

Dr. Z's Corner

Best Advice from Dr. Z. to Engineering Students: Take the F.E. Exam While You're Still in College

For students and educators, January means the beginning of the Spring semester. Our colleagues and friends know that we truly enjoy being an "Engineering Educator" since we are continuously working with young minds, inspiring, motivating and most importantly educating them to become our future engineers.

Quite often, our readers and engineering students ask us for advice to become a competent civil engineer. And the best advice to them is to set goals, work hard and most importantly, take the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam before you graduate. Last year, almost half our civil engineering students took and passed their FE exams on their first attempt, while they were in school. Of course, all of them received job-offer letters from well-known engineering firms after taking their first interviews.

For this month's ASCE-NCS, Dr.Z's Corner article, I've decided to share the success story of Maksim Bahdanovich, a civil engineering student from Belarus. Currently he is a senior engineering student at UDC. He just conquered the formidable FE exam before graduation. I hope our readers will enjoy reading Maksim's interesting story:

Dear Dr. Zeytinci,

I was born and raised in Brest, Belarus. When I was a kid I fell in love with math. I was receiving a lot of joy from solving simple math problems, it really made me feel smart. As a result, I became really good at it. I passed math and physics exams and entered one of the best schools in my hometown. Throughout my high school education, I won many prizes at Olympiads in mathematics and physics. Because of my achievements, some universities from Belarus and Russia reached out to me with scholarship offers. However, I decided to try to enroll into

a University in the United States so that I could continue my tennis career and engineering education.

I started playing tennis when I was 5 years old. I played for the regional tennis team and took part in many national and European tournaments. My achievements helped me to become a member of the Men's Tennis team at the University of the District of Columbia and to receive a good scholarship. During my tennis career, I have learned so many things that help me succeed in my personal life as well. I learned a lot about the benefits of a healthy diet and gained strong willpower.

My father is a very respected Civil Engineer with years and years of experience. He has been managing multi-million-dollar projects of major construction companies in Europe and Asia. Quite often my father took me to the construction sites and taught me about various construction materials and processes. I really liked what he was doing, that is why I decided to become a Civil Engineer.

In August of 2018, I came to Washington, D.C. and started my college education receiving a full scholarship at the University of the District of Columbia. As an international student it was not easy for me to study at the beginning. However, with the support of my teachers, coaches, teammates and friends, I was able to adapt relatively fast. My analytical thinking and learning skills also helped me to understand the material and get good grades throughout my undergraduate education.

All of my professors at the University of the District of Columbia, Civil Engineering department, continuously reminded me that the first step to becoming a good civil engineer is to conquer the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam. That is why I've

decided to work hard and pass the FE exam before I graduate.

As soon as I started my senior year, I was preparing for the FE exam and solving all the problems published at ASCE-NCS, Dr. Z's CORNER. I also covered several classes that I had not yet taken at school myself, and successfully passed my FE exam in November of 2021. That was great news for me and for my family. Years of hard work paid off.

I really value the knowledge I gained at the University of the District of Columbia. After graduation, I want to work as a civil engineer and get some experience in the office and the field.

Thank you, Dr. Z., for all the help. I can't wait to send you the "good news" after I also pass my Professional Engineering (PE) exam!

– Maksim Bahdanovich,
UDC-Senior Civil
Engineering Student



Finally, as always, we have to remind our readers that FE and PE exams are very fast paced exams and you will have little time to look up information. Therefore, make sure you are familiar with your NCEES-FE Reference Handbook, Version 10.1 and begin with the subject areas you know best. This will give you more time and build your confidence.

Most importantly, stay relaxed and confident. During the exam, keep a good attitude and remind yourself that you are going to do your best!

Until next time,
Ahmet Zeytinci, P.E.
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NCEES

Examinee

Name

Maksim Bahdanovich

NCEES ID

[22-389-06](#)

**MAKSIM CONQUERED
THE F.E. EXAM
ON HIS FIRST
ATTEMPT**

Latest Photo



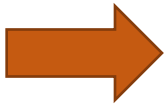
Exam

FE Civil

Date: 11/09/2021

Result: Pass

Board: District of Columbia



Verifiable Link

<https://account.ncees.org/rn/2238906-1471258-3ae5df5>





MEN'S TENNIS



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2021-22 UDC Men's Tennis Roster

Name	Cl.	Ht.	Wt.	Major	Hometown/High School
Maksim Bahdanovich	Senior	6'1		Civil Engineering	Brest, Belarus / Gymnasium No. 2 Brest
Jake Bedforth	Senior	5'11		Business Management	Derby, England / The Duston School
Mauricio Corty	Junior	6'1		Business Management	Merida, Venezuela / Colegio Madre Teresa Titos
Juan Estevez Hernandez	Junior	5'10		Mechanical Engineer	Daganzo de Arriba, Spain / IES Alka'fa Nahar
Louis Mangeon	Junior	6'0		Business Management	Belbeuf, France / Institution Rey
Zicheng Zeng	Senior	6'2		Business Management	Chengdu, China / IMG Academy

MEN'S TENNIS[HOME](#) | [ROSTER](#) | [SCHEDULE](#) | [STATISTICS](#) | [MORE+](#)**T. Richard "Dickie" Mahaffey, III**

Title: Head Coach Men's & Women's Tennis
Phone: (202) 274-5966
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Email: tmahaffey@udc.edu
Hometown: Washington, DC
Previous College: University of Pennsylvania, 1995

Bio

Coach Theodore Richard F. Mahaffey, III (Dickie) enters his sixth season as head men's and women's tennis coach at the University of the District of Columbia in the 2014-15 academic year. Mahaffey has turned the Firebirds tennis program into an East Coast Conference powerhouse and a force in all of Division II.

Mahaffey boasts three ECC Coach of the Year awards: Men's Tennis in 2011 and 2012 and Women's Tennis 2012; the school's first ECC Championship (Women's Tennis 2011), a Reslyn Henley Award winner (Tomas Gajdusek), an ECC Excellence in Community and Character Award winner (Gajdusek), three ECC Scholar Athletes of the Year (Gadjusek, Bruno Reich and Miguel Uzcategui), two ECC Players of the Year (Aleksandar Grabovac 2013, Gajdusek 2010), a pre-season ECC Player of the Year (Jessica Nunez 2012) and several First and Second Team All-ECC selections.

In 2010-2011, Coach Mahaffey guided the men's tennis team to a 13-4 record, a second place finish in the East Coast Conference Men's Tennis Championships, and a No. 4 ranking in the NCAA D-II East Region end-of-season rankings. Coach Mahaffey also guided the women's tennis team to a 7-9 record, a five-win improvement from the 2009-2010 season. In the Spring 2011, Coach Mahaffey was voted by his fellow coaches the ECC Men's Tennis Coach of the Year.

Both teams enjoyed tremendous success in 2011-12 as they both advanced to the NCAA Division II East Regional. The women captured the school's first ever ECC Championship in the fall, and went on to advance to the program's first ever NCAA Sweet 16 in the spring. They finished the season with an overall record of 17-4. The men finished 17-5, advancing to the 2nd round of the

NCAA Tournament. They earned an at-large bid as they were the ECC runner-up for the 2nd consecutive season.

In 2012-13, Coach Mahaffey coached the women's tennis team to an 8-3 record (5-2 conference) and a third place finish in the ECC. Mahaffey had three representatives on the All-ECC team at the end of the season. Jessica Nunez was named 1st team All-ECC and finished the No. 4 ranked singles player in the ITA East Region poll, while Maxime Duijst and Krystina Nepivodova both received 2nd Team All-ECC honors. Meanwhile, the men's tennis team finished 11-5 overall and earned the program's first ECC regular season title with a perfect 5-0 league record. The Firebirds advanced to the ECC Finals for a third consecutive year and once again they earned an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament as a No. 4 seed.

The 2013-14 seasons once again saw both teams qualify for the ECC Tournament after superb regular seasons, but both teams were once again ousted in the semifinals. Senior Jessica Nunez earned her fourth straight First Team All-ECC honor and junior Maxime Duijst earned her third straight Second Team All-ECC distinction in the fall. Later in the spring, senior Miguel Uzcategui was named First Team All-ECC for the second consecutive season.

The Firebirds enjoyed continued individual and team success under Mahaffey in 2014-15. Both teams qualified for the ECC Tournament Semifinal Round, and the men's team went on to earn a No. 7 seed in the NCAA Division II East Regional Tournament. Both teams produced the ECC's Rookie of the Year as freshmen Laura Dimante and Diego Pinto each took home the conference's top honor for first-year student-athletes. Also, each team had a First Team All-ECC performer - junior Peerada Looareesuan for the women and senior Simon Andersson for the men.

Prior to his appointment in 2009 as UDC's head coach, Coach Mahaffey served as assistant tennis coach for Georgetown University's men's and women's tennis teams from 2006 - 2009. In addition, Coach Mahaffey's tennis experience includes serving as assistant head tennis pro for the Edgemoor Club from 2007 - present, assistant director and senior instructor for the Georgetown University Tennis Camp from 2005-2007, and director of tennis for the One-on-One Basketball In Training – Dual Sports Camps from 2007 - 2008.

Coach Mahaffey's other experiences include having served as director of operations for Leeward Islands Lottery Holding Company (CLS-U.S. Virgin Islands), senior consultant at Booz-Allen & Hamilton, and government relations consultant for the firms of Washington & Christian and Washington Strategic Consulting Group, Inc.

Coach Mahaffey is a 1995 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a Bachelors of Arts Degree in International Relations.