

November 28, 2016

A belated Happy Thanksgiving to everyone,

The term 'everyone' has a different connotation in this message. The ASCE Pittsburgh section has recently completed beta testing an update to our member database. Linda Kaplan, our resident website guru has supervised the assimilation of two databases that we have been maintaining over the last several years. One database has been based on information from ASCE National, while the second database is a mish-mash of data input by the Section. I have been told that this message is reaching an additional 600 to 800 ASCE members, so welcome to "Everyone!" And if you're having trouble with your account, please [contact Linda directly](#), she'll be happy to help.

The Pittsburgh Section has been on the move the past month or so. Linda Kaplan and Akezah Griffiths attended the Raise the Bar initiative in St. Louis in September. I attended the ASCE National Convention in Portland in October. Technical sessions that I attended included the following:

- Diversity Drives Innovation
- Calculating Professional Risks
- Green Infrastructure in Resilient Cities
- A Business Perspective on Raise the Bar
- A Business Perspective- The Only Constant is Change
- Achieve Success through Effective Business Communication
- The Grand Challenge

Look for some blog articles from me soon on the ASCE website that further discusses some of the more interesting sessions.

Are you a Key Contact? Don't know what the ASCE Key Contact program is? A Key Contact is a self-identified ASCE member who is interested in public policy. Key Contacts agree to receive emails notifying them of public policy developments that need membership action. The requested action usually consists of sending a pre-drafted email or personal email to your legislators or legislative staff in support of ASCE priorities. With the amount publicly funded transportation based work that western Pennsylvania currently designs, and the potential for public stormwater and wastewater design work forecast for the future, the key contact program will keep you and your company advised of possible house and senate bills being considered. Sign up on www.asce.org/keycontacts.

The Pittsburgh Section has a plethora of events scheduled for the next month or so. The events typically provide professional development hours, which is one of our Section's objectives: to build professional and technical skills. Here is a quick list of the events; you can find more information on the [complete calendar](#).

- Younger Member Forum: The [Annual December Dinner](#) will occur on December 1 on the Gateway Clipper. Dr. John Oyler from the University of Pittsburgh will be the speaker.
- Geo-Institute: Dr. Andrew Bunger will be speaking about [“Changes in Hydraulic Fracturing”](#), at Gaetano’s Restaurant on December 8th.
- SEI: Hosting a webinar on [Pier and Beam Foundation Design](#) at HDR on December 7th.

At the end of October, the Pittsburgh Section submitted their application for the “Outstanding Large Section of the Year” award to ASCE National. The Pittsburgh Section has won this award the last two years, so we are going for the back to back to back titles! A special shout-out goes to Sonya Flournoy, one of our Board Directors, who prepared the application. 'Thanks, Sonya!'

ASCE has also hit the road on their “ASCE College Tour”. Erin Feichtner and I visited Geneva College on November 9 and spoke to the students about ASCE at the Student, Section and National levels and about transitioning from a student to a professional. Pizza was provided, of course. We are also trying to set up similar events at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Carnegie Mellon University, and the main campus of the University of Pittsburgh. I’ll keep you posted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat".

Patrick J. Sullivan, Jr., PE

President, ASCE Pittsburgh Section 2016-2017