



Mechanical Engineering
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

Ryan Thompson, M.S., P.E., C.E.M.

Outstanding Young Mechanical Engineer, 2004

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 2003
MSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 2006

Manager

Department of Utilities and Energy Management,
The University of Texas at Austin

Ryan Thompson was born in Topeka, Kansas, and lived in North Central Kansas until his freshman year of high school. His family moved to the Austin, Texas area and he graduated from Leander High School in 1990. After high school, Ryan enlisted in the United States Navy and worked in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. After boot camp, he attended Nuclear Power School in Orlando, Florida, and Nuclear Prototype training in Windsor, Connecticut. After completing his training, he served as a maintenance leading petty officer on the nuclear carrier U.S.S. Enterprise, based in Norfolk, Virginia, until honorably discharged in 1996.

Upon returning to Austin, Ryan enrolled in The University of Texas at Austin to pursue a mechanical engineering career. In 1998 he joined the staff of Utilities and Energy Management as a maintenance mechanic, working on the turbine generators, boilers, and associated equipment at the Hal C. Weaver Power Plant. Working full-time, Ryan completed his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2003. At this time, Ryan was promoted to a management position and began to oversee the maintenance operations at the power plant. Ryan continued his engineering education at the university, graduating with a master's degree in 2006.

During his career in the Department of Utilities and Energy Management, Ryan has been part of the design, construction, and operation of several critical infrastructure projects that have made the University's Carl J. Eckhardt Combined Heating and Power Complex internationally-renowned for operations and efficiency. These projects include a new gas turbine generator installation, two new chilling stations, two thermal energy storage tanks, and underground thermal distribution systems serving the Dell Medical District. Aside from utilities-related projects, his day-to-day duties include the management of maintenance operations at the Main Campus and Pickle Research Campus power and chilling plants.

Ryan is a member of the Association of Energy Engineers and the International District Energy Association. He is also an adjunct professor at Austin Community College, teaching in the Electronics and Advanced Technologies Department. Throughout his career, Ryan has supported the ME department by giving plant tours and as a guest lecturer for the benefit of engineering students.