



A. JAMES CLARK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEERING

Spring 2023 Newsletter

Dear FPE Friends and Family,

The spring semester is past the halfway point. Both Drs. Shuna Ni and Fernando Raffan-Montoya completed their first semester as assistant professors and have been busy writing research proposals this spring. Both were successful in receiving research support for proposals submitted for the [UMD Grand Challenges Grant Program](#) (read more on that below).

Undergraduate enrollment remains just under 100, with the usual small number of applicants to begin as fire protection engineering majors in the fall. Our recruitment and outreach team, led by Liana Stiegler Omdorff (lstiegol@umd.edu), has been highly active over the last eight months in making presentations at numerous local high schools and community colleges as well as providing tours to many groups of visitors. She is assisted by the [FPE Student Ambassadors](#) whose activities are supported via a donation from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). If you are an alum outside of the College Park area who can attend career fairs at high schools and community colleges, please contact Liana for materials and information.

We continue to move forward in the consideration of offering ENFP undergraduate courses online in the future. We've received positive feedback from the college leadership and key people in the university administration, so a formal proposal will be developed in the fall for campus processing. We aim to make the online courses available in the Fall 2025 semester. Please continue to encourage any interested individuals to contact Nicole Hollywood (niholly@umd.edu) for more information.

We hope to make a formal announcement of the next department chair very soon (I was hoping to make the announcement prior to distribution of this newsletter, if not before). I appreciate your continued patience as the university process on this matter continues. While I'll be stepping down as chair on August 1 and retiring from UMD on September 1, I do plan to return in a part-time capacity to teach classes, assist with the transition to a new chair, and otherwise assist where needed.

Many thanks for your continued support,

Jim Milke, Ph.D., P.E.
UMD FPE Professor & Chair

RESEARCH



Taking Shelter: FPE researchers, in collaboration with [Kindling](#), were featured in the [Spring 2023 edition of Engineering at Maryland](#) article, "Taking Shelter," an effort to better understand the causes and order of magnitude of fires in informal settlements around the globe. Led by Jim Milke and a legion of students, the team hopes to create not just global awareness, but also a global response.

GRANTS & AWARDS

Raffan-Montoya Receives Grand Challenges Grant: Fernando Raffan-Montoya, in collaboration with FPE's Arnaud Trouvé and Lina Castaño of UMD's Aerospace Engineering, were awarded a UMD Grand Challenges Grant for their project, entitled, "High-Resolution Observations of Wildfires and Wildland-Urban-Interface Fires Through State-of-the-Art UAVs and Fire Imaging Technologies." [Learn more...](#)



Ni Receives Dual Research Grants: Shuna Ni was awarded two grants recently: one from UMD's Grand Challenges Program for her project, entitled, "Understanding the Impact of Wind on Fire Dynamics in Mass-Timber Compartments," and the other from the [National Institute of Justice](#) for another project, entitled, "Investigating the Impacts of Architectural Finishes on Fire Patterns in Support of Developing Data-driven Tools for Pattern Analysis." [Learn more...](#)

Milke Receives NFPA Award: Jim Milke is the 2023 Recipient of the NFPA Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes the accomplishments of individuals rendering service not only to the NFPA, but to the cause of fire safety as well. Throughout his career, Jim has strived to keep the field of fire protection current, touching many lives and influencing careers over the years. Milke will be honored at the NFPA Conference & Expo in Las Vegas, NV on June 18.



2023 FPE DESIGN CHALLENGE

The winner of this year's high school design challenge was the "Blazers" from [Notre Dame Preparatory](#). For the first time, the judges wish to acknowledge some incredibly innovative designs and have named three honorable mention teams:

- Atholton "Raiders"
- DeMatha "Foam House"
- Elizabeth Seton "Gaslighters"

Congratulations to all of the teams for their hard work, innovative designs, and enthusiasm! We hope to see all teams back next year.

If you would like to become a volunteer judge, or sponsor this event, please [follow this link](#) to the FPE website, or reach out to Nicole Hollywood for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

