 9, 2025 | 6 pm

Rutgers University, Life Sciences Building 145 Bevier Road, Piscataway, NJ



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Established in 1864, the School of Engineering at Rutgers University—
New Brunswick is home to educational opportunity and innovation, the foundation upon which work of enormous relevance to society and the economy is made possible through world-class research and important industry partnerships. With seven academic departments representing key engineering disciplines, world-renowned faculty, and groundbreaking research centers, the School of Engineering is recognized around the world as comprehensive and leading-edge, training the next generation of innovators across a broad spectrum of professions.



MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE AND DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

The Medal of Excellence and Distinguished Alumni Awards were established by the School of Engineering in 2006. The awards are presented annually and recognize alumni who are distinguished in their profession and for their service to the school and the community. Nominations are accepted each year and recipients are selected by an awards committee that includes School of Engineering faculty members and deans. Beginning in 2024, the School of Engineering began recognizing corporate support as influential in student success, research advancement, and philanthropy.

RUTGERS ENGINEERING ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED ENGINEER AWARD

The Distinguished Engineer Award, established by the Rutgers Engineering Society in 1960, is presented annually to a graduate of Rutgers School of Engineering who has made significant technical contributions in their professional career. Rutgers Engineering Alumni, previously known as the Rutgers Engineering Society, is the alumni organization of the School of Engineering, and supports the school, its programs, faculty, and students through a year-round schedule of activities.

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THE EVENING'S PROGRAM

WEICOMING REMARKS

Remo J. Colarusso, Jr. ENG'83, RBSG'88

Vice President, Manufacturing and Technical Operations, Janssen Supply Chain (Ret.)

Francine Conway, Ph.D.

Chancellor

Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Alberto M. Cuitiño, Ph.D.

Dean, School of Engineering

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Distinguished Young Alumnus | Stephen Recchia

Assimina Pelegri, Ph.D.

Professor and Department Chair, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Dean's Award for Service and Lifetime Achievement | Ilene Rosen

Jean Patrick Antoine ENG'95

Assistant Dean, Enrichment Programs

Rutgers School of Engineering

Alberto Cuitiño

Distinguished Alumnus in Industry | Di Xu

Avca Altav

Senior Data Analyst, Dun & Bradstreet

DINNER IS SERVED

Richard N. Weeks Remembered

Asmi Kaushal ENG'27

Corporate Partner of the Year | New Jersey Transit

Ali Maher, Ph.D.

Director, Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation

Distinguished Alumnus in Research | Peter Pupalaikis

Yingying Chen, Ph.D.

Professor and Department Chair, Electrical and Computer Engineering

Rutgers Engineering Alumni Distinguished Engineer Award | Peter Schultz

Michaele Watson ENG'10

President, Rutgers Engineering Alumni

Lisa Klein, Ph.D.

Professor and Department Chair, Materials Science and Engineering

Medal of Excellence | Robert C. Andersen

Alberto Cuitiño

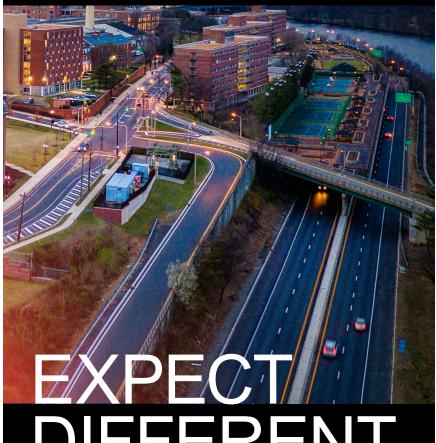


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MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE

This award honors alumni or friends of the School of Engineering whose superior achievements have honorably reflected the school over their lifetime. Recipients of this award will have outstanding professional accomplishments, demonstrated managerial leadership, set high standards of excellence serving as role models for today's Rutgers engineering students, and pursued activities that generally benefit the greater good of society.



Robert C. Andersen
ENG'85 Civil Engineering
Chief Executive Officer (retired)
RC Andersen

At the culmination of a 40-year career, Robert Andersen was the chief executive officer of RC Andersen, the company he founded in 2006 and currently serves in an advisory role.

Mr. Andersen began his career with Paul Beck Associates as a structural engineer before assuming positions at Wilkinson and Co. and Turner Construction, serving in various roles ranging from project engineer, project superintendent, and project manager. After a decade with March Associates in New Jersey as vice president, he decided to start his own firm.

Initially, a local general contractor specializing in industrial warehousing, the company quickly grew, conducting business nationally with integrity, honesty, and transparency. RC Andersen has been named one of Engineering News-Record's top nationally ranked industrial general contractors.

Mr. Andersen's industry honors and philanthropic involvement include the NAIOP NJ Impact Award, Daytop New Jersey Honoree, Crohn's and Colitis Foundation National Honoree, and Chilton Hospital Foundation. In 2022, he established the Robert C. Andersen Endowed Scholarship at Rutgers School of Engineering to benefit undergraduate students studying civil and environmental engineering.

DISTINGUISHED ENGINEER AWARD

The Distinguished Engineer Award is presented annually by Rutgers Engineering Alumni to a fellow School of Engineering graduate who has made significant technical contributions in his or her career. Alumni of the School of Engineering have been presenting this award since 1960.



Peter C. Schultz, Ph.D.

BS'64, PhD'67 Ceramics Engineering
Consultant
Peter Schultz Consulting

Peter C. Schultz is an internationally recognized scientist and co-inventor of the fiber optics used for telecommunications. Today, virtually all the 2.5 billion miles of fiber optic cable deployed worldwide are based on his original materials and process patents. He is the recipient of numerous honors for his achievements, including election to the National Academy of Engineering (1991), induction into the National Inventors Hall of Fame (1993), and receiving the National Medal of Technology (2000) from President Clinton – the highest technology award of the U.S. government. He holds 26 U.S. patents and has published over 25 technical papers.

Dr. Schultz has enjoyed a nearly 60-year career in the fields of optical fiber communication and materials and ceramic sciences. He was senior scientist at Corning (1967-1984), SpecTran Inc.'s vice president of technology (1984-1988), and president of Heraeus Inc. USA (1988-2001). Following his retirement in 2001, Dr. Schultz has continued to provide technical and business consulting services and expertise in patent infringement and litigation cases to numerous international companies through Peter Schultz Consulting, LLC. He has also served on various corporate boards.

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT IN INDUSTRY

HONORFF

This award honors alumni of the School of Engineering whose contributions have earned distinction in industry as a leader, innovator, and manager.



Di Xu, Ph.D.PhD'o1 Industrial Engineering

Vice President and Head of AI Labs and AI Governance

American Express

A native of Shanghai, Di Xu came to the U.S. to earn his graduate degrees. Unfamiliar with universities here, his selection was initially based on Rutgers' convenient location to important metropolitan areas. Today, however, Dr. Xu credits his Rutgers experience with its emphasis on optimization and statistics to his successes in and contributions to advances in machine learning.

Dr. Xu began his career at American Express in 2001, holding positions of increasing responsibility in data science, including acquisition, underwriting, and fraud and customer management modeling functions. Today, as vice president and head of Al Labs and Al Governance and chair of the company's Credit and Fraud Model Risk Committee, Dr. Xu and his team are actively exploring cutting-edge machine learning research and its application in financial services.

Working in an ever-evolving area, Dr. Xu values the input of young people. Committed to fostering the next generation of engineers, he has championed and supported initiatives that connect students with real-world perspectives through academic-industry collaboration. For his professional accomplishments and commitment to his alma mater, including service as a member of the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering's Industry Advisory Board, Dr. Xu received the department's Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2022.

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT IN RESEARCH

This award honors alumni of the School of Engineering whose achievements in research have significantly contributed to the advancement of new technologies.



Peter J. Pupalaikis

BS'88 Electrical Engineering Founding Member Nubis Communications, Inc.

Peter J. Pupalaikis is a founding member of Nubis Communications, Inc., a startup company that develops low-power, high-density, and high-speed silicon photonics electro-optical transceivers for data centers and ML/Al applications. He is responsible for system simulations and simulator development, signal and power integrity, and test and analysis infrastructure development.

Prior to Nubis, Mr. Pupalaikis worked for 25 years at Teledyne LeCroy, where he was vice president of technology development. His numerous inventions in the areas of signal processing, RF and microwave systems, applied mathematics, and measurement enabled the company to develop highly accurate and very high bandwidth measurement instruments, holding records for real-time oscilloscope bandwidth for over a decade. These instruments are critical for the development of technology in numerous areas. Some of his research and development led to new classes of instruments, such as network analyzers based on time-domain reflectometry.

He was elevated to IEEE fellow in 2013, published the textbook, "S-parameters for Signal Integrity" in 2020 through Cambridge University Press, and was inducted into the U.S. National Academy of Engineering in 2024. After serving in the United States Army, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering with high honors from Rutgers. He is a member of Tau Beta Pi and Eta Kappa Nu honors societies.

DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNUS

This award recognizes the early career accomplishments of alumni who have graduated—at any academic level—within the past ten years and have demonstrated continued involvement with the school and university.



Stephen Recchia, Ph.D.

BS'04 Mechanical Engineering, PhD'16 Materials Science and Engineering Department of Defense Military Program Manager Office of Undersecretary of Defense-Manufacturing and Technology, U.S. Army

Stephen Recchia is an engineer with 21 years of experience leading programs and designing munitions and ordinance for the Department of Defense (DoD). Currently, Dr. Recchia is a program manager in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense—Manufacturing and Technology (OSD—ManTech) team. Dr. Recchia has managed the quick-win portfolio and served as the deputy program manager for the Manufacturing Science and Technology Program. During his tenure at OSD-ManTech, he developed focused investment areas, organized technology demonstrations for DoD stakeholders/leadership, and developed technical roadmaps in conjunction with the Principal Director of Materials at OSD. Most recently, Dr. Recchia has assumed the mantle of the program manager for the Department of Defense Manufacturing Innovation Institutes (MII), where he leads public/private engagement and manages public funding for the nine DoD MII.

Prior to joining the OSD-ManTech office, Dr. Recchia was a senior research engineer at the U.S. Army DEVCOM-Armaments Center, where he was recognized as an expert in dynamic loading through failure, including gun launch, penetration, and blast overpressure. In this capacity, he consulted on projects for the Army having issues with reliability and performance.

DEAN'S AWARD FOR SERVICE AND LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

This award honors alumni or friends of the School who have given of their time or talent for the enrichment of the School of Engineering community. A candidate's contribution must directly impact the School through service such as board or committee membership, as a guest lecturer engaging with students, as a supporter of School or student initiatives, by making industry introductions which open doors to opportunities, and other similar contributions.



HONOREE

Ilene Rosen, Ed.D.

BA'82, MEd'87, EdD'97 Associate Dean for Student Services Rutgers School of Engineering

When Ilene Rosen came to Rutgers as a first-year student in 1978, she embarked on what would become a more than 40-year academic and professional relationship with the university. Earning a bachelor's degree in English and master's and doctoral degrees in educational psychology, she joined Rutgers School of Engineering in 1987 as part of a retention initiative for the Education Opportunity Fund (EOF) program.

Dean Rosen's role at the School of Engineering continued to expand, and she eventually assumed the position of associate dean of Student Services and director of EOF. She founded TARGET (The Academy at Rutgers for Girls in Engineering and Technology) and Governor's School of Engineering and Technology initiatives, summer engineering programs for elementary, middle school, and high school students. She also helped establish the Educational Opportunity Program, which offers academic access to students who lack college resources. Dean Rosen's dedication to students included serving as an advisor for several student organizations, such as the Society of Hispanic Engineers, Society of Women in Engineering, Minority Engineering Education Task, Rutgers Formula Racing, RU OK, and the Engineering Governing Council.

CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR

This award recognizes a corporation or business that has demonstrated outstanding collaboration and made a positive impact within Rutgers School of Engineering's community in the areas of philanthropy, student engagement, research partnerships, and career support.



NJ TRANSIT is New Jersey's public transportation corporation. Covering a service area of 5,325 miles, NJ TRANSIT is the nation's third-largest provider of bus, rail, and light rail transit, linking major points in New Jersey, New York, and Philadelphia. On 263 bus routes and 12 rail lines statewide, NJ TRANSIT provides nearly 270 million passenger trips each year.

NJ TRANSIT also administers several publicly funded transit programs for people with disabilities, senior citizens, and people living in the state's rural areas who have no other means of transportation. In addition, the agency provides support and equipment to privately-owned contract bus carriers. As the vehicle that connects New Jerseyans with employment, education, health care, and recreational opportunities in and around the Garden State, NJ TRANSIT is vital to the state's economic and social well-being, as well as its quality of life.

NJ TRANSIT also actively engages with academic institutions in addressing infrastructure challenges and providing the agency's vast network as a test bed for innovation and workforce training. Rutgers School of Engineering and the faculty, students, and staff affiliated with Rutgers' Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT) have worked closely with NJ TRANSIT to develop innovations like electrifying buses and trains, optimizing management of transit infrastructure, mitigating against climate change impacts, and making train windows clear and transparent. Many of these ideas are now being emulated by transit agencies across the country. These strategic partnerships exemplify a forward-thinking commitment to innovation, sustainability, and community service, while addressing both immediate and long-term transportation challenges.

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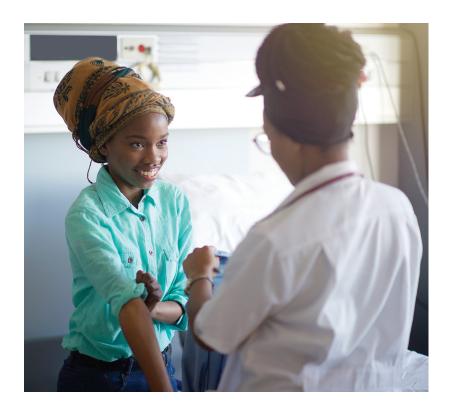
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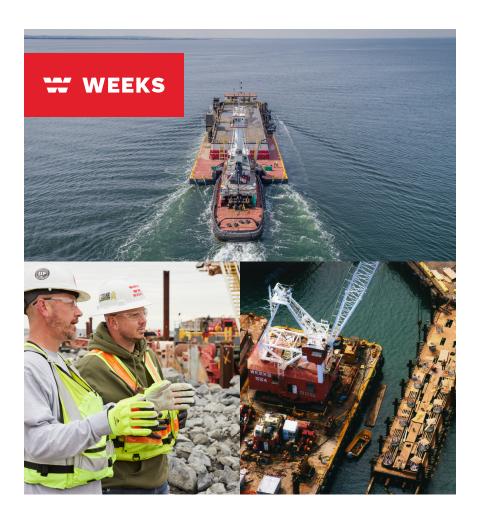
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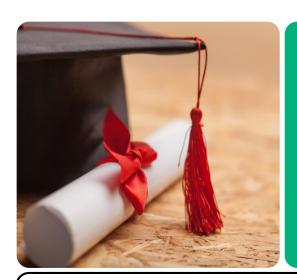


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