



ASCE Illinois Section

News

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Winter 2021

INSIDE:

**President's
Notes**
2

**Infrastructure
Investment and Jobs
Act – A Generational
Opportunity**
3

**105th Annual Awards
Highlights**
4

**News & Secretary
Report**
7

Section Activities
9

Clothing Drive
9

The Office

Written by Kyle Sant, P.E., PTOE

Sorry to disappoint, but I do mean your place of work, not the hit NBC sitcom (mostly). A year ago at this time, the Primary Article in the ASCE Winter Newsletter was a stellar piece written by my fellow Younger Member Group board member Sarah Dick, filled with advice for how to conduct our careers remotely. Since then, we as an industry have responded to the task with remarkable resiliency, adjusting to maintain productivity while prioritizing the health and safety of our friends, families, coworkers, and ourselves. As individuals,

Whether your team plans to work together in person one day a week or five days a week, now is the time to remember how to appreciate the benefits of being in the office and make the most of that time.

we have mastered the arts of communicating project details and deadlines over the phone, navigating the virtual labyrinth of breakout rooms in a Zoom happy hour, and throwing a load of laundry into the dryer between video calls. Ironically, it is this complete achievement of adaptability

that will present us with the potentially even greater challenge of returning to work in person, in whatever capacity that might be. Whether your team plans to work together in person one day a week or five days a week, now is the time to remember how to appreciate the benefits of being in the office and make the most of that time.

Reestablish Separation Between Work and Home / Find Value in Your Commute

Any engineer knows the dangers of scope creep, but the perils of work creep are just as deadly (if not to your project's bottom line, then to your own work life balance). Even before the pandemic, the emergence of smartphones as work devices blurred the lines between when you're working and when you're not. Now, even if your home has a dedicated workspace separated from your living space, responding to just one email or getting a little ahead on a deadline is only ever a few steps away. Increasing the frequency in which you physically travel to your external place of work can help more clearly delineate your boundaries and reclaim some of the home-space you've ceded to your job. The time spent making the journey (continued on page 6)

President's Notes

Andrew D. Walton, P.E.



It is truly an honor and privilege to serve as the ASCE Illinois Section President for 2021-2022. I would first like to thank Past President Brian Pawula, Executive Secretary Sarah Harbaugh, and many others for keeping the Illinois Section (IS) on course amidst a second year of global pandemic.

As we commence the 106th year of IS operations, I am excited at the opportunities the future brings for all civil engineers. Years of advocacy efforts by ASCE has resulted in the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA), a monumental investment in our nation's core infrastructure – including roads, bridges, rail, transit, ports, airports, the electric grid, water systems, and broadband. The IIJA is not a stimulus bill, but a long-term approach to rebuilding American competitiveness through infrastructure. The \$1.2 trillion bill represents the largest single federal investment in our nation's infrastructure, includes ~\$550 billion in new spending above current baseline levels, and addresses every infrastructure category outlined in ASCE's 2021 Report Card for America's Infrastructure.

ASCE has long advocated for the care of the nation's infrastructure, and since 2001, has issued the "Report Card for America's Infrastructure" every four years. Since 2010, the Illinois Section has prepared a State Infrastructure Report Card on a 4-year rolling basis that takes a more localized look at these infrastructure categories within Illinois. The 2022 Report Card for Illinois Infrastructure is currently being finalized and is scheduled for release in Spring 2022.

Locally, the IS will focus on three (3) broad initiatives in 2022:

1. Return to in-person activity
2. Membership initiatives
3. 2022 Report Card Launch

While industry has embraced the virtual platform, the value of personal connection developed through in-person engagement cannot be understated. As a result, the IS will institute local meetings and events both in-person and virtually. Key in-person events targeted include the (1) President-Elect / Student Scholarship dinner, (2) Report Card Launch, (3) Summer Social, and (4) Annual Awards Dinner in Fall 2022.

The IS will continue to connect with younger members through student outreach efforts, including the (1) Mentorship Program, (2) Student Resume Book, and (3) by providing Student Scholarships. We will continue the Local Membership Champion initiative to facilitate local program communication and inform new hires of ASCE membership benefits.

Finally, the Illinois Section has identified the opportunity to develop a local Utility Engineering and Surveying Institute (UESI) chapter. The UESI offers networking and technical advancement opportunities for professionals in the utility, pipeline engineering, and surveying/geomatics communities. Please email awalton@orionengineersllc.com if you would like to learn more.

On behalf of the Illinois Section, we thank you for reading, wish you a happy holiday season, and look forward to seeing you in 2022!

ASCE Illinois Section News

ILLINOIS SECTION NEWSLETTER

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**Communications Chair/
Newsletter Editor -
Katie Bell**

Katiebell529@gmail.com

Director of Advertising -

Tim Scully-Granzeier
312-933-4639

Tim.Scully-Granzeier@arcadis.com

Pres. Andrew Walton (312) 520-9276
Pres. Elect Sandra Homola ... (312) 616-5095
Sec. Matt Huffman (847) 804-7615
Treas. Thomas Janicke (630) 438-6400

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Yours sincerely,

Andrew Walton, P.E.
ASCE Illinois Section President
2021-2022

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – A Generational Opportunity

Written by Brian Castro, PE

President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law on November 15, 2021. This \$1.2 trillion bill is the largest investment into our nation's infrastructure in six decades. The American Society of Civil Engineers has worked ex-

The \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) bill is the largest investment into our nation's infrastructure in six decades.

tensively over the years to educate the public with regards to the current state of our nation's infrastructure and the need for increased spending for the repair and replacement of our ageing infrastructure. ASCE has been developing the Report Card for America's Infrastructure since 1998. The IIJA is expected to address some of the priorities previously identified under previous versions of the Report Card. At the state level, the State of Illinois is expected to receive \$17 billion from the IIJA to help address infrastructure in need of repairs or reconstruction.

The IIJA will provide this generation of engineers an opportunity to develop infrastructure solutions that incorporate the needs and wants of community stakeholders and residents that will mostly benefit from the proposed infrastructure improvements. We have tools

such as virtual public involvement and social media that would help facilitate the outreach to community stakeholders and residents, in addition to traditional public outreach strategies such as in-person open house events, public meetings, public hearings and door to door visits. The IIJA will allow for engineers and planners to apply lessons learned from the construction of the Interstate Highway System. While the benefits of the construction of the Interstate Highway System are undeniable, there are lessons learned from the development of the Interstate Highway system that need to be implemented. If you have not had a

At the state level, the State of Illinois is expected to receive \$17 billion from the IIJA to help address infrastructure in need of repairs or reconstruction.

chance, I highly encourage all of you to read the article "*What does infrastructure have to do with social justice and equity?*" of the November/December 2021 issue of the Civil Engineering Magazine. This article mentions recent developments where social justice and equity has intersected with potential Interstate improvements such as the expansion of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project and Interstate 710 south in Los Angeles. Both projects have been

found to negatively impact the quality of life of communities that these improvements are meant to benefit.

There is another article published by ASCE called "*How the interstate highway system connected — and in some cases segregated — America*" dated July 15, 2021 where the impacts of the construction of the Interstate Highway System to communities of people of color are evaluated and how the construction of the Interstate Highway System divided neighborhoods which lead to the decline of some of the communities that were meant to be benefitted by the infrastructure improvements. I recom-

The IIJA will allow for engineers and planners to apply lessons learned from the construction of the Interstate Highway System, providing us a generational opportunity to improve our infrastructure while also improving the quality of lives of the communities we are meant to serve.

mend that you read this article and identify potential lessons learned that we as engineers need to consider on our designs and construction. This article references the report by the Poverty & Race (continued on page 9)

105th Annual Awards Highlights

Written by Anne Marie Jensen, PE and Zach Pucel, PE

This year marks the ASCE Illinois Section's 105th Annual Awards Ceremony.

ASCE Illinois Section celebrates its 105th Annual Awards.

During this time of year, we typically gather to recognize and congratulate all the individuals and projects for their dedication and outstanding achievements in civil engineering. Above all, it is a time for us to celebrate together and remember how the people in civil engineering help shape our communities to be a better place to live.

ASCE Illinois Section recognizes 2021 Award Recipients.



Fawad Aqueel with Illinois Department of Transportation District 1, recipient of the Young Government Civil Engineer of the Year Award and Andy Walton, ASCE IS President.

Needless to say, 2021 has been another challenging year. The Annual Awards Dinner Committee had planned to host this year's annual awards dinner at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Chicago. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic prevented the Illinois



Peter Wallers with Engineering Enterprise, Inc., recipient of the Civil Engineer of the Year Award and Thomas Janicke, ASCE IS Treasurer.

Section from hosting an in-person annual dinner for the safety of our members. While the pandemic changed the way we conduct our business, it did not slow down our members' hard work and contributions this past year. Even though we cannot celebrate together in-person, the ASCE IL Section still recognizes and celebrates all the outstanding achievements this past year.



Irsilia Colletti with HNTB, recipient of the Young Civil Engineer of the Year Award.

ASCE Illinois Section hired a professional videography agency to record award winners' acceptance speech and produce a special acceptance video to highlight their achievements. ASCE Illinois Section also intends to recognize the



Video One Productions filming Hossein Ataei with University of Illinois at Chicago, recipient of the Construction Engineering Person of the Year Award.

2021 award winners at the in-person ASCE President Elect / Scholarship Dinner in Spring 2022. There were many deserving nominations, and the Awards Committee wishes to thank all those that participated by submitting a nomination. Below are the 2021 award recipients:

- **Civil Engineer of the Year:**
Peter G. Wallers, P.E., CFM
- **Young Civil Engineer of the Year:**
Irsilia Colletti, PE, SE
- **Government Civil Engineer of the Year:**
Sarah Hunn, P.E., CFM
- **Young Government Civil Engineer of the Year:**
Fawad Aqueel, P.E., PTOE

(continued on page 5)

105th Annual Awards Highlights

(continued from page 4)

- **Citizen Engineer of the Year:**
Soliman Khudeira, Ph.D., S.E., P.E.



Soliman Khudeira with Chicago Department of Transportation, recipient of the Citizen Engineer of the Year Award and Monica Crinion, ASCE Society Student Transition & Younger Member Retention Sub-Committee Chair.

- **Construction Engineering Person of the Year:**
Hossein Ataie, PhD, P.E., P.Eng., F.ASCE
- **Private Sector Employer Recognition Award:**
Gannett Fleming, Inc.
- **Sustainability in Civil Engineering Achievement Award:**
Illinois Tollway's Aurora (M-8) Maintenance Facility
- **Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Award Under \$10 Million:**
City of Wood Dale's Ward 2 & 3 Stormwater Improvements

Award Winners' achievements highlighted in acceptance speech videos.

- **Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Award \$25M to \$100M:**
Chicago Department of Transportation's Lakefront Trail Pedestrian Bridge



Lubica Benak representing Chicago Department of Transportation Lakefront Trail Pedestrian Bridge Project, recipient of the Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement, \$25-\$100 Million Award, Tony Shkurti, with HNTB and Andy Walton, ASCE IS President.

- **Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Award Over \$100M:**
Chicago Department of Aviation's Chicago O'Hare International Airport Runway 9C-27C.

ASCE IL Section is developing an electronic book exhibiting each award recipient and their recognitions video. The electronic book will be posted on the following ASCE IL Section website in the upcoming weeks: <https://www.isasce.org/award/s/>. If you would like to send your own personal congratulations message to our award winners, please comment on our ASCE IL Section Facebook page at



Sarah Hunn with DuPage County Stormwater Management, recipient of the Government Civil Engineer of the Year Award and Jeana Gowin, ASCE IS Director to 2022.



Gannett Fleming, Inc., recipient of the Private Sector Employer Recognition Award.

<https://www.facebook.com/Illinois-Section-ASCE-157603771107643> or on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/illinois-section-asce/>.

Author bios: Anne Marie Jensen, P.E. is a Project Manager with HNTB, serves as co-chair for the Annual Awards Committee, and Director to 2021. Zach Pucel, P.E. is an Assistant Vice President and Resident Engineer with TranSystems and co-chair for the Annual Awards Committee, and Director to 2022.

The Office

(continued from page 1)

itself can feel like less of a loss if you find ways to make your commute work for you. If you bike or take transit, think of the extra steps or exercise you're injecting into your day. If you drive, use the time to catch up on personal calls, podcasts, or audiobooks (hands free) that have fallen by the wayside. If you're a coffee drinker, acquaint yourself with a local spot such as Dwight's Caffeine Corner.

Strengthen Your Professional and Personal Relationships

Early on in the pandemic, I realized that it was nearly impossible to have an impromptu conversation while working from home. Where in the office a spontaneous conversation can start when passing someone in the hall or while filling up your water bottle; a re-

Like many others in our industry, I have enjoyed the benefits of working from home and am optimistic that we will continue to find ways to optimize flexibility and work-life balance to the advantage of all parties.

mote confab can only begin with a direct phone call. In this way, we can become siloed, interacting only with our immediate teams and narrowing our experiences. For younger engineers, this can limit

growth in key areas like interpersonal professional skills and interdisciplinary exposure. For more experienced engineers, working from home can limit your ability to transfer those skills to the future of your team. On a more personal level, working in the office can inject your day with trivial but meaningful interactions: getting a movie or book recommendation from a coworker, running out for an hour to grab lunch with a neighboring team, or participating in an office group like the Finer Things Club.

Make Use of Office Infrastructure / Increase Productivity

For many at-home engineers, workspace is the kitchen table, a corner of a spare room, or wherever a few square-feet can be spared. In cases like these, the office can oftentimes provide a more professional and distraction-free environment. If the office is where you work most efficiently, take advantage of the opportunity, get more done in less time, and reinvest those time savings. Similarly, personal setups can lack some of the important features an office setting can provide, such as ergonomically suitable chairs, standing desks, or adequate monitor space. Your office space is most likely designed to be comfortable, keeping you more productive and healthier in the long term. If you don't already, you'll also have easy access to printing and scanning, a bevy of office supplies, and reliable, high-speed internet. If your office isn't back to full capacity yet, there may

even be potential to take advantage of spare equipment to form a Megadesk.

Work-life balance is a two-way street, and sometimes getting the most out of the work half involves full participation and a positive attitude.

"Great," I hear you say, "another person telling me why I should be leaping to get back into the office and be happy about it." I hope this article doesn't come off that way. Like many others in our industry, I have enjoyed the benefits of working from home and am optimistic that we will continue to find ways to optimize flexibility and work-life balance to the advantage of all parties. This is intended to be a reminder that work-life balance is a two-way street, and sometimes getting the most out of the work half involves full participation and a positive attitude. In the words of the immortal Michael Scott, "An office is for not dying. An office is a place to live life to the fullest, to the max. An office is a place where dreams come true."

Author Bio: Kyle Sant, P.E., PTOE is a Transportation Engineer, an alumnus of the University of Notre Dame, and an employee of Sam Schwartz Engineering. He currently serves as the Chair of the IS-ASCE Younger Member Group.

To inform Illinois Section members of the discussions at monthly Board meetings, the Section Secretary contributes this article to the newsletter covering October 2021 and November 2021. Due to COVID-19 all Illinois Section Board meetings are being held via MS Teams. Any questions or comments on the Board activities are welcome by contacting Matt Huffman at mhuffman@cbbel.com.

■ **Treasurer’s Report**

A treasurer’s report was presented and approved at the October 2021, November 2021, and December 2021 meetings. The October 2021 and November 2021 Board Meeting minutes were approved.

■ **Highlights from Illinois Section Activities and Institute/Group Reports.**

▲ **ASCE Society Convention** – The 2021 ASCE Convention will be held virtually from October 6th through October 9th. The 2022 Convention will be held in Anaheim, California (October 24-27, 2022). The ASCE 2023 Convention will be in Chicago, Illinois (October 23-27, 2023). Please refer to the following webpage for information regarding the upcoming ASCE Convention: <https://convention.asce.org/>

▲ **2022 Illinois ASCE Infrastructure Report Card Update** – The IS

Report Card Committee has been actively making progress and a draft 2022 Illinois Infrastructure Report Card is near completion. In early 2022 various reviews will occur and is targeted to be released in April 2022. More information will be provided to IS Membership about the release of the report card when available.

▲ **Annual Dinner** – In consultation with the Executive Committee and Annual Dinner Committee, it was decided to cancel the in-person Annual Dinner due to COVID 19. The decision was made in late September and the award recipients are being acknowledged via recorded videos conducted by Video One, which is anticipated for release in December 2021 or January 2022. There were no objections raised by the IS Board.

▲ **Incoming 2022 IS Board Members** – Three director to 2023 positions (Irsilia Colletti, Steve Randolph and Tina Revzin) and treasurer position (Tom Janicke), and all new Institute/Group chairs were installed on October 14, 2021, at an event at Pinstripes Oakbrook. Approximately 30 incoming/outgoing board members attended the event, which utilized a semi-outdoor event space. A virtual option was also offered for those that could not make the in-person event. Region 3 Governor, John Lazzara, installed the 2022 IS Board Members.

▲ **TFIC Annual Meeting Sponsorship** – The ASCE IS approved sponsorship of the TFIC Annual Meeting was held on November 17, 2021, at the Chicago Laborers in Burr Ridge. Several IS Board members attended the meeting to support of TFIC.

▲ **2022 Budget** – The 2022 IS budget was approved at the December IS Board meeting. The approved budget includes investment in the public relations efforts for the 2022 Illinois Infrastructure Report Card release.

▲ **2021 Holiday Party** – The 2021 Holiday Party was held on virtually on December 16th. This virtual zoom event featured holiday themed trivia and general networking opportunities for members and students.

▲ **2022 Legislative Fly-In** – The 2022 legislative fly-in will be March 2nd thru March 4th in Washington D.C. Two attendees will be sent from the IS.

▲ **Government Relations (GR) University** – The IS planning on hosting the GR University as a lead item to the Illinois Infrastructure Report Card Release in the Spring 2022. This request has been submitted to ASCE HQ and may be a half day or full day event. The event is planned to be in-person.

(continued on page 8).

Secretary Report

(continued from page 7)

▲ **Construction Institute (CI)** – The CI held their Board meeting on October 6th. For more information or if interested in joining this institute, please contact CI Chair Muhammad Ali at Muhammad.Ali@exp.com.

▲ **Environmental & Water Resources Institute (EWRI)** – The EWRI held their Board meetings on October 12th, November 9th, and December 14th. A webinar *MWRD's Stormwater Detention and Volume Control Trading Pilot Program* was held on October 4th with the Nature Conservatory. Please contact EWRI Chair Saki Handa with any questions or for information about EWRI activities at Saki.handa@optimatics.com.

▲ **Geo-Institute (GI)** – The GI held their Board meeting on October 26th. A kick-off happy hour was held on October 5th at Recess in Fulton Market. The GI is starting to plan for their Spring Lecture Series at a December 16th meeting. A virtual seminar was held on November 30th *Case History of Collapsible Soil Investigation at Petrochem Facility*. They are looking at hosting in-person events again in early 2022. Please contact GI Chair Alex Potter-Weight with any questions or for information about GI

activities at apotter-weight@menardgroupusa.com.

▲ **Structural Engineering Institute (SEI)** – The SEI held their Board meeting on November 17. Lecture Series Session 3 was held on October 6th at *Union State Building Structures Themed Evening* and Session 4 was held on October 20th at *Union Station Bridges Evening*. The FY 22 SEI Leader Meeting was held virtually on October 20th and was attended by SEI Illinois Chapter. Please contact SEI Chair Patrick Laux with any questions or for information about SEI activities at Patrick.Laux@wsp.com.

▲ **Transportation & Development Institute (T&DI)** – The T&DI held their Board meetings on October 13th, November 10th, and December 8th. In-person luncheons are planned to resume in January 2022. Please contact T&DI Chair Brian Castro with any questions or for more information at brian.castro@mbakerintl.com.

▲ **Urban Planning & Development Group (UP&D)** – A UP&D Board meeting was held on October 21, 2021 at Chandlers Chop House. Please contact UP&D Chair Saad Khatri with any

questions or for more information at skhatri@gsg-consultants.com.

▲ **Younger Member Group (YMG)** – The YMG held Board meetings on October 6th and November 3rd. A Professional Skills Series: PM Session 2 was held on November 10th. A virtual dinner webinar was held on November 17th *Preparing for Connected and Automated Vehicles*. YMG hosted a virtual Holiday Party on December 16th. For more information about YMG activities or if interested in joining this group, please contact YMG Chair Kyle Sant at ksant@samschwartz.com.

The Illinois Section Board Meetings are held the first Monday of the month, except for holidays. The next board meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2022, and will be in-person at EXP (205 N. Michigan Avenue). For any guests or Board Members that cannot attend in-person, a virtual option will be provided via MS Teams. If you are interested in attending these meetings, please contact President Andrew Walton at awalton@orionengineersllc.com.

By Matt Huffman, PE, ASCE Illinois Section Secretary 2020-2022, mhuffman@cbbel.com

Illinois Section

Activities

IL Section ASCE UP&DG January Dinner Meeting

Topic: Event Planning
Date: Thursday, January 6
Time: 5:30 pm
Place: TBD

IL Section ASCE EWRI Board Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 11

Time: 4:00 pm
Place: Via conference call
RSVP: Paige Adams
(PAdams@baxterwoodoman.com)

IL Section ASCE SEI January Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 19
Time: 5:00 pm

Place: WSP USA, 30 N. LaSalle St., Suite 4200, Chicago, IL 60602

IL Section ASCE SEI January Dinner Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 26 (tentative)
Topic: TBD
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Pazzo's, 311 S. Wacker Dr.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – A Generational Opportunity

(continued from page 33)

Research Action Council: *The Interstates and the Cities: Highways, Housing, and the Freeway Revolt* by Raymond A. Mohl (2002).

Recently, at a meeting in the Avondale neighborhood in Chicago with community stakeholders, it was mentioned that the construction of the Kennedy Expressway negatively impacted the Avondale neighborhood as it reduced the amount of green space in the neighborhood and the underpass of the Kennedy in Avondale does not accommodate for pedestrians and

cyclists. I am almost certain that if the Kennedy had been built in 2021, these issues would have been accommodated as commitments to the community in the Phase I Project Report. There are also countless anecdotes of the construction of the Dan Ryan and the Eisenhower Expressways that mention the division of up-and-coming communities due to construction.

In the end, we have been granted the generational opportunity to improve our infrastructure and to improve the quality of lives of the

communities that we are meant to serve. Let's make the most of this opportunity.

Author Bio: Brian Castro, P.E. is a Project Manager and Office Quality Manager at Michael Baker International with approximately 11 years of experience in plan preparation, preliminary engineering studies, construction management, program management, utility coordination and quality management. He currently serves as the Chair of the IS-ASCE Transportation & Development Institute

Clothing Drive

Wondering what to do with those professional clothes that don't fit or you no longer wear, we have the solution for you! ASCE is hosting a drive to collect business clothes to be donated to Dress for Success (<https://dressforsuccess.org/>) and Bridge to Success (<https://www.thebridgetosuccess.org/>). ASCE, APWA, ITE,

WTS, and ACEC are competing to collect professional clothing into the new year. Drop your unwanted business attire at the offices of Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. in Rosemont (9575 W Higgins Road) to be donated to either of these two charitable organizations. ASCE members will arrange for the delivery of any donated items to the organizations. Please contact

Jeana Gowin (jgowin@cbbel.com) prior to dropping off clothing at CBBEL's Rosemont office through noon on Monday, January 10th, 2022. So, go through your closets and gather those clean shirts, ties, suits, dresses, slacks, etc. that you no longer wear and bring them to Rosemont! Help ASCE win this challenge for a great cause.