**Young Professional Member Engagement**

**General project description:** Young Professional Member Engagement

**Those in charge:** Section/Branch/Group Membership Chair or Membership Champion

**Benefits:**  ASCE members age 35 and younger are defined as younger members and are the future of your Section/Branch/Group. It is critical to encourage them to remain vibrant in ASCE. Experienced professionals’ benefit from the fresh perspectives of early career professionals, and younger members benefit from the experience and wisdom of those who have been working in the field for many years. Networking at all levels brings people together and results in successful professional relationships.

**Recommendations:**

* Through the automatic upgrade process, your Section/Branch/Group will have an increased number of young professionals. Set a goal to retain a defined percentage of members 35 and under. Create a plan for reaching out to them in your area. Include these main components in the plan:
* Hold monthly social/networking events at the same time each month. Younger members are more likely to keep their schedules open to attend if they know of the commitment in advance.
* Balance socials at restaurants and other establishments with recreational activities, games, and service projects. Variety helps keep members interested and the attendance up!
  + By ensuring that younger members have an enjoyable experience, you can encourage them to share their experiences with other young professionals. And ask them to bring a friend/colleague along to the next event.
* “Young Professional Spotlight” is an opportunity for younger members to nominate and recognize their peers for community awards or professional achievements. The spotlight may be an article, poster, or award that acknowledges an accomplishment of another younger member.
* Follow-up is important. Send out an email after the event and thank them for attending. Attach a photo, if possible, to remind people how much fun they had.
* Listen to young professionals willing to share ideas about outreach to other younger members. Do not ignore their suggestions.
* Never GIVE UP! Keep in contact with them. Even if they are reluctant at first, they may need additional encouragement, and once they come to one event and realize what they have been missing, they may attend many after that—and hopefully recruit others to attend as well.

**Communication Goals:**

* Listen and seek to understand the perspective of young professionals.
* Position ASCE as an essential resource for networking, industry knowledge, professional development, and career advancement.
* Be welcoming and accessible to young professionals, inviting them to make a difference in the profession through ASCE.
* Demonstrate that ASCE seeks and values contributions from young professionals.
* Motivate young professionals to engage with the Society in ways that reflect their unique personal interests.
* Encourage members to create Younger Member Groups and continue their engagement with ASCE at the Section/Branch/Group level as they advance in their careers.

**Additional Ideas:**

* Obtain a list of members aged 35 and under from ASCE Membership.
* Send a welcome letter from the Section/Branch/Group President.
* Develop programs and activities relevant to interests of young professionals.
* Offer ASCE membership pins and consider nominations for [Society Awards](https://www.asce.org/communities/younger-members/awards).
* Discuss ASCE benefits and how membership may impact their career paths.
* Invite attendees to engage in Section/Branch/Group meetings.
* Create an attendance and participation roster. This could help create future engagement expectations and simplify follow-up queries and reporting.
* Post event details and pictures which can aid in recruitment and marketing.
* Remove layers in your organizations so that ideas, innovations, and communications of young professionals are heard. Focus on programming and activities that fill the needs of young professionals and will help them prepare for their future. Encourage and challenge young engineers to participate or lead in programming decisions. Place experienced volunteers with less experienced volunteers
* Encourage and groom young professionals to become the future leaders of organizational entities of ASCE. Create opportunities to shadow current leaders, provide leadership training, and assign leadership tasks to help them build skills needed to succeed.
* In everything that you say to and do with young professionals, drive home the point that you value their perspective, encourage their voice in the profession, and see younger members as the future of ASCE.