The 2018 Joint Rail conference will provide the attendees an opportunity to network with fellow engineers with similar goals and responsibilities. Over 200 rail transportation professionals attended last year’s conference. The attendees will provide 130 papers and presentations and the opportunity to visit shops and incline railroads. To register for the 2018 Joint Rail conference, go to https://www.asme.org/events/joint-rail-conference/Register.
Preliminary Conference Schedule:

Tuesday 4/17
3:00pm - 8:00pm  Conference Registration Open

Wednesday 4/18
10:00am  +  Conference Registration Open
9:00am – 10:30am  ASME RTD Committee Meeting
10:30am – 11:30am  JRC Organizing Committee Meeting
11:45am – 1:00pm  Welcome Lunch and Plenary Session
12:00pm – 4:00pm  Exhibits Open
1:15pm – 6:00 pm  Concurrent Technical Sessions
6:30pm – 9:00pm  JRC Organizing Committee Dinner

Thursday 4/19
6:30am – 7:30am  Continental Breakfast
7:00am – 5:00pm  Conference Registration Open
7:00am – 5:00pm  Exhibits Open
7:45am – 12:00pm  Concurrent Technical Sessions
12:15pm – 1:15pm  Lunch & Grand Challenge
1:30pm – 5:45pm  Concurrent Technical Sessions
6:00pm – 6:30pm  Reception
6:30pm – 8:30pm  Conference Banquet

Friday 4/20
6:30am – 7:30am  Continental Breakfast
7:00am – 5:00pm  Conference Registration Open
7:00am – 5:00pm  Exhibits Open
7:45am – 12:00pm  Technical Tours
12:15pm – 1:15pm  Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm  Workshops
2:45pm – 4:45pm  Seminars

Joint Rail Conference 2018 - Grand Challenge Competition

This year the JRC will host the 2nd Annual JRC Grand Challenge Competition open to all conference attendees. We invite registered participants to propose an idea to the below Grand Challenge Question and present that idea to a panel of industry experts using a 3-minute “shark tank pitch”. The goal of this competition is to spark new ideas, innovations, and approaches to solving a relevant issue affecting the railroad industry.

The 2018 JRC Grand Challenge question:

In recent years, railroad’s have faced increased pressure to reduce operating ratio through improved efficiency and reduction of costs. With the exception of the 2008-2009 recession, railroads saw a fairly steady growth of revenue per ton-miles (Figure 1). However, in the last 4 years, this growth has slowed and railroads are looking for new ways to improve efficiency and reduce costs. How can the railroad industry utilize innovation and technology to advance economic goals, while maintaining high levels of safety and customer service?

Figure 1. Freight Revenue per Ton Mile (in cents) for US Class I railroads from 2004-2016 in current USD and constant 2004 US dollars derived using the implicit price deflator for GDP (Sources: AAR and FRED)

Rules of the Competition:

This competition is open to all registered participants of the 2018 Joint Rail Conference. *Participants must register for the conference in order to be admitted to the competition.

Participants may enter the competition between December 1, 2017 and March 1, 2018.

During the competition, contestants will be allowed no more than three (3) minutes to present their idea using a single PowerPoint slide with no animations. Contestants may present as individuals or as a team of three people at most.

The winner of the competition will receive a prize of $500 (check to be mailed by ASME after the conclusion of the Joint Rail Conference). Competition winner will also be recognized at the conference banquet dinner on Thursday, April 19th.

After submitting an online entry form, contestants will be contacted by a member of the JRC Organizing Committee within 1-2 weeks. Entries are open to individual contestants or teams of 2 or 3 people, but only one entry is allowed per team. Apply online at: https://goo.gl/forms/TOuOroLHMjMAQEZz2

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Applies to section 3 of the document.
Have you filled out your profile in ASME.org? If not, you should make this a priority as it allows you access to the Rail Transportation Division Group Page as well as your Technical Committee Group page. If you have a LinkedIn account, you can quickly import information to complete your ASME.org profile. Once you complete your profile, you can then participate in an existing online group or create your own group based on a specific engineering discipline, your interests, or even your university alumni. You manage group participation, content, tools, and activities. The rich suite of ASME.org functionalities make it easy for you to lead and grow your own group. It's a great opportunity to network, collaborate, and showcase your leadership skills to like-minded engineers.

SAVE THESE DATES

JOINT RAIL CONFERENCES

- **2019 JRC**: April 9-12, 2019. Snowbird, UT. Snowbird Ski &Summer Resort 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. [http://www.tcrr.com/](http://www.tcrr.com/) (Golden Spike was May 10, 1869, at Promontory Point, Utah)

- **2020 JRC**: April 21-24, 2020. St Louis Mo. St. Louis Union Station Double Tree by Hilton Hotels. 100th Anniversary of RTD. The first ASME-IEEE JRC was in St. Louis in 1920
The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Rail Transportation Division (RTD) continues to be a strong supporter of collegiate researchers, both professors and students, who play a vital role in the advancement of the rail industry. To this end, the ASME RTD offers the ASME RTD Graduate and Undergraduate Student Scholarships, which give students the opportunity to network with rail professionals, present rail research publications, and exchange ideas on rail technological innovations and solutions at the ASME Joint Rail Conference (JRC). Most importantly, the scholarships increase the awareness of the rail engineering discipline from both an academic and professional perspective.

Since 2011, the ASME RTD has received 107 graduate and undergraduate applications. Of the 107 applications received, 93 scholarships totaling $97,550.00 have been awarded to deserving students with an interest in rail.

**ASME RTD Graduate Student Conference Scholarship**

**V. Terrey Hawthorne Memorial Scholarship Fund**

**Purpose:** Fund travel, lodging, and conference registration expenses for scholarship awardees selected to attend and present their research publication at the ASME Joint Rail Conference.

**Award Amount:** $800.00 USD

**Application Deadline:** December 17, 2017

Scholarship [Application Form](#)

**Requirements:**

- The student must be enrolled full-time and attending a U.S. college or university.
- The student must submit an abstract(s) and technical paper(s) for the ASME Joint Rail Conference and have them accepted through the publication process. **Note:** If you are an undergraduate student who has submitted an ASME technical paper for the conference, you are not required to submit an essay, but you are required to submit the undergraduate application to be considered for the undergraduate scholarship.
- The paper topic(s) must be relevant to the rail industry.
- The student must be indicated as the lead author of the accepted paper(s).
- The student must complete and return the ASME RTD Graduate Student Scholarship application to [thurston@temple.edu](mailto:thurston@temple.edu) by the deadline specified.
- The student must receive written notification from the ASME RTD Scholarship Committee indicating award of the scholarship.
- The student must deliver an oral presentation of the paper(s) in person at the conference.

In order to be issued the scholarship, the student must be registered for the full conference as a student and must provide a completed Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification Form (W-9) in PDF format for his/her college/university. The completion of the form is required for tax purposes and will need to be returned to the Scholarship Program Chair by the deadline specified. **Note:** W-9 Forms are not requested until after the scholarships have been awarded and should indicate college/university tax information not the applicant's tax information. In addition, only one W-9 Form should be submitted per college/university.
**ASME RTD Undergraduate Student Conference Scholarship**

**Swamidas K. Charan (John) Punwani Memorial Undergraduate Student Scholarship Fund**

**Purpose:** Fund travel, lodging, and conference registration expenses for scholarship awardees selected to attend the ASME Joint Rail Conference.

**Award Amount:** $800.00 USD

**Application Deadline:** December 17, 2017

Scholarship [Application Form](#)

**Requirements:**

- The student must be enrolled full-time and attending a U.S. college or university.
- The student must be enrolled in an undergraduate engineering program at their university, college, or technical college.
- The student must be of Junior or Senior status.
- The student must submit a minimum 250-word essay outlining why they should be selected to attend the conference and what they hope to gain through attendance (or what the student could contribute to the rail industry). Or, alternatively, a minimum 250-word essay can be submitted that suggests a solution to a real-world rail industry problem. **Note:** If you are an undergraduate student who has submitted an ASME technical paper for the conference, you are not required to submit an essay, but you are required to submit the undergraduate application to be considered for the undergraduate scholarship. If your technical paper is accepted and you are awarded the scholarship, the award will be in the amount of $800.00 USD.
- The student must complete and return the ASME RTD Undergraduate Student Scholarship application and essay to thurston@temple.edu by the deadline specified.
- The student must receive written notification from the ASME RTD Scholarship Committee indicating award of the scholarship.
- In order to be issued the scholarship, the student must be registered for the full conference as a student and must provide a completed Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification Form (W-9) in PDF format for his/her college/university. The completion of the form is required for tax purposes and will need to be returned to the Scholarship Program Chair by the deadline specified. **Note:** W-9 Forms are not requested until after the scholarships have been awarded and should indicate college/university tax information not the applicant's tax information. In addition, only one W-9 Form should be submitted per college/university.

In addition to the $800.00 USD undergraduate scholarship award for reimbursement of travel-related expenses to attend the conference, one undergraduate student will be selected to receive an additional award for “Best Essay” based on the quality of his or her essay. Details of the award will be provided during the conference banquet where the award will be presented.

Please note that additional scholarship details and requirements may apply.

If you, or anyone you may know, has an interest in the ASME RTD Graduate and/or Undergraduate Student Scholarship, or has questions regarding the V. Terrey Hawthorne Memorial Scholarship Fund, please contact Ms. Monique F. Stewart, ASME RTD Scholarship Program Chair, at thurston@temple.edu.

For inquiries regarding scholarship disbursements, please contact ASME Staff Support, Mary D. Jakubowski at jakubowskim@asme.org.
IN MEMORIAM:
John “Kevin” Kessler

KEVIN KESLER (Age 65) Passed away in Wilmington, NC on December 1, 2017 from cardiac arrest.

Kevin was born December 4, 1951, in Washington, DC to Graham and Joan Kesler. A 1969 graduate of Springbrook High School in Silver Spring Maryland, and a 1973 graduate of the University of Maryland's Mechanical Engineering program, Kevin worked for more than 40 years in the railroad industry with ENSCO and most recently the Federal Railroad Administration.

Kevin married the former Janice Tomasello of Silver Spring, MD on October 9, 1971 and together they raised three daughters, Kelissa, Lindsay and Ashley. As a member of the Burtonsville chapter of the Lion's Club and lifelong musician, he ran a regular open mic night in conjunction with the Burtonsville Moose Lodge. Following the death of his wife of 43 years in 2015, Kevin relocated to North Carolina.

On April 23, 2016 Kevin married the former Terry Croom and they lived together in Carolina Beach, NC where Kevin connected with local musicians and began a regular open mic night at the Silver Dollar.

Kevin is survived by his wife, Terry Kesler, as well as his three daughters Kelissa Orsin, Lindsay Terry, and Ashley Mitchell, their husbands, Jason Orsin, JP Terry, Brad Mitchell and seven grandchildren- Jaxson Orsin, Xander Orsin, Kyler Terry, Madden Terry, Zeke Terry, Marlowe Mitchell and Luke Mitchell.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in memory of Kevin may be paid forward in a random act of kindness. Buy the person next to you a drink, turn to the person behind you in line and pay their bill, buy the homeless man on the street a meal - reach out to someone near you and let them know it was the act of love and kindness that was Kevin Kessler, as this was his way.

A memorial service and celebration of his life will be held on February 3, 2018 from 5 to 10 p.m. at Cedar Ridge Church [crcc.org] in Burtonsville, MD where he was a member.

Published in The Washington Post on Dec. 14, 2017