



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Thomas W. Smith III**

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Dear Tony,

We're working on a significant makeover of how we keep you informed about everything happening in the Society and in the industry. Civil Engineering Source will be a one-stop destination bringing you industry news, career and management articles, Society news, job postings, and practitioner-focused technical updates. It will include a completely redesigned *Civil Engineering* magazine digital edition and bring in content from *Geo-Strata* magazine.

### INSIDE THIS EDITION

New ASCE communications hub and daily newsletter coming in November

ASCE receives two grants from United Engineering Foundation

Virtual ASCE 2020 Convention coming this week

### SECTION INFORMANT

Best Practice: Aggressive action for membership recruitment

Free screenings of *Dream Big* for students next month

Ask Counselor Tara: Bylaws stipulations in the age of COVID-19

### TALKING POINTS

Significant proposals await Board action at fall meeting

Also coming is a new daily Civil Engineering Source newsletter that will take the place of our weekly ASCE News newsletter and the daily ASCE SmartBrief. The new newsletter will be a “smarter news brief,” using artificial intelligence to deliver each subscriber a custom experience with content tailored to their interests. Watch for the new Source hub and daily newsletter later next month. Be sure to open it and click on the stories that interest you during the first couple of weeks, and watch how it begins to shape content uniquely to your interests.

This year's United for Infrastructure campaign was originally to take place in May, but as with so many events, the pandemic forced a change in plans, shifting the week of advocacy to September and making it virtual. But that didn't change the intensity of the effort to impart the importance of infrastructure to the nation's economy.

ASCE had a prominent role in the week's events. One of the great virtues of the campaign is how it brings together disparate groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, trade unions including the AFL-CIO, governors, mayors, and major engineering firms including AECOM, Bechtel, and WSP USA. All agree that the nation needs to step up to upgrade deficiencies in our infrastructure systems. I spoke on the nation's dire need for greater investment in our electric grid, drawing on our recent Failure to Act report on electricity infrastructure. You can [watch my presentation](#). For more about ASCE's activities during the week, read this [Government Relations post](#).

The United Engineering Foundation, which counts ASCE among its Founders Society members, has chosen its grant recipients for 2021, and I'm proud to say that two ASCE projects have been selected.

- The first grant teams ASCE with Discovery Education to produce videos and accompanying instructional materials for the K-12 audience that will excite kids about careers as engineers. The videos will showcase a variety of innovative, creative engineers who talk about working their dream jobs and the sometimes-surprising paths they took to their careers. The high-quality digital materials will be especially valuable during these times when more kids are getting their education online and at home.
- A second grant reflects our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will produce a set of short instructional videos that will focus on fundamental DEI best practices within engineering. The videos will feature interviews with engineers speaking about DEI and how it plays an essential role in engineering practice, combined with case studies illustrating practical applications. Lisa Black, ASCE's director of cultural belonging and social ethos, will lead this project.
- For 2020, ASCE received a UEF grant to produce videos that will reinforce the importance of ethics in the profession. Interviews with engineers are currently in progress under the direction of General Counsel Tara Hoke, and the completed videos are expected to be ready for release by the end of this year.

The virtual [ASCE 2020 Convention](#) is coming up, starting Wednesday and running through Friday. As always, the Society's flagship event will deliver top quality content covering our professional and technical sectors. You'll hear from Jacob Ward, former editor-in-chief of *Popular Science* and an NBC News

technology correspondent, who will talk about the world's most disruptive technological breakthroughs and what they mean to you. On the eve of a very consequential U.S. elections, you'll also hear from one of the top political journalists covering Washington, D.C., Amy Walter, who will expertly break down the political scene with special insights.

And most exciting, following up on last year's debut of Future World Vision's first 4D scenario, the [Floating City](#), this year we will feature the next scenario, [Mega City 2070](#), an anticipation of the changes in technology and society in urban settings, and their implications for civil engineering over the next 50 years.

The Board will be considering at this month's meeting a variety of impactful actions, including 2021 Strategic Initiatives, second reading vote on a comprehensive revision to the Code of Ethics, revisions to Policy Statement 417 on "Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion," options for ASCE certification programs, committee realignment, a plan to align student conferences within regions, and revised terms and qualifications for Life Membership. Many Life Members have shared their views on how these latter changes would affect them, and their views will be carefully examined by the board before the vote.

### **Highlights of other activities**

- The American Institute of Chemical Engineers is interested in collaborating with ASCE on creating an innovative engineering education program that would encourage students to take up studies in sustainable energy. 2020 President K.N. Gunalan and I had a good discussion with AIChE President Monty Alger and members of his team on the possibilities.
- Amid the heightened severity of wildfires and hurricanes this year, I was asked about the importance of making infrastructure more resilient in an article in Roll Call. The article explored the connections between climate change and infrastructure. [Read it here.](#)
- Want to feel inspired? SEI President Glenn Bell wrote an eloquent commentary on the virtues of professional association membership for Structure magazine. "We all need professional communities, and those communities will be increasingly essential to each of us in the future." [Read Bell's commentary.](#)

Until next month, my best to you and your families for good health and safety.

*Tom*