
Newsletter for the San Luis Obispo / Central Coast Branch • April 2009

APRIL 2009 MEETING:
Our Water, Our Future

TOPIC:

Steven Tanaka, P.E., Director of Water Resources at the Wallace Group, will present a topic entitled "Our Water, Our Future". The presentation will focus on global, national, state-wide and local water issues, and the importance of water recycling and water conservation to secure our future water needs.

The presentation will also provide overviews of two large-scale water recycling projects recently presented at WaterReuse Association Conferences, including agricultural reuse at the Monterey Regional Wastewater Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) facility in Monterey County, and the Orange County Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) project for indirect potable water reuse in Southern California.

LOCATION:

Fairways Restaurant
(at the Dairy Creek Golf Course)
2990 Dairy Creek Road
San Luis Obispo, CA



DATE & TIME:

Thursday, April 16th
12:00 pm (Noon)

MENU:

Mexican Buffet

RESERVATIONS:

Please sign up by 1:00 p.m. Friday, April 10th, at the Branch web site (www.asceslo.org). Please attend the luncheon if you sign-up – some restaurants will charge the Branch for every seat we reserve, regardless of the actual attendance. If you have specific dietary restrictions or have questions, please contact Tom Zehnder at (805) 544-4011 or by email at TomZ@wallacegroup.us. The cost is \$25 for members or guests and \$10 for student members.

NEW DETAILS OF 2009 REPORT
CARD'S D GRADE RELEASED

Get the facts behind the overall D grade announced by ASCE. The complete 2009 Report Card for America's Infrastructure is now available, detailing the rationale behind the grades in 15 categories. Discover the specifics behind the grades at the official site: www.infrastructurereportcard.org.

PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE:

Recognizing Achievements in Civil Engineering

Is there someone that you know who goes above and beyond the minimum in his or her profession or community? Or a project that impressed you with its application of innovative engineering techniques? Then all you need to do is send me an email or letter by April 24th that explains why you think the person or project deserves recognition. That's right; it's time for our civil engineering colleagues to pat each other on the back by nominating them for a San Luis Obispo ASCE Branch Award. There are several categories your nomination could fall under, including:

- Outstanding Government Civil Engineering Project
- Outstanding Private Sector Civil Engineering Project
- Outstanding Sustainability Project
- Outstanding Architectural Engineering Project
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Government
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Private Sector
- Outstanding Life Member Civil Engineer
- Outstanding Younger Civil Engineer
- Outstanding Faculty Advisor
- Outstanding Practitioner Advisor
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Legislative Activities
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Community Service
- Excellence in Journalism

Descriptions of the criteria for each category can be found on our Branch's website – www.ASCESLO.org. Make sure the project you would like to nominate is located in the San Luis Obispo County and Northern Santa Barbara County areas, hasn't been submitted to other branches for award consideration, and was/will be completed between January 1, 2008 and April 24, 2009. All nominated projects and people will receive a certificate of recognition from our Branch, with the winning project or person receiving a plaque. Depending on the number of nominations received, the project representative will either be asked to do a short or long presentation at the June meeting, when our winners will be announced. The winners may also be invited to share more detail on their project at future luncheons. Hopefully those you nominate will be willing to participate!

Winning nominations are then submitted to the Section for competition amongst projects and professionals from other Branches. If successful there, the Section submits the project

MEET THE MEMBER - MISGANA MULETA, PH.D., PE

This month we have an opportunity to meet Dr. Misgana Muleta, who recently moved from Los Angeles to join Cal Poly as an Assistant Professor in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. Misgana's specialization is Water Resources. We sat down to discuss his background and thoughts on the profession.

Misgana is originally from Oromia, the largest region in Ethiopia. It has been a while since he has had an opportunity to visit, but has plans to return in about 2 years. He completed his undergraduate education in Ethiopia, did a Masters in Ireland, and completed his Ph.D. at Southern Illinois University. His memories of the cold and wet climate of Ireland stand out in stark contrast to the weather on the Central Coast.

Misgana has enjoyed working at Cal Poly and living on the Central Coast. Coming from Los Angeles, he very much enjoys the scenic nature of the County and the traffic (of course). He does not miss the hour-plus commutes at all. While in Los Angeles, he worked at MWH Soft and was an adjunct professor at Cal Poly - Pomona (the "other" Cal Poly). During his tenure with MWH Soft, a water resources software company located in Arcadia, California, Misgana worked with great multidisciplinary team of computer scientists, GIS specialists, and engineers to develop several industry standard models that are used for urban stormwater management and sewer collection systems modeling. Misgana remarked, "that gave me the opportunity to learn and value team work and to communicate technical knowledge across disciplines."

Dr. Muleta's research activities involve development and application of comprehensive numerical models and heuristic optimization methods for cost effective design, planning and management of water resources and environmental systems. Specific application areas include nonpoint source



pollution management for agricultural and urban watersheds, urban stormwater management, and integrated watershed management.

Dr. Muleta teaches classes in water resources including Hydraulic Systems Engineering, Water Resources Engineering, and Groundwater Hydraulics. He has plans to develop courses such as Application of GIS to Water Resources and Modeling of Hydrosystems.

When asked whether he has any special recommendations or perspective for the younger members just entering the profession during these tough

times, Misgana mentioned in a positive tone "It's obviously a difficult time, but it can also be an opportunity to pursue graduate school." He strongly recommends professional licensure and describes the benefits as higher pay, greater job responsibilities, and overall a big help in gaining employment. His PE was not required for his software development work at MWH Soft, but he saw the importance and value of licensure for consulting engineers.

Misgana has not been heavily involved with ASCE activities in the past, with the exception of attending EWRI conferences.

Outside of work, Misgana loves nature. He enjoys driving through scenic places and this is one of the reasons he came to Cal Poly -- he loves natural beauty of the area. Keep an eye out for Misgana at upcoming branch meetings and at his favorite destinations for soaking in the natural views of the central coast -- Avila Beach, and on Highway 46 between 101 and 1. Misgana is engaged, but he and his fiancé have not yet set a wedding date.

~ Jim Hanson

K-12 Outreach Continues...

Come see teamwork, imagination, and ingenuity at its finest!

What?	Cal Poly's 3rd Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest
When?	10 AM on Saturday, April 18, 2009
Where?	Cal Poly, Building 13, Room 125
Who?	K-12 students from local schools

Come watch teams as they test their bridges made of only popsicle sticks and glue! Cal Poly ASCE will host the event, but welcomes any Branch members (and their families) that want to attend the event. The Cal Poly Open House will be happening throughout campus that day, so pack some walking shoes, get there early, watch the bridge contest, and check out other events taking place like the tractor pull or the Poly Royale Parade!

Other upcoming events: Due to the enthusiasm generated by the K-12 presentations in February, our Branch will continue to travel to schools County-wide and talk to students about civil engineering. More volunteers and ideas are always welcome! Thank you again for your participation so far!

For more information, contact Carolyn Berg today: (949) 422-3616 or ckberg2@gmail.com

PRESIDENT PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

to the Region for potential Region-wide recognition. Our Faculty Advisor for the Student Chapter of ASCE at Cal Poly, Dr. Gregg Fiegel, the Cambria Grammar School Project and the Lopez Dam Seismic Retrofit Project were successful at the Section level, with Dr. Fiegel and the Lopez Dam Project both going on to receive awards at the Region as well. So you see, your winning nominee has an excellent chance to receive State-wide recognition!

With the challenges our area faces in completing projects – archaeological sites, endangered species habitat, water supply restrictions, land stability issues, financial constraints – there are sure to be a number of candidates that have exhibited innovative efforts and achievement over these adverse conditions. Engineers deserving recognition may be active in the local chapters of Engineers without Borders and Habitat for Humanity, as these organizations provide opportunities for civil engineers to selflessly volunteer their time and energy to provide their services directly to those most in need. A small token of recognition is the least we can do to acknowledge these wonderful contributions to humanity!

~ Courtney Howard

RECOGNITION OF WALLACE GROUP

On behalf of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Committee on Younger Members (CYM) and the San Luis Obispo Branch Officers would like to recognize Wallace Group as a recipient of the 2008 Employer Recognition Award.

The Employer Recognition Program was a result of the ASCE Strategic Plan which called for the establishment of a program to recognize and acknowledge employers who support Younger Member participation in ASSCE activities. Younger Members are defined as ASCE members of age 35 and under. CYM has been given the responsibility of implementing the Employer Recognition Program.

Based on information supplied through the nomination form completed by Kari Wagner, CYM feels that Wallace Group should be recognized for its encouragement and exemplary support of Younger Member involvement in ASCE activities.

Wallace Group will be among the names of the Employer Recognition Award recipients that will be published in ASCE news.

YOUNGER MEMBERS & STUDENT MEMBERS:

The Committee on Younger Members is happy to announce the publication of the Younger Member Newsletter available at www.ASCE.org/inside/files/pdf/issue66.pdf.

OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

If you have an event you would like posted at no cost, contact Syllas Cranor at 781-5260 or at scrantor@co.slo.ca.us.

The local chapter of the **American Public Works Association** meets on the second Wednesday of the month, every other month. For details, contact Jay Walter at jwalter@slocity.org.

The Central Coast Branch of the **California Land Surveyors Association** usually meets the second Thursday of each month. Contact Rochelle Vierra at 549-3461 or Rochelle_Vierra@dot.ca.gov for more information.

Cal Poly's **Society of Civil Engineers (SCE)** welcomes local professionals to its regular meetings held alternate Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in Room 13-118. For further information, contact Kari Wagner (kariw@WallaceGroup.us) or Jeff Spannbauer (jeffs@cannonassoc.com).

The Central Coast Chapter of the **International Code Council** meets the first Thursday of the month at Margie's Dinner. Contact Sylvia Aldana at 781-4671 or saldana@co.slo.ca.us for information.

The **American Institute of Architects** meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Vista Grande Restaurant (Cal Poly). For information, call Jeff Emrick at 549-8658.

Engineers Without Borders meets on the second Wednesday of each month at Noon. For further information, contact an EWB Officer at ewb.slo@gmail.com.

The **Central Coast Geological Society** meets every second Tuesday. For information, contact Lou Blanck at 542-4626.

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Visit the ASCE National Website at www.ASCE.org

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