

May 2020

ASCE Austin Branch Newsletter

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President's Message by Travis Isaacson, P.E.

As the COVID-19 pandemic is changing the world we live in, ASCE Austin Branch continues to prioritize the health and safety of our members and community. We are I hope you are all staying safe and well during these unprecedented times. If you are like me, you are wondering what the future will hold for our economy and our civil engineering industry, while trying to maintain some sense of normal with your family and work life. ASCE Austin wants to continue to bring our members ways to connect and learn during this time, so we have decided to hold our May 19th meeting as an online Zoom meeting. I hope you will be able to join us for the meeting, which is being hosted by our Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI).



ASCE Austin Branch is also working to help our Central Texas community members in need. The Branch has made a one-time donation of \$5,000 to the Central Texas Food Bank and has set a goal of raising an additional \$5,000 through membership donations. We need your help! Please consider giving today to help those that have been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Our spring calendar has been thrown in the trash, but we are already working to reschedule events for later in the year. This includes the YMF Golf Tournament, which has been rescheduled for September 11th at Avery Ranch Golf Club, and our annual Continuing Education workshop, which has been rescheduled for October 9th at the J.J. Pickle Research Center.

May is also the start of planning for the coming year! The Nominating Committee for ASCE Austin Branch is putting together our slate of officers for the June election and we will be holding elections for the following board positions this year:

- VP Programs
- Secretary
- Treasurer-Elect
- Communications Director
- Younger Member Director

We also have a number of Committee Chair positions open. If you are interesting in running for one of the open positions or hearing more about the Committee Chair positions we have open, please reach out to [Kacey Paul](#).

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Linked In](#) and [Instagram](#) for event recaps, upcoming events, relevant news, and updates. If you have any questions about our Branch, please don't hesitate to contact me at 512-203-8767, tisaacson@rios-group.com. Thank you for everything you do to support ASCE!

Travis S. Isaacson, P.E.

ASCE Membership Survey

by Colton Fisher, P.E.



Hello everyone! The ASCE Austin Branch is looking to receive your feedback to see what we are doing well and ways we can improve. Click the link below to fill out a quick 4 question survey at your convenience. Hope everyone is staying safe out there!

[Survey Link](#)

Central Texas Food Bank

by Francisco Arce, P.E.



Central Texas still needs your help!!! We're making progress toward our goal, but we've got a long way to go. Please consider donating to support our local community if you can spare any amount!

In response to the global outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the ASCE Austin Branch is committed to helping the Central Texas Food Bank fund-raise to support people facing hunger in the Central Texas area. The ASCE Austin Branch has made a one-time donation of \$5,000 to the Central Texas Food Bank and has set a goal of raising an additional \$5,000 through membership participation.

May Branch Meeting by Sam Shorter, P.E.

ASCE Austin Branch is excited to host Katina Bohrer, PE, CFM – Watershed Engineering, Floodplain Mapping and Modeling, City of Austin, as this month's speaker.

Date: 5/19/2020 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Topic: Atlas 14 Floodplain Studies, an update from the City of Austin



[Register here](#)



Katina has spent her career in the Floodplain Modeling and Mapping Services group within Watershed Engineering at the City of Austin since she joined in 2005. She has been involved with the floodplain study & mapping process for 37 Austin area watersheds. She previously has led the WED Easement Release team and currently serves as lead for Commercial Floodplain Review for the City of Austin.

May Branch Meeting Sponsor by Augustine Verrengia, P.E.



Bio Clean is Forterra's newest line of environmental products for stormwater treatment. Products range from large object filtration to fine filtration including bio-filtration. Products, such as the Bio Clean Automatic retracting screen (ARS) are used on existing or new curb inlet structures and block large solids from entering the stormwater collection system. The Bio Clean curb inlet and catch basin inserts prevent large solids and sediment from clogging stormwater collection systems. The SciClone is a Hydrodynamic separator, which allows suspended solids to fall out of suspension and reduce TSS in stormwater flows. For finer filtration needs, the Modular Wetland uses both large and fine filtration methods including bio-filtration within one unit. The Modular Wetland Biofiltration system received TCEQ approval for use in the Edward's Aquifer, as well as a conditional approval in the City of Austin, and provides more treatment capacity in a smaller area.

Food Bank Cont'd

The link will take you to a secure website set-up by the ASCE Austin Branch through the [Central Texas Food Bank Virtual Food Drive portal](#). Please consider giving today!

Support State DOT Revenue Needs Amid Pandemic

ASCE has urged Congress to provide \$50 billion in immediate, and necessary relief for state departments of transportation (state DOTs) as a way to ensure vital transportation projects can continue.

As the current COVID-19 pandemic continues, state DOTs are unable to generate the revenue needed to prevent major disruptions in their ability to operate and maintain their transportation systems. to impact ASCE members and creates prolonged economic uncertainty.

Under the current pandemic, individual state revenues are estimated to be impacted by 45% in the next 18 months. This is a result of expected decline of 50% for state motor fuel taxes, a 67% decline in toll road traffic, and a 77% decline in ferry traffic. Because of this sharp decline, state DOT's ability to provide a match for federal funds will be constrained and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has estimated that [state DOTs require \\$50 billion](#) in order to continue to operate.

ASCE's [2017 Infrastructure Report Card](#) identified an investment gap of \$2 trillion, half of which is for our nation's surface transportation infrastructure. Now is the time to [urge your Members of Congress](#) to support our nation's surface transportation infrastructure and our state DOTs by providing emergency relief.

[TAKE ACTION TODAY](#)

ASCE Austin Branch 2020 Continuing Education Workshop by Jason Garza, P.E. and Jane Ellen Carter, E.I.T



Mark your calendars! The Continuing Education Workshop has been rescheduled for October 9th, 2020 at the JJ Pickle Research Center. We are working with the presenters for the rescheduled date. We will continue to monitor the situation through the summer months.

ASCE Austin Branch Sponsorship Opportunities Now Available! by Augustine Verrengia, P.E.

2020-2021 ASCE Austin Branch Sponsorship Opportunities are STILL Available!

We ask that all members consider supporting your local ASCE branch during these uncertain and difficult times. Almost all the functions of the organization are dependent upon these sponsorships and we cannot do all the great things that we do, without YOUR SUPPORT!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Annual Sponsors (\$300)
 - Valid for 1 Year after date of purchase.
 - Company logo is displayed on newsletters, mailers, and at ASCE branch meetings.
 - Free postings on the ASCE job board.
- Monthly Branch Meeting sponsors (\$350)
 - Company highlight in event promotion emails.
 - Special recognition at branch meeting event.
 - Opportunity to give a brief introduction of your Company during the event.
- Continuing Education (2021) Event (\$300)
 - Company highlight in event promotion emails.
 - Several additional levels of sponsorship available.
- SPECIAL BUNDLE RATE (\$850)
 - Save \$100 when you pledge to support all three!
 - Includes Annual Sponsorship
 - Includes one credit for monthly branch meeting sponsorship.
 - Includes sponsorship at Continuing Education event.

For more information about the benefits of sponsorship visit <https://www.austinasce.org/sponsors>. If you have any questions or for more information please email sponsorship@austinasce.org.

Thank you,
Augustine Verrengia, P.E.
Sponsorship Chair, ASCE Austin Branch



ASCE Austin Branch sponsored the 2020 ASCE Texas Student Symposium, which gathered over 400 students and professionals from Texas and Mexico from March 4th through 7th in Arlington, Texas. The Symposium offered students the opportunity to showcase their year of hard work in the Concrete Canoe, Concrete Bowling, Concrete Frisbee, Blue Sky, Surveying, Research Poster and Technical Paper Competitions, attend technical and career-oriented seminars, interact with potential employers at the career fair and networking mixers, and exchange ideas with colleagues from across the state and Mexico. The competitions couldn't have been a success without the dedicated time and support from the wonderful volunteer judges from ASCE Texas Section, led by Head Judge, Jessica Hilscher PE.

This year's Symposium was co-hosted by the ASCE and Chi Epsilon Student Chapters at the University of Texas at Arlington with "Unity is Strength – La Union es la Fuerza" as the event theme. This theme emphasized engineers from different cultures and countries working together as leaders in their communities to build a better quality of life across the street and around the world.

You can read all about it [here](#), as well as view the full photo album [here](#).

As part of the City of Austin's Disparity study to examine its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Minority- Women-owned Business Enterprise programs, the study consultant, Colette Holt & Associates, would like to hear about your experiences with the City of Austin's contracting practices. We encourage you to participate in the small group meetings scheduled for September 2020. For more information visit the study website, austin.disparity-study.com or contact the study email austin-study@mwbellow.com.

What is a Disparity Study?

A disparity study involves compilation of evidence to determine whether the City of Austin has a strong basis for implementing race- and gender-conscious contracting remedies for City contracts. To make this determination, the study looks at quantitative as well as qualitative data.

What kinds of Study Data is collected?

There are two types of data gathered during the study: Contract data such as dollars awarded over a particular time period that are analyzed statistically and anecdotal data that is gathered from focus groups, such as Business Owner Interviews that we will be conducting in September.

We are a prime/majority/non-MWBE firm. This study does not pertain to us.

We want to hear from a broad cross-section of firms that includes prime contractors, sub-contractors, certified and non-certified businesses that have done work or potentially could seek work with the City of Austin. It is important to the study to hear all points of view and experiences.

How can my members or I participate?

There are several ways to participate:

1. They or you can visit the Study website and submit comments, <http://austin.disparity-study.com/>
2. They or you can submit comments to the study email: austin-study@mwbellow.com
3. They or you can attend one of the Business Owner meetings that are tentatively scheduled for the middle of September. Invitations will be going out around the beginning August.

Announcing ASCE Scholarship Winners by Robert Ramon, P.E.



The ASCE Austin Scholarship Committee would like to congratulate this year's winners! **Christian Douglas** was awarded the \$3,000 scholarship, and **Sabika Bharmal** was awarded the \$2,000 scholarship.

Christian Douglas is a second year Civil Engineering major with a minor in Economics attending the University of Texas at Austin, where he is involved with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Student Chapter, the Equal Opportunity in Engineering (EOE) Program, and the Longhorn Band. Christian currently serves as

Coronavirus Webinar Series for Students

by Lily Aung, P.E.

Construction Institute - Student Days 2020

Denver, Colorado | July 31 - August 4, 2020

Application Deadline -- April 15

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ASCE May Luncheon

[May 19, Zoom](#)

EWRI Conference

[Postponed Until Summer](#)

SET Talks

[Postponed Until Fall](#)

ASCE YMF Golf Tournament

[Postponed Until September 11](#)

ASCE Continuing Ed Workshop

[Postponed Until October 9](#)

ASCE Job Board

Attention ASCE Austin Branch sponsors! Did you know the ASCE Austin branch has a [JOB BOARD](#)? If you're looking to add new talent to your team, consider advertising on our website. Public entities (cities, counties, TxDOT, etc.) are also invited to post job openings. If you're interested, please contact [Lily Aung](#).

ASCE Austin Leadership Opportunities

If you're looking for ways to get more involved with your local ASCE branch, you're in luck! We're actively recruiting for our 2020-2021 Board, as well as multiple open positions for ASCE Austin, EWRI, SEI, and more.

If you are interested in the board or any one of our committees, please contact our and our Nominations Committee Chair, Kacey Paul, at kpaul.pe@gmail.com.

Scholarship Winners Cont'd

a Transportation Design Intern for Freese and Nichols, Inc. where he is putting his coursework to use and gaining a better understanding of engineering applications. Christian is from Pflugerville, Texas and after graduation, he plans to pursue a graduate specialization in Transportation Systems Engineering at the University of Michigan to stay involved with ASCE and engineering through research and higher education.



Sabika Bharmal is a civil engineering student at the University of Texas at Austin (UT). She finds the field of Civil Engineering interesting because of its unique combination of math, science, art, and design. Currently, she is on track to graduate in December of 2021 and is beginning to take technical electives, including Geotechnical Engineering, Structural Analysis, and Transportation Systems. In the past, she has also participated in research on the UT campus

by working on the green fund project. She currently serves as the Treasurer of the UT student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineering and is working on the LivingBIM Research project with members of the Construction Project Management Department at UT Austin.

SEI Update by Eric L. Sammarco, PhD, P.E.



**STRUCTURAL
ENGINEERING
INSTITUTE**

Austin Chapter

with the situation, our local SEI Chapter is striving to lend a helping hand where we can.

Greetings from the SEI Austin Chapter! We hope everyone is staying safe and healthy amidst the current COVID-19 situation. Indeed, these are challenging and uncertain times – an earmark in history that we will look back upon for years to come. As our community and profession continue to cope

In our next SEI e-blast we will be providing links to a few places you can go to access SEI pertinent (and free) structural engineering content, should you need technical guidance or just an interesting read during these times. We will also be hosting a virtual Professional Meeting for you either the last week in May or the first week in June. Presentation details are provided below. Stay tuned for additional date/time information on our website and in our next SEI e-blast. Registration for this virtual event will be handled through our website as usual, and we will send out an email with log-in information once we receive your registration. We are also working hard to reschedule SET 2020 for later this fall; additional details on that are also provided below.

May Virtual Professional Meeting Details:

Topic: Improving Durability of Texas' Reinforced Concrete Bridges - Corrosion
Presenter: Sumanth Cheruku, P.E. | Project Engineer, Thornton Tomasetti, Inc.
Location: Virtual Event (log-in details to be provided via e-mail once registered)
Date: TBD – tentatively planned for last week in May or first week in June
Time: 11:30am to 1:00pm

Leadership Opps Cont'd

ASCE Austin Branch

Continuing Ed Committee

Contact: president@austinasce.org

Community Outreach Committee

Contact: Francisco Arce

communityoutreach@austinasce.org

EWRI

Multiple Open Positions

Contact: ewri@austinasce.org

SEI

Multiple Open Positions

Contact: sei@austinasce.org

2019-2020 ASCE Austin Branch Officers

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SEI Update Cont'd

Summary: Durability against the exposure environment and increased design life of new bridge infrastructure is gaining priority. One of the mechanisms that compromise the durability of a reinforced concrete structure is the corrosion of embedded steel reinforcement. This presentation will discuss the problem of corrosion of steel reinforcement in the context of both, design of new bridges and assessment of existing RC bridges.

The first half of the presentation will focus on understanding the corrosion mechanisms and leveraging that knowledge to design new bridges with longer design life. This part will include a review of the corrosion-resistant reinforcement included in TxDOT specification 440 and some open-source tools to optimize the design process from a materials standpoint.

The second half of the presentation will focus on testing for identifying and locating corroding reinforcement in existing RC bridge structures since the corrosion process, while progressing gradually has the potential to result in sudden, catastrophic failures - more recently in the case of Morandi Bridge in Genoa, Italy. With more than half of Texas' bridges being 40 years or older (ASCE Report Card, 2017), an understanding of the methods to assess the risk from this mechanism is pertinent for engineers.



Bio.: Sumanth Cheruku, P.E. is a Project Engineer with Thornton Tomasetti, Inc. in their Austin, TX office and a researcher with the University of Texas at Austin. His research is on wind-induced vibration of bridge cables. His areas of expertise include structural dynamics and concrete materials. He is the secretary of Chapter 29 of the ASCE 7 Standard and a contributing member of ACI and NACE.

Structural Engineering Talks (SET) 2020:

It was a tough but necessary decision to postpone SET 2020. The Austin Chapters of SEI and SEAoT, along with our partners TxDOT and the University of Texas at Austin, are currently exploring options for rescheduling the event this fall. It is not possible to know for sure what the future entails regarding the current COVID-19 situation; however, we are tentatively planning for an Oct./Nov. timeframe. Please stay tuned for additional details and updates toward the end of the summer.



As always, you can stay plugged into the SEI Austin Chapter via our [website](#), where you'll find the latest and greatest on upcoming events and chapter leadership. We always welcome your thoughts on future technical and other special events - particularly during these challenging times. If there is something you'd like to do, then we'd like to hear about it. Please drop us a line at sei@austinasce.org.

Officers Cont'd

TEXAS SECTION DIRECTOR

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texassection@austinasce.org

YOUNGER MEMBER DIRECTOR

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Garver
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PAST PRESIDENT

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GOVT RELATIONS COORD

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YMF FORUM

Leanne Cantalupo
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EWRI Update by Sunit Deo, PE, CFM

EWRI Scholarship:

EWRI Austin Chapter received 30 scholarship applications from high school and college students and is proud to announce the winners of six (6) student scholarships:

Luke Crawford	HS Senior	\$500	Deianna Madlambayan	College Junior	\$1,500
Frances Bolger	HS Senior	\$500	Kelsey Nelson	College Junior	\$1,000
Andrew Perez	HS Senior	\$500	Allen Ho	College Sophomore	\$1,000

Food Bank Donation:

EWRI has elected to donate some funds to the Central Texas Food Bank. Pre-Coronavirus, these funds would have been used for lunch expenses at EWRI monthly meetings, however, due to the transition to virtual meetings, EWRI will be re-allocating these funds to support the food bank in this time of need. Central Texas Food Bank has seen over a 200% demand increase from February to March in Travis County alone. This has translated to more than 7,000 additional households that have not turned to CTFB before. The Food Bank has converted their operation to emergency food boxes that are given out in drive-through or drop-and-grab settings to maximize social distancing.

Annual Continuing Education Workshop:

EWRI workshop is tentatively scheduled to take place during the timeframe of June 2020 to August 2020. This will be subject to change following any developments to local and state executive orders or guidance on COVID-19. Stay tuned for more details.

Younger Member Forum News by Katherine Smith, EIT

Keep an eye out for more upcoming events this spring. We look forward to meeting you! If you are interested in learning more about ASCE YMF Austin, please contact our president Marita Moya at marita.moya@half.com

Thank you everyone for helping spread the word about our scholarship! We had a lot of submissions and have started reviewing the applications!

A new date has been chosen for the Golf Tournament: Friday, September 11th. Mark your calendars!

If you are interested in joining the YMF leadership team reach out to us, we're excited to meet you!

We can't wait to see everyone soon, until then stay safe!



ASCE Texas
STUDENT SYMPOSIUM



Innovation: Building the Future Together

Hosted by **ASCE**
STUDENT CHAPTER
University of Texas
at Austin

Save The Date
April 15-17, 2021 // Austin, Texas
For more information contact utexas.asce@gmail.com

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