

JUNE 2009 MEETING:

Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Awards

TOPIC:

This month's meeting is the Branch's 2009 Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) Awards program. This year, awards will honor local people and projects that best illustrate superior civil engineering skills and represent a significant contribution to civil engineering progress and society in a number of categories. There were seven nominations, representing seven award categories, 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 Younger Civil Engineer
- Outstanding Practitioner Advisor

The luncheon will start with opening remarks and introduction of the judges, followed by short presentations on each of the entries, and commence with the award presentations. Finally, an overall project winner will be announced and receive the 2009 OCEA bronze plaque for the project site. Make sure to mark your calendar and join us at the Custom House in Avila Beach to see which project will be awarded the 2009 OCEA Award!

LOCATION:

Custom House
404 Front Street
Avila Beach, CA



DATE & TIME:

Thursday, June 18th
12:00 pm (Noon)

MENU:

Pasta bar! Bowtie pasta with sun dried tomato pesto, Fettuccini Alfredo with asparagus and mushrooms, and Italian Sausage Lasagna. Soda included.

RESERVATIONS:

Please sign up by 1:00 pm Friday, June 12th, 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.

PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE:

ASCE Opportunities

Would you like to see our Branch offer more than just luncheons? Want to become more involved, but don't know how? This month I thought I would share some other opportunities to be more involved through ASCE, such as volunteering to serve on a branch committee or implement an ASCE-sponsored program locally, which may be just what you're looking for.

Become a local mentoring program champion/Serve on a Mentoring Program Committee: With Cal Poly participation and the range of experience levels our Branch membership includes, implementation of a local mentoring program has a high probability of success. OK, so I didn't actually conduct a study and I tend to be an optimist. However, ASCE has several resources available to help implement a program locally, including a webinar-on-CD entitled "Mentoring: Implementing a Program in Your Organization". The San Bernardino/Riverside County Branches in our Section have also implemented a program and are available to provide additional tips and guidance – check out www.ascesbriv.org/Mentorship_Committee. Don't want to help others be mentors and protégés, but are looking to be a mentor or protégé yourself? Consider signing up for ASCE National's ecareer mentoring (<http://careers.asce.org/ementor>) – "Whether you are a protégé looking for career advice from someone in your field ... a highly experienced civil engineer ready to share knowledge and expertise ... or a mid-career professional who has advice to offer and in need of some helpful advice of your own ... ASCE eCareerMentor provides the online tools to match our members with others with common interests and specific expertise for maximum learning advantage."

Serve on a Younger Member Committee: Our Branch officers have considered the idea of forming a Younger Member Forum (YMF), and while we felt that forming a formal YMF was not feasible at this time, it would be fantastic to have younger members facilitate events similar to those held through YMFs of other Section branches. Essentially, you would help to facilitate more "social" activities for members, aside from our monthly luncheons – perhaps an evening social hour or weekend winery outing with a planned tour of one of their facilities. Many of the wineries could probably highlight their sustainable practices related to engineering. I know many of our officers would appreciate your help in forming this committee. This committee may also consider accomplishing the goals of a mentor program committee.

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MEET THE MEMBER - WILSON WONG

This month we have an opportunity to meet Wilson Wong, who is just completing his M.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cal Poly, with a specialization in geotechnical engineering. We sat down to discuss his background and thoughts on the civil engineering industry.

Wilson is from Saratoga, California. He lived in San Diego for several years during his undergraduate studies and during a 3-year stint in environmental consulting. He currently resides in San Luis Obispo. He plans to move back to San Jose after completion of his thesis.

Wilson is working on research related to compaction characteristics of municipal solid waste and is in the process of preparing his thesis. He is evaluating the geotechnical behavior of municipal solid waste for compressibility, hydraulic conductivity, and shear strength as a function of initial waste compaction conditions. Wilson's work has demonstrated that a significant increase in waste placement at a given site is possible if compaction is conducted at appropriate moisture conditions. This work has significant environmental as well as economic implications. His work involves laboratory testing on manufactured municipal solid waste (Wilson never would have



Wilson conducting field research at a landfill in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The research team was instrumenting a geomembrane liner system to measure long-term displacements using linear potentiometers.

guessed he would be making trash in graduate school).

Wilson has an engineering science background that complements his graduate engineering work. His previous studies in Environmental Systems: Earth Science have given him a strong foundation for approaching the engineering coursework at Cal Poly. At UCSD, his focus was structural geology and data visualization. Although the

transition to engineering has been difficult, he has greatly enjoyed it and feels that the geotechnical professors at Cal Poly have helped him to realize his potential and given him the tools to quantify what his intuition tells him.

Wilson recently sat for the FE Exam. Due to his non-engineering background and heavily focused geotechnical curriculum, he found studying for the FE an eye-opening experience (in a good way). Wilson enjoyed learning about the other aspects of engineering that he had not covered otherwise during his graduate studies and he was happy to discover that the general breadth of geotechnical engineering had prepared him for the FE. Although he laments the lack of formal class work in thermodynamics, he is happy to have had the exposure through his studies for the FE.

Wilson's involvement in ASCE has helped him develop technical skills and teamwork skills. Specifically, Wilson was a member of the Cal Poly Geo-Challenge competition in 2008. This group qualified for national competition and traveled to New Orleans to compete against other universities. Wilson was a late-comer to the project and was not too heavily involved with the design stages of the scale-model reinforced retaining wall (poster board wall on a nominally 2 ft x 2 ft x 2ft cube). Being a hands-on type of person, he greatly enjoyed the opportunity to learn, first hand, about mechanically stabilized earth walls. The team conducted interface strength tests, trial runs with a variety of designs, and tension tests for the reinforcing strips. Since the competition, Wilson has taken an earth retaining structures class, allowing a whole new level of appreciation for the design process. Wilson is very thankful to the local chapter of the ASCE for sponsoring the team and making it possible for them to attend the ASCE GeoCongress in New Orleans.

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YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM CORNER

How does a day at the beach sound? The ASCE Orange County YMF Group is hosting a 2nd Annual Beach Day and if you are under 35 years old, you are invited!

Where and When? Huntington Beach (1st Street/Huntington Street, south of the pier) Saturday, July 11, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.

Or maybe an afternoon strolling through Santa Ynez's vineyards catches your interest? The ASCE MLAB (Metropolitan L.A.) YMF Group is hosting a trip to Santa Ynez for \$45, which includes transport (presumably from the L.A. area), tasting fees, and lunch! Spots are limited, so act fast.

Where and When? Santa Ynez, Los Olivos, and Solvang, June 13, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.

These events are a great way to network with folks from all reaches of southern California and a chance to unwind after a long week at work. For more information on these events or YMF, please contact Carolyn Berg at (949) 422- 3616 or cklberg2@gmail.com.

PRESIDENT PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

Become a local diversity contact/Serve on a local Diversity Committee: ASCE National is soliciting branches for a local diversity contact that would be responsible for receiving updates, invitations and other important notices about ASCE's Diversity programming efforts on behalf of our Branch. Whether you may be interested in helping to educate members or advocate for diverse and inclusive work environments, resources are available to help you engage members in our community.

Become a local National Committee or Technical Institute advocate: If you are already involved with a Technical, Professional, Educational, Research, Board, or Institute Committee at the National level, consider providing the Branch with up-to-date information on the activities and programs of your committee, serving as a liaison between the committee and our Branch, and/or facilitating and encouraging involvement of our Branch members at the National level. If you are actively participating in a Technical Institute, consider sharing what the institute has to offer with Branch members.

I would be happy to discuss these opportunities with you further at any time. Thanks for considering!

~ Courtney Howard

**YOUNGER MEMBER EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION AWARD**

The Committee on Younger Members is seeking nominations for the 2009 Younger Member Employer Recognition Award.

The Employer Recognition Award was created to recognize employers who support young engineers and assist with their personal development. CYM also awards two Superior Employer Recognition Awards (one public, one private) to the nominees who best display exemplary support of young engineers in their organizations. A list of winning organizations will be submitted for publication in ASCE News and included in the Younger Member Newsletter.

Nominations must be postmarked by August 1, 2009. The nomination form, which describes the award in detail, is available for download on the CYM Awards page: www.asce.org/files/doc/pressroom/honors/2009EmployerRecognitionApplication.doc

Thank you for your continuing support. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Marie A. Maly at mmaly@schemmer.com

Visit the ASCE National Website at
www.ASCE.org

MEET THE MEMBER (CONT.)

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Wilson is planning to get married in October to his fiancé, Liz. He will be moving to San Jose where they plan to start their lives together. He is quite excited and describes his status as simply "I can't wait". When he finds free time between classes and research activities, Wilson embraces the outdoor California lifestyle. He enjoys mountain biking, long distance running, and tinkering with computers. Wilson also enjoys learning new things, and fixing things after first breaking them.

~ Jim Hanson

**K-12: CURIOUS GEORGE BRINGS CIVIL
ENGINEERING TO GROVER HEIGHTS**



Curious George joined three local professionals and two Cal Poly civil engineering students at Grover Heights Elementary Boys and Girls Club. The afternoon consisted of roughly 100 kids (K-6), hundreds of toothpicks, gumdrops galore, marshmallows, crayons, straws, and newspapers. The kids rotated through several activity stations: the newspaper tower competition, the construction zone (built any engineering structure out of toothpicks, gumdrops, and marshmallows), the hoop gliders, and the drawing station. Overall, everyone involved enjoyed the event and the kids expressed a great enthusiasm for math, science, and engineering!

We are always looking for more enthusiastic civil engineers to join us while we urge kids to consider a future in civil engineering.

If you have any ideas for future events, want to get involved, or simply would like more information, please contact Carolyn Berg at (949) 422- 3616 or ckberg2@gmail.com.

~ Carolyn Berg

PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY

Civil 3D Reminders

<http://Blog.Civil3DReminders.com>

A Local Source for Civil 3D Information

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