



## MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ENGINEERS TEACH STEM CONCEPTS — WITH LEGOS

WASHINGTON DC, APRIL 7-8, 2018 — At this year's USA Science and Engineering Festival, faculty and students from Morgan State University's Department of Civil Engineering will be on hand to teach kids about protecting structures from windstorms with some of their favorite toys: Legos.

The annual expo, held April 7 and 8 in Washington, DC, is aimed at stimulating and sustaining interest in STEM subjects – and is attended by thousands of kids, teens and their parents.

At the MSU booth, kids get the chance to build a shelter strong enough to prevent a Lego minifigure from being blown away by a simulated wind storm. The wind will be supplied by a fan-powered wind tunnel based on the famous Wall of Wind at Florida International University. The Wall of Wind is part of the Natural Hazards Engineering Research Infrastructure, an NSF-funded experimental facility. The MSU activity is part of NHERI's education and outreach mission.

Spearheading the activity is Monique Head, professor of structural engineering at MSU and NHERI educator. She explains that much of the teaching at the booth will be done by engineering students from MSU. "They will show kids how to design structures to resist lateral loads like wind, and they'll talk about what it is like to study engineering in college," Head says.

Booth participants will learn an important tenet in structural and hazards engineering: when designing a structure, one must consider various loads that act upon it. This hands-on activity will excite participants and show how structural engineers design structures to resist loads from windstorms and protect lives.

### Contact:

Monique Head  
Associate Professor/Structural Engineering  
Department of Civil Engineering  
Morgan State University  
(443) 885-3295  
monique.head@morgan.edu