

THE CASE FOR BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR HAWAII'S LARGE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

BY THE HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE

Hawaii pays the highest electricity prices in the nation and creates more climate pollution for each kilowatt-hour (kWh) generated than any other state. Reducing large buildings' energy demand is therefore more than just climate policy—it is also cost control, risk management, and a local jobs strategy.

On our independent islanded grids (six in total), every avoided kWh shrinks imported fuel expense and exposure to oil price volatility, lowers peak energy demand, and aids in our pursuit of 100% renewable energy. In Hawaii's high-cost environment, those avoided kWh translate directly into meaningful operational expense savings. One of the most cost-effective pathways toward 100% clean energy are Building-Energy Performance Standards (BEPS or BPS) for large existing commercial and multifamily buildings. BPS policies set outcome-based targets for measured whole-building energy use, with flexibility in how teams get there—functioning first as an engineering and business tool, and as a climate lever second. Hawaii's consistently high retail electricity rates make this leverage a particularly strong tool as efficiency investments here have higher returns than in other states.

Roughly only 25% of Hawaii's commercial buildings are larger than 50,000 square feet, yet they account for about 79% of the entire sector's energy use and 78% of its emissions. Targeting these large facilities first captures outsized savings or "low hanging fruit" for the sector. Lodging/large hotels and resorts are our top consumers—no surprise in Hawaii's tourism driven economy—followed by offices, education, health care, retail, and warehouses. A significant number of Hawaii's larger commercial buildings were built before the 1990's—a time before robust energy efficiency construction codes were in place. These older buildings benefit greatly from upgrades to modern efficiency technologies and building controls. The fastest savings often come from better operations and maintenance (O&M) and better building controls, including improved scheduling, ventilation management, and temperature resets. Layering in lighting and HVAC upgrades and optimization can deliver further significant cuts in energy use. In Hawaii, where every bit of demand reduction creates

a faster pay back, these steps both lower operating expenses for building owners and hedge against future electricity price volatility.

Reducing demand at the building level also lowers peak grid load, flattens demand load shapes, and can potentially lower the costs of future transmission and distribution upgrades. An enforced statewide BPS policy can scale these measures from one-off projects to a portfolio-wide practice, making the grid easier and cheaper to operate while Hawaii's renewable energy build-out continues. Building Performance Standards of this nature have already been adopted as binding policies in several states and local jurisdictions across the nation—Washington and Colorado have statewide BPS programs, and several cities like Seattle, New York, Denver, and Boston have their own set of similar policies.

Hawaii's state energy policy sets a path to net-negative greenhouse-gas emissions

by 2045, with a 50% reduction target by 2030. Analyses prepared for the legislature underscore that load reduction—chiefly through aggressive efficiency—is among the most cost-effective ways to cut emissions in the near term, especially while large renewable-energy, storage, and grid projects continue to advance. A BPS turns this vision into an execution framework for the buildings that use the most electricity. It is worth noting that globally, buildings account for ~42% of all carbon emissions when including both operational and embodied emissions.

WHAT A STATEWIDE BPS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- Who would be affected? Start with the largest buildings, then phase to mid-size (capped at a minimum threshold of 50k sq. ft.), on a sensibly timed runway.

cont'd on Page 2

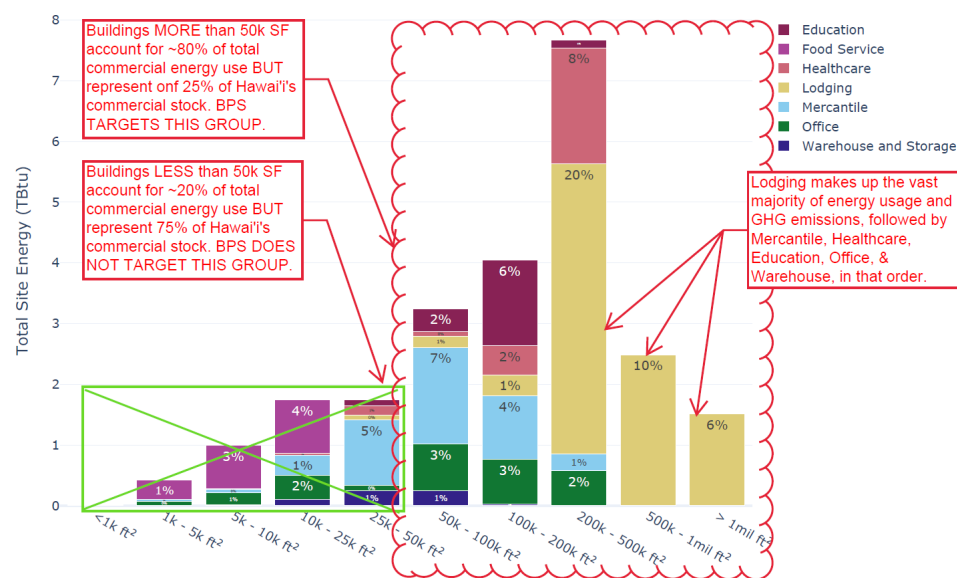


Figure 1. Site energy consumption of Hawaii's commercial buildings¹. Note that the 'Lodging' building type makes up the majority of overall site energy use within the state. A subsequent chart visualizing the emissions of these buildings looks almost identical to this—thus highlighting that Scope 2 emissions reflect the primary emissions type of buildings in the state. Data and visualization courtesy of NREL and USDOE. Markups in RED by HSEO.

¹ Horsey, R., Parker, A., CaraDonna, C., Dahlhausen, M., Klun, L., LeBar, A., & Praprost, M. (2023). Understanding Building Energy Use in Hawaii: Basic Building Stock Characterization: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy (EERE). <https://doi.org/10.2172/1998694>

² Hawaii State Energy Office, Hawaii Pathways to Decarbonization (2023) https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Act-238_HSEO_Decarbonization_Final_Report_2023.pdf



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DEADLINE FOR
WILIKI
IS OCTOBER 15TH

"THE CASE FOR BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR HAWAII'S LARGE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS" CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

WHAT A STATEWIDE BPS COULD LOOK LIKE CONT'D:

- What will the targets be? Clear, measured targets need to be set for different building types for whole-building energy use, which are tightened gradually to encourage continuous improvement. The energy targets need to be based on measured and simulated building performance metrics relevant to Hawai'i's climate.
- How to comply? Owners and facility teams would be allowed to design and choose the least-cost path for each building—optimized operations and maintenance, controls, lighting, HVAC, envelope improvements, refrigerant management, heat-pump adoption, or on-site generation where appropriate. A simpler prescriptive pathway to compliance should also be made available that is less reliant on technical design input.
- When would building upgrades be required? Tiered compliance timelines should be set by size and building type, with reasonable extensions made for documented buildings with constraints.
- What support can owners expect? Technical assistance, planning tools, and financing options would be provided so projects pencil out and persist. Many BPS policies also incentivize "early-adoption" by providing higher tax incentives or rebates to teams complying with the targets ahead of the typical deadlines.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND PRESERVING EQUITY

Building efficiency work is local work—energy audits, envelope improvements, controls integration, electrical upgrades, HVAC replacements, and ongoing tuning are performed by local engineers and tradespersons. A BPS policy that raises the performance floor for buildings creates a steady project pipeline for design firms and contractors, and it supports apprenticeships and upskilling in trades. Hawai'i's BPS implementation should explicitly invest in workforce development programs and education to meet the resulting rise in demand for electricians, controls specialists, HVAC technicians, commissioning agents, and energy analysts. A well-designed BPS program should also ensure that under-resourced buildings are not left behind. Practical supports—free benchmarking help, virtual assessments, targeted audits, one-on-one coaching, and assistance unlocking incentives—can direct bill savings and building-quality upgrades to properties that serve LMI communities and affordable multifamily housing.

Ultimately, a statewide BPS for large commercial buildings in Hawai'i makes practical engineering and economic sense: it cuts energy bills in a high-price market, strengthens the grid as demand grows, and drives up demand for local, hands-on jobs. Long-run simulations via the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimate that the targeting specific commercial building types in Hawai'i could achieve about 2,100 GWh in energy savings over several decades. It also operationalizes an already well recognized decarbonization pathway—efficiency and load reduction first—while letting each building ownership team choose

the lowest-cost technical route to the desired results.

Please contact Ron Chatterjee, Energy Efficiency Specialist at the Hawai'i State Energy Office (ronak.chatterjee@hawaii.gov), with any questions.



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Save the date: 10/9/2025 @ 4:00pm

Presentation on 'Smarter Air Quality, Standards, and Energy Strategies in Healthcare Environments' by Renée Robison Jacobs, CHFM, CHC, FASHE

Location: Safe Harbor Storage

Details will be posted here soon - <https://ashraehawaiichapter.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php>



<http://www.hawaiispe.org/>

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Nominations for the Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year candidates are being accepted. Nomination forms are available by contacting Kurt Kunimune or Pac Chung of HSPE. The awardees will be presented at the Engineer's Week Banquet in February of 2026. Please contact Kurt Kunimune or Pac Chung at kkunimune@bowersandkubota.com or pchung@bowersandkubota.com for nomination forms or with any questions. Nominations will be due by Friday, December 26, 2025. Mahalo!



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AACE Hawaii Section held a general membership meeting and in-person networking event on September 24th at the historic Royal Brewery building in Kakaako. Attendees shared career perspectives and connected (or reconnected) with other attendees through the common interest of cost engineering advancement.

AACE International was founded in 1956. The local section, AACE Hawaii, was originally established in 1973. Our local area continues to achieve CCP, CEP, CST and PSP certifications. For more information, please visit <http://web.aacei.org/certification> and our local website www.aacehawaii.com.

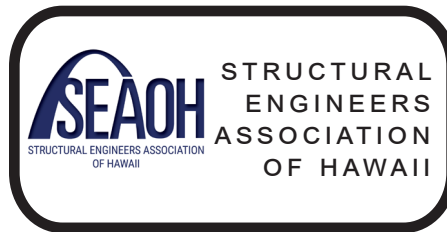


Some attendees at the September event. From left: Anas Nasr, Loy Kuo, Alan Davison, Scott Jennings, Calvin Gidlof, Yong Shi, Dominic Turninetti



An original manhole cover on the sidewalk fronting the historic building. The cast lettering of "HB&M Co." stands for The Honolulu Brewery & Malting Company.

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PREVIOUS BOD MEETING

September 3, 2025

MEMBERSHIP

The following memberships have been approved:

- Danielle Lewis, associate – Coffman Engineers

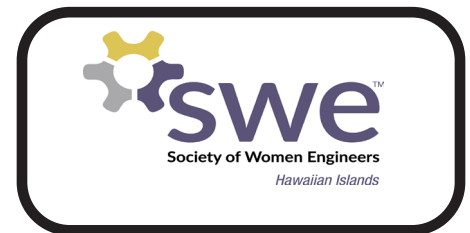
The following new membership applications were received:

- Romar Failman, associate – Consulting Structural Hawaii
- Mohamed Sherif, associate – KAI Hawaii Inc.
- Ashlyn Uehara, student – MKE Associates LLC
- Tyler Kleinsasser, student - South Dakota School of Mines & Technology

Please contact any SEAHO Board Member by September 30, 2025 to file comments regarding the new applicant.

NEXT BOD MEETING

Wednesday October 1, 2025. For information, contact SEAHO President Grant Okunaga at grant@mkellc.com



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The mission of the Society of Women Engineers is to empower women to achieve full potential in careers as engineers and leaders, expand the image of the engineering and technology as a positive force in improving the quality of life, and demonstrate the value of diversity and inclusion.



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AUGUST 29, 2025 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTES

- Looking into volunteer at events
- Updating ASME promo material for future events
- ASME is recruiting volunteers to help

ASME-HAWAII NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled via Zoom tentatively mid-October 2025. Please contact us if interested in participating.



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WEBSITE: [R6.IEEE.ORG/HAWAII](https://r6.ieee.org/hawaii)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

IEEE Executive Committee (ExCom) Meeting

- Last meeting: September 3rd, 2025
- Next meeting: October 1st, 2025
- Register here: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/481813>

For a full list of upcoming events, visit r6.ieee.org/hawaii/events

Join IEEE Hawaii Section in celebrating IEEE Day 2025!

- When: 07 October 2025, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
- Where: [Dave and Busters, Ala Moana](#)
- Why: Come connect with fellow engineers, innovators, and technology enthusiasts at Dave & Buster's Ala Moana. This is a great opportunity to network, celebrate the spirit of innovation, and enjoy some fun together as we honor the global IEEE community.
- Register here: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/490475>



SAVE THE DATE: IEEE Hawaii 75th Anniversary!

- When: 13 November 2025, 6:00 PM
- Where: [The Pacific Club](#)
- Why: Join IEEE Hawaii Section as we honor IEEE Hawaii's 75 years of innovation, collaboration, and technological advancements that have shaped the world! Stay tuned for event details and registration information.
- Register here: <https://ieeehawaii75.eventbrite.com/>



IEEE NEWS

The IEEE Hawaii Joint EDS/SSCS chapter celebrates its first cohort of the SSCS student-run tutoring program which ran during the Fall 2024 to Spring 2025 terms. Volunteer tutors received an SSCS T-shirt and one year of IEEE and SSCS society membership. Tutors provided free office hours for ECE undergraduate courses through the University of Hawaii at Manoa HKN chapter.



PAST EVENTS

- On September 2, 2025, the IEEE Hawaii OES Chapter hosted a joint seminar with the Marine Technology Society Hawai'i Section on "Observing the Oceans and Earth: the Role of Subsea Cables" by Bruce Howe. Attendees learned about submarine cable systems that have been supporting science and the early warning of tsunamis and earthquakes. Thank you to all who attended!



Observing the Oceans and Earth - the Role of Subsea Cables

- On August 27, 2025, Professor Azita Emami from The California Institute of Technology gave an engaging and informative seminar talk on "Brain-Computer Interfaces: A Software-Hardware Co-Design Approach". Hawaii EDS/SSCS Vice Chair Calvin Lee presented Dr. Emami with a certificate of appreciation and an IEEE Hawaii Section coin. Thank you to all who attended!

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

VEX Robotics Tournament at Kaimuki Middle School

- What: Kaimuki Middle School's VEX Robotics Team 4400 will be hosting a local qualifying ADC tournament. They are seeking 12 adult volunteers from any career field to serve as interview judges. As an interview judge, you'll be paired with another judge and provided a set of questions to ask participating middle and high school teams. This is a great way to connect with students, encourage future innovators, and support STEM education—no robotics or drone experience required!
- When: Tentatively December 13, 2025, Saturday, 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Where: Kaimuki Middle School
- If you're interested or have questions, please contact star.voyagers.808@gmail.com.

Honua Scholars 4th Annual Laulima Symposium

- What: Join Honua Scholars 4th Annual Laulima Symposium. They are looking for volunteers to serve as judges, mentors, or event helpers during the symposium. If you're unable to attend in person, you can still contribute as a virtual/asynchronous judge for our proposal competition



Brain-Computer Interfaces - A Software-Hardware Co-Design Approach Talk

- When: November 15, 2025, Saturday, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Where: [Hale Ākoakoa, Windward Community College](#)
- Volunteer sign-up is available at the bottom of our symposium page: www.honuascholars.org/programs/laulima-symposium. For questions, contact info@honuascholars.org

IEEE JOB LISTINGS

The following jobs are currently listed on the IEEE Job Board.

- Electrical Engineer - Bowers + Kubota
- Electrical and Mechanical Engineer - Adon Renewables

For job listings, visit r6.ieee.org/hawaii/jobs

Want to post a job? r6.ieee.org/hawaii/post-a-job

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

2025 ACM/IEEE International Symposium on Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement (ESEM), 1 - 3 October 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person and Virtual

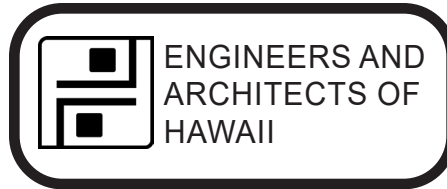
- 2025 IEEE/CVF International Conference on Computer Vision (ICCV), 19 - 25 October 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
- 2025 IEEE International Symposium on Emerging Metaverse (ISEMV), 19 - 20 October 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
- 2025 IEEE Automatic Speech Recognition and Understanding Workshop (ASRU), 6 - 10 December 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
- 2025 Annual Computer Security Applications Conference (ACSAC), 8 - 12 December 2025 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: In-person
- 2026 IEEE/JSAP Symposium on VLSI Technology and Circuits (VLSI Technology and Circuits) 14 - 18 June 2026 | Honolulu, Hawaii, USA | Event Format: Hybrid (In-person and Virtual)

For more information about upcoming conferences, visit bit.ly/ieeehconferences



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OCTOBER 10 FRIDAY NOON MEETING

Speaker: Dora Nakafuji - Apparent Hawaii

Topic: Solar Heat Pump Hot Water Technology

Dora Nakafuji returns to eaH to tell us about the latest Heat Pump technology combined with Solar Hot Water systems. Dora has previously worked on renewable energy projects with Hawaiian Electric and Kamehameha Schools and is now with the local office of Apparent, a renewable energy technology company.



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Last held: September 4, 2025

Next meeting: October 13, 2025

ASCE HAWAII SECTION DINNER MEETING

We will keep you informed via e-blasts and/or notices posted on our website at ascehawaii.org with the meeting information and schedule.

OUTSTANDING CIVIL ENGINEERING ACHIEVEMENT (OCEA) AWARDS

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Hawaii Section requests the pleasure of your company at the 2025 Hawaii Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) Awards

Banquet on Thursday, September 25, 2025 at The Kahala Hotel and Resort. Please join us in recognizing the outstanding civil engineering accomplishments of Hawaii's design and construction professionals. For more information on nominations and the awards banquet, please visit <https://ascehawaii.org/past-ocea-awards/>

COMMITTEE POSITIONS

ASCE Hawaii is looking for volunteers for various committee positions, including Advocacy Captain, Report Card Committee Members, and Water Resources Chairperson. If you are interested or have questions on any of these positions, please contact President Sheila Uyeoka, president.ascehawaii@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP

If you haven't already done so, please renew your ASCE membership, which includes 10 free PDHs. You can renew your membership at www.asce.org.

ASCE HAWAII SECTION STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Please help us increase our scholarship endowment so that we can recognize deserving students. We continue to accept tax-deductible donations with the goal of increasing the annual scholarships. Make your check payable to 'ASCE Hawaii Section' and include the note 'Walter Lum Scholarship Fund' and mail to: ASCE Hawaii Section, P.O. Box 917, Honolulu, HI 96808-0917. If you have any questions, please contact Steven Doo at presidentelect.ascehawaii@gmail.com.

ASCE JOB LISTINGS

The following job listings are currently posted on the ASCE Hawaii Section website:

- Schnabel Engineering (Senior Engineer/Project Manager and Project Engineer)
- County of Hawaii Department of Environmental Management Wastewater Division (Division Chief [Civil Engineer VII] and Wastewater Deputy Division Chief)
- Oceanit (Civil Design or Senior Civil Design)
- Enviroservices & Training Center, LLC (Senior Project Manager & Project Manager)
- Bowers + Kubota (Civil Engineer - Subdivisions, Senior Civil Engineer, Senior Project Manager, Civil Engineer - Military Construction, Water Resource Engineer, Hydraulics Engineer)

For further information, please visit

<http://www.ascehawaii.org/jobs/>



Website: hawaii.apwa.org

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YMF GENERAL MEETING

The next YMF general meetings will be in-person on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 6:00PM and Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 6:00PM. Please check our website, social media channels, or weekly eblast for the latest information on our upcoming general meetings and events. If you are interested in attending and learning more about the various professional, social, and service opportunities available through YMF, please contact YMF at ymf.hawaii@gmail.com.

DIAMOND HEAD MILLENNIUM PEACE GARDEN BY LAUREN HILL AND MEAGAN NAKAMOTO, COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRS

On August 16th, 2025, ten YMF members came out to volunteer at Diamond Head Millennium Peace Garden! YMF members along with other volunteers removed invasive grasses and weeds to prepare the area for new plants. Thank you to all the volunteers who came out!

KAPOLEI GOLF CLUB GOLF OUTING BY ZACHARY CHANG, GOLF ACTIVITIES CHAIR

On Saturday, August 23, sixteen YMF members set out to Kapolei Golf Club for some friendly competition on the 18-hole golf course. Congrats to the winners of "closest to the pin" and "longest drive". Thanks to everyone who came out this year and we look forward to more fun next year!

ASCE YMF JOB SHADOW PROGRAM

The Job Shadow Program is looking for students and industry professionals interested in becoming a mentee/mentor. Your interest and participation in this program will provide a valuable experience that will help guide students toward a successful path beyond graduation! If you have any questions and/or want to sign up*, please email the Job Shadow Program directly at ymfhawaii.jobshadow@gmail.com.

*Note: Information collected will help the Job Shadow Program pair mentor(s) and mentee(s) up based on their experience and interest.

2025 PE EXAM UPDATE

The PE Exam is now computer-based, with appointments available year-round at Pearson VUE test centers. Information about how to register for the exam can be found on the YMF website: <https://ascehawaiiymf.org/pe-exam-information>



Kapolei Golf Course Outing

ACEC

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
 of Hawaii

ACEC Hawaii

Website: www.acechawaii.org

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SAVE THE DATE! ACEC EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS & OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON 10/30

The Emerging Leaders Program Cohort 6 will be wrapping up soon with final capstone presentations on October 30. At the same time, the October General Membership Meeting will be held with a special guest speaker. Don't miss out on the chance to support fellow colleagues in Cohort 6 while staying up to date with everything current at ACEC Hawaii! More details soon to come at acechawaii.org.

JOB POSTING: ACEC HAWAII EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawaii (ACEC Hawaii) is a professional association representing the business interests of engineering firms across the state. ACEC Hawaii is committed to being the leading voice shaping an innovative, equitable, and resilient engineering industry by 2030. The organization focuses on advocacy, education, communication, and business services to support its member firms.

The Executive Director (ED) is the chief executive officer of ACEC Hawaii and is responsible for supporting and driving the strategic direction set by the Board of Directors. Along with the ACEC Hawaii president, the ED serves as the public face of the organization and is expected to represent ACEC Hawaii professionally with members, government agencies, industry partners, and the broader community.

For more information, go to Hawaii Alliance of Nonprofit Organization's website.

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OCTOBER

2025

S U N	M O N	T U E	W E D	T H U	F R I	S A T
			1 IEEE ExCom Meeting SEAOH BOD Meeting	2	3	4
5 ACEC Fall Conference 10/05 to 10/08 in San Diego	6	7 IEEE Day 2025 @ Dave & Buster's	8	9 ASHRAE Hawaii Presentation Meeting	10 eaH Noon Meeting	11
12	13 ASCE Executive Committee Meeting	14	15 ASCE YMF General Meeting	16	17 UH College of Engineering 15th Annual "Holmescoming"	18 SAME Young Professionals Hiking Event @ Aiea Loop Trail
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 ACECH ELP Capstone Presentations & Oct GMM	31	

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