

December 8, 2015

# President's Message: On Advocacy, Recognitions and Engagement

*(Or What Do My Annual Pittsburgh Section \$35 Dues Do?)*

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"Infrastructure can be made sexy. Really," stated Carl Bernstein, the Pulitzer laureate best known for his coverage of the Watergate scandal, to highlight the need to promote infrastructure as a 'pressing' priority topic in Capitol Hill ([Ref. 1](#)). While Mr. Bernstein was addressing a national forum, closer to home our Section continues our staunch involvement in the [Construction Legislative Council of Western Pennsylvania](#) (CLCPA), ASCE Pennsylvania Council (APC), the organization and participation of [Infrastructure Week](#), and a dynamic [Government Relations Committee](#) to advocate for pressing civil engineering issues regionally and statewide including our input on on-going legislation such as the [Fix the Highway Fund](#). As you may know, the APC is a unique-to-our-state effort that brings together Pennsylvania's four ASCE sections to strategize and collaborate in optimizing our impact at the national level.

These advocacy efforts are just one of the Section's facets that are sponsored and sustained by your [\\$35 Pittsburgh Section dues contribution](#) because, although National dues cover coast-to-coast promotion, coordination and offering of technical webinars, journals, conferences, special events, group rates and the corresponding staffing for these tasks, at the local level each Section is responsible for their own staffing, website, grass root coordination and promotion, local member outreach, student awards, seminars, etc. This is the reason we encourage all our members to become involved and research for themselves the benefits our Section uniquely offers.

Another aspect that our Section promotes, sponsors and showcases – yes, a bit of limelight on the good we do is all right once in a while – is our local achievements and achievers. From projects, to professionals (young, young-at-heart, students and meritorious service), and to employer recognition and journalism, our [Pittsburgh Section Awards](#) aim to recognize the talent, dedication, commitment and achievements of our profession. Thus, remember to nominate your candidate(s) for these awards – the December 18<sup>th</sup> deadline is fast approaching but there's time to have you, your colleagues, firm or a young colleague or student recognized at our [Annual Engineer's Week Award Banquet](#).

Due to space constraints there's only room for one more example of the far-reach that your \$35 Section dues achieve: our engagement of local professionals and students. From inviting our future colleagues to be recognized and celebrate [E-Week with our Section](#) members through the [plethora of technical, volunteer and social events](#) our Section holds year around, we strive to bridge the transition from academic to professional environment; from student to colleague; from active to very active ASCE member.

It's amazing how far \$35 can go! Unfortunately I am out of space to expand on additional benefits of Section dues such as our news blog, multimedia capabilities, educational outreach, continuing education, etc. at this time. So for now, on behalf of our [Institutes](#), [Committees](#), and [Student Chapters](#): a hearty **Thank you** for your continued support at the national and local level! Please [contact us](#) for more information or to become more involved. We continue to

encourage our members' participation and leadership through the "three E's": engagement, erudition and energy!

Sincerely yours,

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