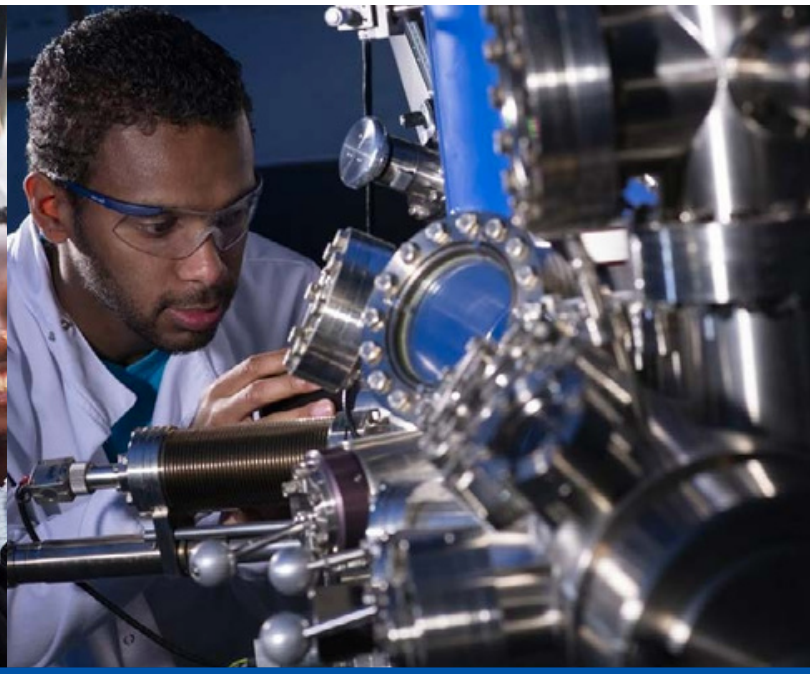
COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENGINEERING PATHWAYS

EMPOWER

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

STUDENT GUIDE



The American Society of Mechanical Engineers
® ASME

70%
of employers offer full-time jobs to successful interns

85%
increased chance of interns being employed after graduation

57%
of internships result in full-time job offers

60%+
of companies pay their interns

16%
more job offers received by students who complete an internship

For more information about ASME, visit asme.org.

About the EMPOWER PROGRAM

Preparing community college students for an engineering work experience.

In response to the growing demand for skilled engineering professionals equipped with practical experience and technical expertise, ASME created its **Engineering Mentorship and Project-Oriented Work Experience Resource (EMPOWER) Program**. This 12-week comprehensive boot-camp style project-based learning experience is tailored for students enrolled at community colleges. Students participate in career readiness, professional development, and technical skills workshops and activities designed to prepare them for the workplace and culminates with a hands-on experiential learning project.

The objectives of the **EMPOWER Program** are to:

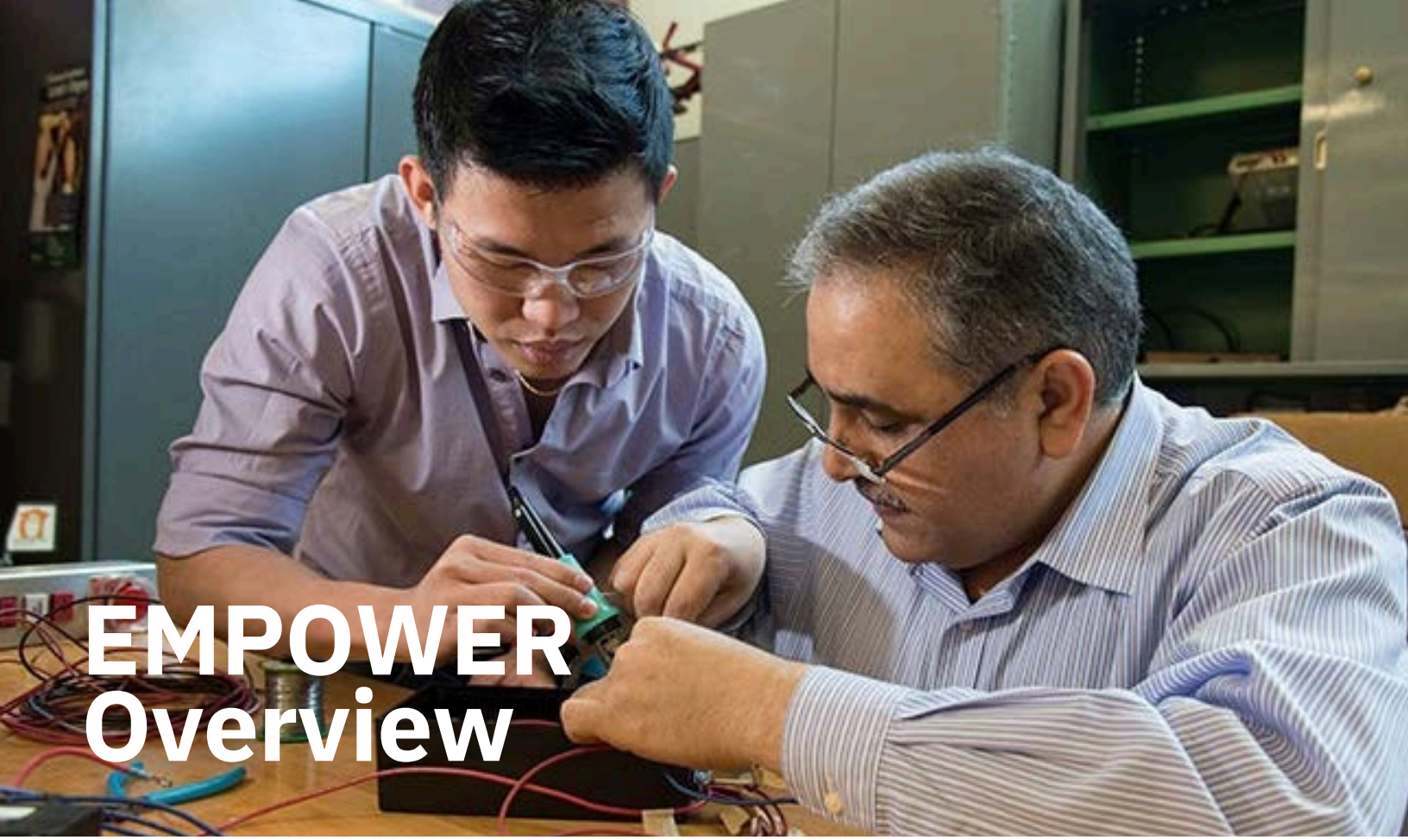
- Provide real-world engineering experiences through hands-on, project-based learning.
- Prepare future scholars and innovators for careers in engineering and engineering technology.
- Allow students to apply theoretical knowledge to industry related projects.

ASME's EMPOWER program laid the foundation for my engineering journey and sparked a strong passion for CAD. It exposed me to mentors, hands-on tools, and a supportive community that encouraged me to take initiative.

Jesutofunmi "J.T." Akerele

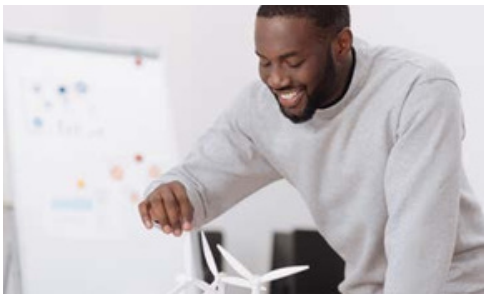
Aerospace Engineering
Prince George's Community College '26

ASME cultivates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and skill development across all engineering disciplines, while promoting **the vital role of the engineer in society.**



EMPOWER Overview

Experiential learning complements a student's education with real-world, practical application and is extremely valuable to understand how engineering theories are applied in the field.



Experiential learning provides opportunities for students to:

- Align classroom theory with practical application.
- Acquire practical skills through real-world projects.
- Gain knowledge and skills required within the engineering field.
- Receive mentorship from industry professionals.
- Build confidence and a sense of belonging.

Students who participate in an engineering internship or work based learning project have a competitive advantage when looking for a full-time position upon graduation. Employers seek engineering students with related job experience and use their internship programs to recruit entry-level talent.

The ASME EMPOWER Program is an independent program.
Students will not receive academic credit for completing the program.

The EMPOWER Program helped me gain valuable skills that will help me for a lifetime and provided me with an opportunity to use these skills to solve a real-world problem. It gave me a sense of belonging.

Michelle Rivera

Mechanical Engineering
Dallas College '25

Junior
The University of Texas at Dallas

Benefits & Key Skills

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Program designed specifically for community college students
- Virtual work-based learning experience for select students, dependent on availability
- Acquire career readiness and professional development skills necessary for employment
- Enhance engineering education with work experience
- Gain technical experience in engineering
- Add work experience to your resume
- Network with corporate employees and fellow students
- Become familiar with the corporate environment
- Learn about employers and organizational culture before graduation
- Explore career interests within the field of study
- Assess interest in specific engineering fields and majors

KEY SKILLS

- **Problem-Solving** – As an engineer, regardless of your specialty, you will be given problems to overcome daily. The ability to suggest solutions, identify inefficiencies, and deliver successful outcomes will be crucial.
- **Communication** - Soft skills such as written and verbal communication are required skills that you will need to practice and sharpen. Employers are putting a stronger emphasis on these skills than they have previously.
- **Creativity** – Engineers are innovators, and you will be asked to create new systems, suggestions, and solutions that require thinking outside the box.

The Program

- A 12-week boot-camp style project-based learning experience
- Provide students with a work-based learning opportunity
- Program is conducted during the summer from mid-May to early August
- Most projects are virtual, but some are in-person
- Students are placed into teams of 2-4 based on project design

Phase 1 - Training
May 18 - June 26

A series of live, virtual, instructor-led workshops and trainings designed to help develop skills for your project, and prepare you for your work-based learning experience.

Training Topics May Include:

- **Career Readiness Training**
  - **Resume Writing**
  - **Interviewing Skills**
  - **Presentation Skills**
- **Technical Skills Training**
  - **Computer-Aided Design (CAD)**
  - **Research Methods**
- **Professional Development**
  - **Project Management**
  - **Communication Skills**
  - **Team Building**
  - **Problem Solving**

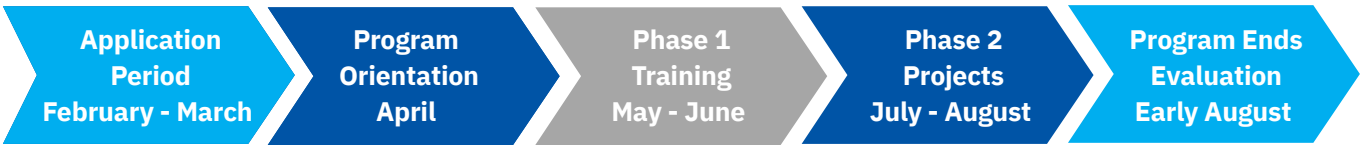
Phase 2 - Project Experience
June 29 - August 7

Teams of students work on a project that addresses a real-world problem or challenge to develop recommendations or a potential solution.

Projects May Include:

- **Analyzing data**
- **Completing math computations**
- **Conducting research**
- **Writing a design specification**
- **Designing and sketching a prototype**
- **Testing and evaluating a product**
- **Making recommendations for project strategy**
- **Creating a solution to a problem**

EMPOWER Program Timeline



Eligibility Requirements

- Must be a current ASME student member and in good standing.
- Must be enrolled at a community, state or technical college in a Mechanical Engineering/Mechanical Engineering Technology/Engineering Technology or closely related program.
- Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- Must be a US citizen or authorized to work in the US.
- Be highly motivated, eager to learn, reliable, and dedicated.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Submit cover letter and resume for review and feedback.
- Participate in mock interview(s).
- Attend live virtual training prep webinars.
- Dedicate 20 hours per week for the duration of the program.
- Receive professional development and technical mentorship
- Work independently and as part of a team.
- Conduct a presentation on your project experience.
- Complete an evaluation at the end of the program.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Communicate with ASME
- Attend and complete training workshops
- Participate fully and submit assignments on time
- Work independently and as part of a team
- Complete workshop and project evaluations

Acceptance into the program does not ensure a work-based learning experience. All those accepted will be eligible for the first-six weeks of the program. Transition to work-based learning experience is dependent on program participation.

How to Apply

- EMPOWER applications open in early February.
- Students must apply to the ASME EMPOWER program by completing the online application through the link below.
- Students must meet the eligibility requirements and submit a completed application by the stated deadline.
- The application will be shared with our company partners, so students should submit a high-quality application, using correct grammar and spelling, and complete sentences when applicable.
- Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

2026 EMPOWER Student Application

For more information contact:

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Increasing access to engineering and technical jobs for community college students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

email: ccep@asme.org

"Creating professional relationships is important, and joining a group allows you to have a sense of security and trust. From this, you are able to support and help one another in reaching your professional goals.

HIGHER ED JOBS

ASME
SETTING THE STANDARD

FOLLOW ASME ON SOCIAL MEDIA