

Immediate Release

For more information contact:  
Debbie Birrell, Executive Director  
[excdir@chicagoengineersfoundation.org](mailto:excdir@chicagoengineersfoundation.org)



## Chicago Engineers Foundation Awards \$116,000 to Class of 2019 Engineering Students

*Building Engineers for the Future*

CHICAGO — During the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year celebration, 94 students received \$116,000 in awards, and three students won the first Video Competition during The Chicago Engineers' Foundation (CEF) Incentive Award event on June 13, 2019, at the Union League Club of Chicago. At year's awards ceremony, Mr. George A. Smith, P.E. (Class of 1971) was awarded the first CEF Distinguished Alumni Award due to his career accomplishments, launching the National Society of Black Engineers with his colleagues, and encouraging aspiring engineers.



### Student Awards

This year's ceremony awarded 32 high school graduates and 62 college students with a monetary award of \$1000-1400 per student. Proud parents were dominant during the evening's celebration. Thirty-five percent of the students are first-generation college students. The average non-weighted GPA is 3.58 of the students. CEF award winners represent twenty-three high schools in Chicago. We are very proud to offer the students this incentive award to seize this opportunity in life to pursue engineering as a career. CEF has awarded over \$600,000 to students over the past five years. For a list of the student award winners, visit [here](#).

The CEF leadership also presented awards to the top finalists in the first "Because of CEF" video competition. Previous award recipients were encouraged to share videos describing how their CEF involvement has impacted their engineering career goals. The top three awards winners are 1<sup>st</sup> Place - Matthew Kadus, Rising Junior, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Vivian Auduong, Rising Sophomore, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - Alan Nguyen, CEF Class of 2018.

### Evening's Celebration

Over 200 guests attended the evening celebration. CEF President, Erik Cempel, P.E. (Amtrak) and award alum (Class of 1996), served as the master of ceremonies. The evening began with a special video message from Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (8<sup>th</sup>District), an engineer and business owner turned legislator.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of CEF's inaugural Distinguished Alumni Award to George A. Smith, P.E. (Class of 1971). The Distinguished Alumni Award was established by the CEF Board of Directors this year to honor past award recipients for their professional achievements and dedication to future engineers.

Mr. Smith received his CEF scholarship award as a Lindblom High School graduate. He attended Purdue University, pursuing a degree in electrical engineering. While at Purdue, George Smith was one of six undergraduate students who established a first-of-its-kind professional and mentoring society for minority engineering students. Later, the group evolved to become the [National Society of Black Engineers](#) (NSBE). Since its inception, NSBE has grown from six founding members to more than 17,000 members, with over 500 chapters worldwide. During Mr. Smith's remarks, he recognized all of the NSBE co-founders, including Brian Harris, who also attended the celebration.

### Sponsors

CEF is very proud of its group of supporters. Each student award is supported by a sponsor totaling 94 student awards this year. Before the event, judges score the student's applications based on grade point average, achievements, and community service when determining the qualified award recipients. Thank you for your generosity and support of our student scholars. For a full list of award sponsors, [visit this page](#).

We would also like to recognize The Primera Foundation, which made a \$20,000 Commitment to the CEF Incentive Awards. CEF appreciates their outstanding generosity in supporting the aspiring engineering students and their involvement in this program for the next four years.

Special thanks to the event sponsors: [HNTB](#), [Focus Group Holdings](#), [CBC Meetings +](#), [Golden Square](#), and the [University of Illinois at Chicago](#). Their contribution and participation help make the event successful. The leadership of the CEF extends congratulations to the Class of 2019 and is grateful for the generous support of this year's awards celebration.

The [Chicago Engineers' Foundation](#) (CEF) of the [Union League Club of Chicago](#) (ULCC) contributes to the civic and economic advancement of its community and country by encouraging and promoting the vital profession of engineering. CEF advances its mission primarily through its Incentive Awards, which grants educational scholarships to college-bound high school graduates of Chicago high schools or currently enrolled undergraduate college students who are pursuing engineering degrees at an accredited four-year university. For more details, visit [www.chicagoengineersfoundation.org](http://www.chicagoengineersfoundation.org)

For more information, please contact us:

Michael Driscoll, Software Engineer, CEF Chair, Awards  
USG Corporation  
[driscoll42@gmail.com](mailto:driscoll42@gmail.com)

Paul Barter, P.E., CEF Sponsorship Committee  
WMA Consulting Engineers, Ltd.  
312.786.4310  
[paul.barter@salasobrien.com](mailto:paul.barter@salasobrien.com)

Deborah J. Hodges, CEF Chair, Communications, Marketing and Media  
Golden Square  
312.675.6080  
[Dhodges@GoldenSquare.biz](mailto:Dhodges@GoldenSquare.biz)

###