

President's Message - September 2020

Dear Members,

It is difficult for me to comprehend that it is already halfway through September! It has made me reflect on the nature of time, and how important it is to focus on and cherish the present moment. The passage of time on earth essentially occurs at a constant and consistent rate. But for us humans, the passage of time is really quite relative (just ask Einstein!). You know what I mean: Sometimes it seems like a day will never end, while another day seems to pass in the blink of an eye. When I look back at what I've done with my time, I'm generally pleased. However, there are moments that I'd love to go back to - in Doc Brown's DeLorean of course! - to change or influence points in my timeline. I'm sure that you all have similar moments that would benefit from the wisdom only acquired from experience.

William Penn is credited with saying "Time is what we want most, but what we use worst." This statement seems truer to me today than it ever did the first time I heard it many years ago. I grew up in rural western Pennsylvania where I learned my work ethic from my farming family. Work always came before play and often still does. I try to be a good steward of my time, and I'm working to use it more appropriately. We only get one chance at life: There isn't an instruction manual to guide our way, only the lessons passed along by those who made the journey before us. So yes, work is important. And having a strong work ethic is a valuable asset. But more important is the cultivation of relationships and providing empathy and assistance to those in need. I urge you to make the most of what you have and do what you can to limit the regrets of time wasted. My advice today is to always find a way to keep learning, always take advantage of any opportunity to create memories with those you cherish, and always make time to help a friend or neighbor.

Having said that, if you're looking for a way to share a passion for your work while also spending time creating enjoyable memories, consider participating in some of ASCE's upcoming national and local activities:

SEI is organizing a couple events to celebrate Steel Day with a [virtual game show](#) on September 25th and a [Design Contest](#) on October 5th. These are opportunities to "bring" the family and demonstrate structural engineering concepts! Registration is required for both events.

I'm also happy to announce that the Pittsburgh Section is working to form a Utility Engineering and Surveying Institute (UESI) chapter this year. Our hope is that the Pittsburgh UESI Chapter will offer professionals working within the utility, pipeline engineering, and surveying/geomatics communities the opportunity to network with others and shape the future of the industry by participating in technical activities, conferences, and the development of internationally recognized standards. A Virtual General Interest meeting is planned for Thursday, [October 8th](#). If you are interested in

getting involved with the development of this Institute or are just curious and want to learn more, please contact [Alma Rettinger](#).

Last week was ASCE's first virtual 2020 V-Tech Conference. Members heard and interacted with top technical global leaders from each of ASCE's institutes from the comfort of their home or office. Read some of the highlights [here](#). If you were not able to attend the V-Tech Conference, I encourage you to consider attending the 2020 Convention on October 28th through the 30th. The ASCE Convention is the Society's flagship membership event. It is the single annual opportunity that the entire Society is represented together and reflects the diversity of civil engineering that ASCE encompasses. The Convention program is designed to have integrated, multi-disciplinary, technical, and educational components to meet the needs of the profession. [Registration](#) for the 2020 Convention is open!

I know your time is your best currency, so thank you for spending it to support ASCE as an engaged member. I continue to seek your guidance to help the Board govern our activities. Please feel free to contact me anytime at jshimko@mckimcreed.com.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Shimko

President

ASCE – Pittsburgh Section

