

I would like to begin by congratulating all of our recent high school and college graduates! No education system is perfect, but I hope you learn from and acknowledge all the tests and obstacles you overcame to get to your diploma. These lessons help equip you to be adaptive and successful problem solvers who can change the world, hopefully for the better. It's my hope that you use this momentum to become active ASCE members. As part of the recent Society updates, Student members automatically receive ASCE Profession Associate Membership. This membership upgrade allows access to free online trainings, salary surveys, and forum boards. ASCE is designed to support everyone involved in civil engineering; from your first day as a first year student in college, through your entire career, into retirement. ASCE provides the same level of technical and professional support regardless of your position in your career.

Speaking of growth and support, I reread my Younger Member Form President Message and goals from May 2017 to aid me in writing my introductory President's message. Though I have grown and learned a lot through my terms as YMF president and Pittsburgh Section Board member, my original statements on why I found ASCE membership valuable still ring true:

"I got involved with ASCE because I liked that it focused on relaying current events happening in the industry while also allowing networking opportunities with my peers, who had diverse life and work experiences. Plus involvement never looked bad on a resume or hurt a company's marketing efforts!"

Therefore, I challenge all members who are office managers, professors, or department heads to strongly encourage and support those engineers whom you supervise to become involved in a professional engineering society like ASCE. I believe the events of the past year have shown how important unity and connection to others are to advancing public good and to facilitate lifelong learning. Pittsburgh has numerous valuable professional societies that have unique goals and opportunities. Though I myself get involved in several of our region's professional organizations, ASCE has always felt like the best fit for me. Throughout the years, I've found that it offered the best opportunities for me to meet other entry civil engineers, build my networking skills, expand my knowledge beyond just my day-to-day projects, get connected to engineering focused volunteer opportunities, and be mentored by established professionals. Not taking advantage of all that ASCE has to offer is to waste a connection to a valuable resource.

For those who do not know, there are nine ASCE members on the Pittsburgh Board, each serving a three-year term. I want to recognize and thank the members whose Board term has come to an end. Alma Rettinger, Justin Brooks, and Brian Heinzl, have all greatly contributed to providing valuable programs and civil engineering knowledge to the Pittsburgh region during their terms. We will still see them around, in different roles, at events so please take a moment to say "Hi" and thank them.

I want to also congratulate Jonathan Shimko for leading the Pittsburgh Section through all of the changes that occurred from spring 2020 through today. On the heels of the Pittsburgh Board's recent strategic planning meeting on June 29th, I'm very excited for the start of a busy term that helps share the knowledge and advancements in the civil engineering industry that are occurring here in Pittsburgh. Look for upcoming event information in your inbox from asce-pgh.org. And please join us in making this year the time you rededicate yourself to ASCE and the profession of civil engineering!

Thank you for your support,
Erin Feichtner, P.E.

