In Memoriam: Martha Bidez, Ph.D.

In a career that spanned more than 35 years, Dr. Martha Bidez helped make the world a safer place. After earning multiple engineering degrees from UAB, Bidez led a distinguished career in both the academic and private sectors that established her as one of the nation’s foremost authorities in safety engineering. “When you read about the history of UAB, you often see the word “pioneer” used to describe its leaders, and that word certainly suits Martha Bidez,” said Iwan Alexander, Ph.D., dean and professor of the School of Engineering. “Her success as an entrepreneur speaks for itself, and the Advanced Safety Engineering and Management program she created will continue to serve as a lasting legacy. Her contributions won’t soon be forgotten.”

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Bidez graduated with high honors in biology from Auburn University in 1979 before turning her focus to a career in engineering. She earned a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering from UAB in 1985 and a master’s and Ph.D. in biomedical engineering in 1983 and 1987, respectively. Soon after, she became a senior scientist with the UAB Injury Control Research Center. She was the first woman to be named “Young Engineer of the Year” by the Engineering Council of Birmingham in 1988.

“She was an advocate for those who had no voice, and she encouraged those who needed strength to find their own.”

-Donald Burke, Ph.D., Program Director

On behalf of the ASEM faculty, alumni, and Advisory Council, it is my pleasure to introduce the first issue of the ASEM newsletter. The impetus behind this publication is to give alumni, students and friends of ASEM a means for staying connected to the Safety Blazers family. Within each issue you will find updates from alumni who are advancing the field of safety and making a real difference in their workplaces. You will find a calendar of upcoming events, including the lineup of speakers in the ASEM seminar. Job openings, student and alumni awards, a suggested reading list, publications, alumni discussion board questions, and a lessons learned section will be common threads in each issue. ASEM continues to provide unparalleled graduate education in safety engineering and management and the strength of peer-to-peer learning is a feature of the ASEM program that we believe should extend beyond graduation. Therefore, we want all of you to continue to be a contributing part of the Safety Blazers and invite you to submit articles, publications, speaking opportunities, job openings, or whatever you feel would benefit our group. Send your suggestions to asem@uab.edu.

Sincerely- Dr. Burke

Read More
ASEM Speakers

- Feb. 5: Jim Loud
  Major Risk: Moving From Symptoms to Systems Thinking

- Feb. 12: Mike Smith
  Serious Injury and Fatality (SIF) Prevention in the Workplace

- Feb. 19: Anna Floyd
  Bringing Attention to Residual Risk of Lower Order Controls: Psychology of Warnings, Administrative Controls and PPE

- Mar. 5: Ron Gantt
  Operational Drift

- Mar. 12: Kellie Pierson
  NIOSH Worker Health

- Mar. 26: Darryl Hill
  Responding to a Workplace Fatality

- Apr. 2: Chris Colburn
  Leadership and Ethics

Alumni Making a Difference

The American National Standard Institute (ANSI)/American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) published the ANSI Z10 Standard in 2012. This voluntary consensus standard provides guidance for the development and implementation of an effective Occupational Health and Safety Management System. This groundbreaking standard changed the landscape of occupational health and safety management by providing the first guidance document on the subject and introducing concepts such as Prevention through Design and a revised version of the Hierarchy of Controls. The standard is viewed by many in the health and safety community as the “gold standard” of Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. The standard is also a seminal document in the curriculum of the University of Alabama Birmingham’s (UAB) Advanced Safety Engineering and Management (ASEM) Graduate Program. The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), who facilitates the committee that oversees the standard, recently activated the ANSI Z10 Committee which is tasked with the revision of the standard. Three UAB ASEM alumni were selected, along with other top minds in the practice of health and safety, to serve on the committee. Pictured above are Christopher Colburn, Paul Gantt and Ron Gantt. These three Safety Blazers will be working to contribute to the standard and the practice of occupational health and safety management.

U.S. News & World Report

ASEM is proud to announce that we have been recognized as one of the top online graduate engineering programs in the United States. We improved our ranking to #28 among all online graduate engineering programs in the country. We attribute our success to our continual effort to keep our courses updated and in-touch with what is required by industry by retaining excellent faculty members who are well known in the field and are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge. We also benefit through word-of-mouth endorsement of ASEM by growing numbers of alumni who have experienced first-hand the benefits of completing the program. Thank you and cheers!
Leah McCraney Scholarship

The Leah McCraney Memorial Endowed Scholarship was established to provide funds to deserving students in the ASEM program. The 2017 award recipient is Nicholas Latham. Mr. Latham is in his final semester and said the following about ASEM: “The ASEM program has offered me the structure and education necessary to perform my role in my current company much more effectively by using prevention through design methodologies. I consider its elements a core component of my career path and aspirations moving forward.” Congratulations Nicholas!

MBA/ASEM

Combining a business degree with an engineering degree can help professionals learn to manage safety through design while traversing the uncertainties of management with flexibility. UAB offers an exciting dual degree program in which students can earn a Master of Engineering in Advanced Safety Engineering and Management and a Master in Business Administration degree concurrently. This unique program opens opportunities for students to plan careers that balance business management skills with specialized knowledge of occupational safety. Alumni are also welcome to apply.

Faculty Book List

UX Lifecycle
by Jeremy Baines and Clive Howard

Science of Success
by Charles Koch

Lean UX: Designing Great Products with Agile Teams
by Jeff Gothelf and Josh Seiden

Competing Against Luck: The Story of Innovation and Customer Choice
by Clayton M. Christensen

Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Work
by Timothy Keller

Dark Matter
by Blake Crouch

Publications

Bringing Attention to Residual Risk: Psychology of Warnings, Administrative Controls and PPE
H.Landis Floyd II and Anna H.L. Floyd

Use Crew Resource Management to Enhance Tower Crew Reliability, Above Ground Level Magazine
Randy E. Cadieux
A few semesters ago we had an invited lecturer who shared information about a fatal incident involving an improperly secured propane tank on a fork lift. The lessons learned report gave instructions on how to identify and correct the problem and was shared with all ASEM students at the time. We received emails from seven students who had found at least one forklift at their workplace that were found to have the same problem. We share this lessons learned report again with all of you and invite you to send us your feedback and any lessons learned reports you would like to share with your Safety Blazer colleagues.

The purpose of Operating Experience is to help us learn from events, and prevent similar events. Following are brief descriptions of recent events. Managers and supervisors should promptly use this information to engage in discussions with their employees and implement actions to prevent a similar occurrence within their work group.

External Operating Experience - Fatality Due to Propane Explosion
A fatality at a Harley Davidson plant occurred when a forklift propane tank leaked resulting in an explosion that killed the driver. The cause of this accident was that the locking mechanism of the propane gas cylinder was not used, the propane tank rotated causing the flexible supply hose to separate, and the resulting propane leak led to an explosion.

This event could have been prevented had the unlocked mechanism been identified and corrected prior to the event.

1. TVA Operations Safety & Performance Improvement Operating Experience Alert

Required Actions:
- Each site/BU is to review this OE for awareness and site application.
- Each site/BU is to inspect all forklifts and other heavy equipment to ensure all safety locks and pins are properly used to prevent rotation of gas and fuel cylinders.
- Any adverse conditions are to have a CR written to address the deficiencies.

Lessons Learned: Propane Explosion

- This pin should be installed/positioned (see next text box).
- Pin should be in this hole.