

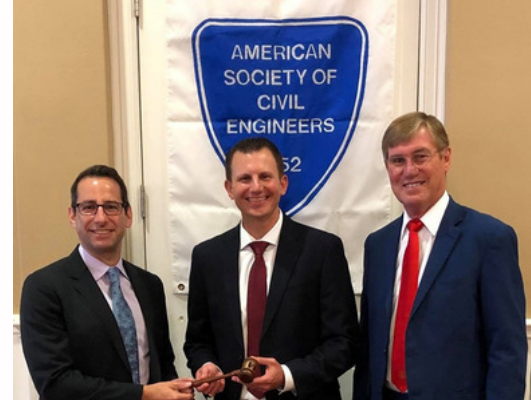
# ASCE AUSTIN BRANCH NEWSLETTER

*January 2021*



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY BRADLEY L. EAST, M.S., P.E.



I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season and I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year! 2021 is here, hurray!!! 2020 set the bar pretty low, but it looks like 2021 is going to be a great year. All of us at ASCE are excited about the opportunities before us and welcome the chance to focus on what we can do to better ourselves, our communities, and our profession.

We have some exciting events/activities on the horizon. The ASCE Texas Legislative Drive-In will be held virtually from February 22-26, 2021. Attendees will have access to briefing sessions on key legislation and ASCE's legislative priorities, as well as training on lobbying and influencing your elected leaders. For more information, please visit [texasce.org/our-programs/legislative-drive-in](https://texasce.org/our-programs/legislative-drive-in).

The ASCE Student Chapter at the University of Texas at Austin will also be hosting the ASCE Texas Student Symposium. This will be a virtual event on April 15-17, 2021. The Symposium will include various student competitions, technical seminars and a career fair. Please visit [www.texasce.org/our-programs/student-symposium](https://www.texasce.org/our-programs/student-symposium) for more information.

Engineers Week will also be held from February 21-27, 2021. Engineers Week is a time to celebrate how engineers make a difference in our world, increase public dialogue about the need for engineers, and bring engineering to life for kids, educators and parents. Stay tuned for more details about upcoming Engineers Week events.

I want to remind everyone that we continue our search for the 2021 Civil Engineer of the Year. Nominations are currently open. This award will be presented at the upcoming Texas Society of Professional Engineers' banquet, which has been postponed to May 2021. Please reach out to David Matocha at [david.matocha@forterrabp.com](mailto:david.matocha@forterrabp.com) to make a nomination.

I want to shout out an extra-large THANK YOU to all of our sponsors! The 2021 sponsorship drive is underway and we are excited to welcome back returning sponsors while welcoming in our new ones. Your support means so much and I know our Board is ready to work hard to continue to show the value of being a part of the ASCE Austin Branch. Thank you again for your support and generosity!

Lastly, with the New Year upon us, I want to encourage everyone to get more involved with ASCE. Join us at any one of our monthly luncheons. Consider volunteering, including at the aforementioned events/activities. Or sponsor. The strength of this organization is in you, the members, and all the talents, expertise and heart that you bring. If you have any questions, ideas or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at me at (512) 971-3911 or [beast@polarisforensics.com](mailto:beast@polarisforensics.com).

Thank you for everything you do to support ASCE!

Bradley L. East, M.S., P.E.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2021

- 1/1 New Year's Day
- 1/12 EWB Virtual Chapter Meeting
- 1/18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 1/19 ASCE Austin January Luncheon
- 1/19 EWB Virtual Trivia
- 1/21 SEI Meeting
- 1/29 EOY Award Nominations Due
- 1/31 Food Bank Holiday Fundraiser Ends



## JANUARY BRANCH MEETING

BY PAUL HAHN, P.E.

Please join us for our January virtual branch meeting. We will receive a presentation on Connected/Autonomous Vehicle technology titled "Use of Shared Automated Vehicles for First-Mile Last-Mile Service: Micro-simulation of Rail-transit Connections in Austin, Texas" from Yantao Huang, a researcher and PhD candidate at the University of Texas.

### MEETING SPONSOR



Freese and Nichols, Inc. is a professional consulting firm serving clients across the Southwest and Southeast United States. With sustainability in mind, Freese and Nichols plans, designs and manages infrastructure projects. It is the first engineering/architecture firm to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

### REGISTRATION LINK

(\$10 suggested donation)

#### DATE

01/19/2021, 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

#### LOCATION

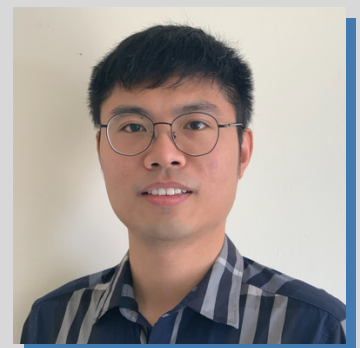
Zoom Virtual Meeting

### SPEAKER: YANTAO HUANG

RESEARCHER AND PHD CANDIDATE AT UT - AUSTIN

Yantao Huang received his BS degree in transportation engineering from China's Central South University in 2012, and his master's degree in transportation engineering from Imperial College London. He began working with Dr. Kara Kockelman to pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Texas, Austin in Jan 2017. His research interests are rooted in shared autonomous vehicle applications and network simulations.

He has contributed to research analysis and travel behavior modeling for two DOT-sponsored research projects on the topic of smart transport systems for Texas, and contributed to electric vehicle infrastructure optimization research for a National Science Foundation project. Currently, Yantao is exploring the impact of shared autonomous vehicles on transit systems.



Yantao Huang




# ASCE AUSTIN IS ON YOUTUBE!


BY GRISELDA QUINTERO, EIT & LEANNE CANTALUPO, EIT

Across the U.S. and the world, the COVID-19 pandemic forced people, businesses, and communities to make daily shifts in their operations. The ASCE Austin Branch was no exception.


In May 2020, we transitioned our monthly general meetings to a virtual platform. We've continued to convene over Zoom, and online meetings have become our new normal. Since COVID (and online meetings) aren't going away anytime soon, we've decided to make the most of it. We're now recording & publishing our virtual luncheons on YouTube! We hope this new platform addition helps make your ASCE Austin Branch membership just as valuable to you as it was pre-pandemic.

Were you on vacation on the day of the meeting? Or maybe you had a conflicting appointment? Were able to attend but want to go back to double-check something you heard? No matter what your reasoning is, you're in luck! The ASCE Austin Branch YouTube Channel is LIVE! Click here to subscribe to our channel: [ASCE Austin Branch YouTube Channel](#)




 *ASCE Austin Branch*


**NOW FEATURING:**



**2020 NOVEMBER  
GENERAL MEETING**



**2020 DECEMBER  
GENERAL MEETING**




**IT'S HERE!**


# SUBSCRIBE

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Also find us at:



[www.austinasce.org](http://www.austinasce.org)



[ASCE Austin Branch](#)



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## EWRI UPDATE

BY TRAVIS KAATZ, P.E.

EWRI-Austin is currently investigating activities and events to replace our typical raingarden build events with AISD due to COVID 19. Please keep you eye out for information on community outreach events in future newsletters. EWRI-Austin is also in the process of planning our 2021 Continuing Education Workshop. We will be sending out a Save The Date in coming months.

## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

BY AUSTIN MESSERLI, P.E.



### LEGISLATIVE DRIVE-IN

Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic, the 2021 ASCE Texas Section Legislative Drive-In will be held virtually this year. This bi-annual event brings civil engineers from across the State to meet with their representation in the legislature to discuss issues important to our industry and our communities. With our industry seeing a direct correlation from the pandemic on infrastructure funding, this will be a critical moment to ensure we are making progress on improvements necessary to serve the eve growing population of Texas.

Mark your calendars for the week of February 22nd through the 26th as we host a weeklong effort to meet with our legislators. Joining in the event has numerous benefits:

- ASCE's Government Relations & Public Relations University training
- Briefing sessions on key legislation and ASCE's legislative priorities
- Virtual meetings with your State Senator and Representative, or their staff
- Discussions about engineering and infrastructure related issues within each specific legislative district
- An opportunity to educate legislators on ASCE's state priorities and position on key infrastructure bills
- Tips and best practices for fostering relationships with your local elected officials
- A chance to create relationships with your ASCE peers from across the state

Click the link to sign up: [www.texasce.org/our-programs/legislative-drive-in](http://www.texasce.org/our-programs/legislative-drive-in)

### JOIN THE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Lastly, we are always looking for ASCE members to join in our efforts so if you or someone you know would be interested in being part of the Government Affairs Committee, do not hesitate to reach out the committee at do not hesitate to reach out the [GovernmentRelations@austinasce.org](mailto:GovernmentRelations@austinasce.org).



# FORENSICS ENGINEERING CONFERENCE

BY RADELL GIBBS

The annual Forensics Engineering Conference is being hosted by the Cockrell School of Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin.

This annual conference brings together the best of academic and industry for an exciting exchange on Forensics Engineering. By using real-world case studies such as hurricanes, structural failures and foundation issues, the conference focuses on lessons learned across a variety of topics. Topics covered in previous years include: non-destructive testing for forensics investigations, the role of the Forensic Engineer in the legal process, forensics related to hurricanes Harvey and Irma, and Engineering Ethics, among others.

Who Should Attend?

- Design Structural Engineers
- Forensics Engineers
- Engineers in materials laboratories
- Architects interested in technical issues
- Foundation Engineers
- Engineers in public service
- Engineers-in-Training
- Engineers involved in building envelopes

For more information on discounted rates, contact RaDell Gibbs at [rgibbs@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:rgibbs@austin.utexas.edu) or visit [executive.engr.utexas.edu/epd/forensics.php](http://executive.engr.utexas.edu/epd/forensics.php)

## FORENSICS ENGINEERING CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY



The University of Texas at Austin

Cockrell School of Engineering



### WHEN

February 11-12, 2021  
8:00am to 5:15pm



### FORMAT

Live-online



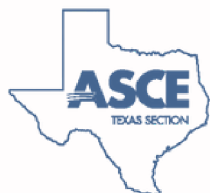
### MODEL

Instructor-led



### PRICE

Early Bird..... \$450  
(before 1/11/2021)  
Regular  
Registration..... \$500



## ASCE TEXAS SECTION UPDATE

BY SEAN MERRELL, P.E., ASCE TEXAS SECTION PRESIDENT

### A MESSAGE FROM ASCE TEXAS SECTION PRESIDENT SEAN P. MERRELL, PE, PTOE, RAS, F.ASCE

Howdy. Welcome to 2021...I have been anxiously awaiting your arrival. Never in a million years would I have guessed what 2020 had in store for all of us. I'm not a futurist, but I do predict 2021 will be a much better year. A good 2021 wouldn't be possible without the hard work and planning from our ASCE Texas leaders and volunteers in 2020. This begins with the world-renowned... [click here to read more.](#)

### DON'T MISS THE 2021 ASCE TEXAS STUDENT SYMPOSIUM CAREER FAIR!

The Student Symposium Career Fair is an opportunity for employers to meet with over 400 students from universities from across Texas and Mexico in one place. We know the students who participate in ASCE are some of the brightest civil engineering minds engaged in leadership, teamwork, and professionalism. Join us and experience the Student Symposium Career Fair using a highly-rated virtual career fair platform. The Symposium will be held virtually on April 15-17, 2021 and hosted by the ASCE Student Chapter at The University of Texas at Austin. Visit [www.texasce.org/our-programs/student-symposium/](http://www.texasce.org/our-programs/student-symposium/) for more career fair details (under "Sponsorship Opportunities").



# ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS UPDATE

BY JENNA GARDNER

Join the Greater Austin chapter of Engineers Without Borders on Tuesday, January 12th at 6 PM for our virtual General Meeting!

The EWB Los Angeles chapter will be our guest speakers and we will learn all about their projects. If you are interested in attending, please contact Jenna Gardner for the meeting information, [operations@ewbgreateraustin.org](mailto:operations@ewbgreateraustin.org)



## VIRTUAL GENERAL MEETING FT. EWB-LOS ANGELES

what

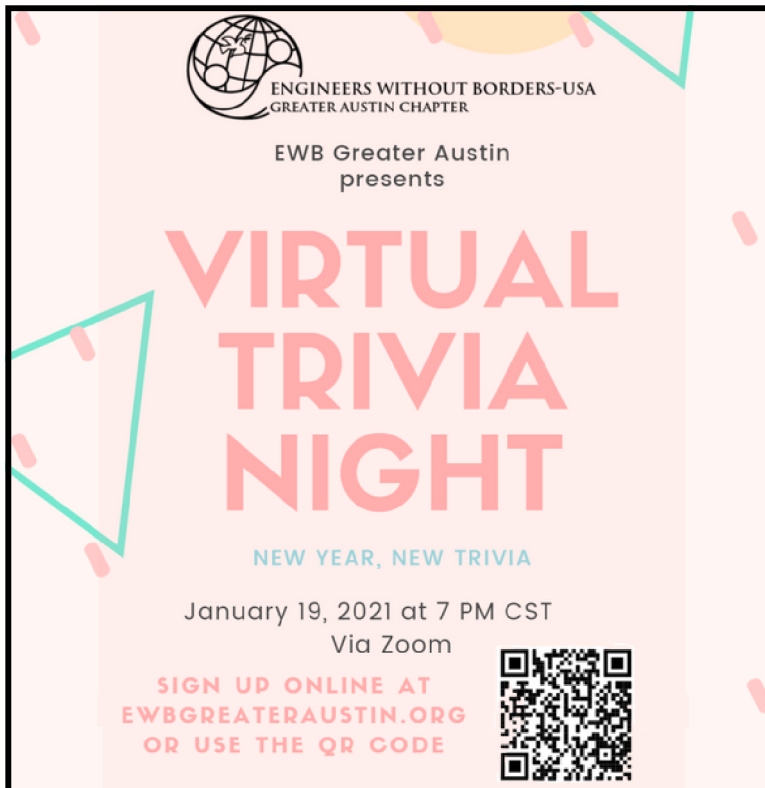
Virtual General Meeting

when

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 | 6PM

details

Contact Jenna Gardner at [operations@ewbgreateraustin.org](mailto:operations@ewbgreateraustin.org)



Additionally, the chapter will be hosting a virtual trivia night on Tuesday, January 19th at 7PM! The winning team will receive a prize. Invite your friends, families and coworkers. Max team size is 6 people.

There is a suggested donation of \$5 per individual, but all are welcome to participate. Please consider donating to benefit the Tanzania water rehabilitation project and to help us host more fun trivia nights like this!

If you are interested in sponsoring a trivia night or have any other questions, please email Director of Projects, Lizzie Wilson, at [projects@ewbgreateraustin.org](mailto:projects@ewbgreateraustin.org).

See our latest [blog\\_\\_post](#) for more information.

## ASCE AUSTIN 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 submit your job posting here: [www.austinasce.org/job-board](http://www.austinasce.org/job-board)





Thank you everyone who came to our virtual wildflower Seed Bombs Craft-Along Service event December 10th! It was a ton of fun and we can't wait to see those flowers bloom!



Thanks everyone who went to our Christmas Trivia Happy Hour on December 17th!

Quick! How many ghosts are in the movie A Christmas Carol? If you guessed 4, you are right! Don't forget that Scrooge is visited by his former business partner at the beginning of the movie. One of our winners got a gift card to Tiff's Treats, that could be you next time. 😊

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@ymfaustin



ASCE YMF ATX



[www.austinasce.org/  
younger-members](http://www.austinasce.org/younger-members)

If you are interested in learning more about ASCE YMF ATX, please contact our president Kaylyn Hudson at [Kaylyn.hudson@freese.com](mailto:Kaylyn.hudson@freese.com).

## YMF MEMBER MONDAYS

Did you know that YMF posts monthly "Member Mondays" on social media? Check out October and November's highlighted members below.

**ASCE**  
TEXAS SECTION  
Austin Branch  
YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM

**MEMBER MONDAY**

"I love connecting with other engineers outside of the workplace, making a difference in our community, and growing my leadership skills."

**Mica Garza, E.I.T.**

**ASCE**  
TEXAS SECTION  
Austin Branch  
YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM

**MEMBER MONDAY**

"I chose civil engineering to make a difference and to improve the quality of life of people around me."

**Clint Smith, E.I.T.**



# HONORS COMMITTEE UPDATE

BY DAVID MATOCHA



The due date for nominations for the 2021 Austin Branch Engineer of the Year Award has been extended until January 29th, 2021. The winner will be announced as part of the Engineer's Week festivities in May 2021.



Now is the time to think about the many wonderful engineers that serve the Austin Branch and the civil engineering profession and show them your appreciation by nominating them for the Austin Branch Engineer of the Year Award. The past winners of this award are literally a "Who's Who" of the Austin civil engineering community.

The only requirement is the nominee must be a member of the Austin Branch. Surely you know someone deserving to be considered for this award.

Please reach out to me, David Matocha, at david.matocha@forterrabp.com for a nomination form or if you have any questions. I am happy to help you with your nomination.

# OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE

BY AYAH ALOMARI



With school being virtual many students are falling behind! BookSpring is a nonprofit that works to improve children literacy and book ownership in Central Texas. They need help sorting and packaging books that are donated!

Feel free to fill out the volunteer form in the link below to choose the times that are most comfortable with you for volunteering! You can volunteer from your own home or visit their locations!

## VOLUNTEER FORM

<https://www.bookspring.org/en/volunteer/>

## COMPANY COLLABORATIVE VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING

If you and your company are interested in participating in a friendly competition for charitable cause, then we have the event for you!



From NOW - January 31st, ASCE Austin is going to join the local community in the Central Area Food Bank Holiday Fundraiser!

Create a team through your company and try to raise as much as you can through ASCE. The firm to donate the most money will be granted free sponsorship! Fill out the form below if you are interested in learning more!

## INTEREST FORM

<https://forms.gle/uD5HrAbAik62bDjr8>

# ASCE 2021 SPRING SCHOLARSHIPS

BY ANDREA BRYANT, P.E.

The scholarship committee is looking for new committee members.

If interested, please contact Andrea Bryant and Laura Friello at [scholarships@austinasce.org](mailto:scholarships@austinasce.org) for more information.







With 2020 in the rearview mirror we look forward to what lies ahead in 2021. SEI Austin hopes you had a refreshing holiday season and are ready to move forward. We will continue to carry out our mission to advance and serve the Structural Engineering profession in the coming year by offering Professional Meetings, Structural Engineering Talks (SET) and on-line resources. Have a great start to the New Year!

## PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

We are starting 2021 with our first Professional meeting of the year, scheduled for Jan 21, 2021. Nick Gaziani, Bridge and Tunnel Division Regional Manager at Watson Bowman Acme will provide a brief overview of the evolution of the expansion joint sealing system for bridge structures and highlight various joint states are using as well as some of the innovations that are available today. Additional information will be provided in the upcoming SEI e-blast and on the SEI Austin website ([www.austinasce.org/sei/](http://www.austinasce.org/sei/)).

## STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING TALKS (SET) 2021

Planning continues for SET 2021. We hope to hold it in person later this year but will adjust based on the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Updates and all available information will be maintained at [www.austinasce.org/sei/set](http://www.austinasce.org/sei/set)



## ADDITIONAL ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

### 1. New SEI Standards Series ([Click here for details](#))

Join live, virtual sessions for exclusive interaction with expert ASCE/SEI Standard developers on state-of-the-market updates. Participants will learn about technical revisions and review a design example. Attendees are encouraged to join and participate in Live Q&A.

### 2. Career Path Series: Insights with Glenn Bell and SE Industry Leaders ([Click here for details](#))

One monthly discussion remains on Performance-Based Design. However, recordings of previous presentations are available for structural engineers across the entire career arc – from where to begin to possibilities beyond Principal. Live sessions are free for ASCE/SEI Members, but space is limited. \$35 registration fee per session for non-members. Members will be able to access the recording after the event, as well as resource links specific to each session.

### 3. SEI Structures 2020 Virtual Event ([Click here for details](#))

This recording is free and open to all. It features content on Generations@Work, Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety CROSS-US, and Performance-Based Design taken from the recently canceled Structures Congress.

### 4. SEI Structures Congress 2020 Proceedings ([Click here for details](#))

This site provides access to the papers that were to be presented at the 2020 Structures Congress.

### 5. ASCE Collaborate ([Click here for details](#))

This is a collaboration page normally reserved for ASCE members but now open to all. It contains several events that can be joined. Most events are free of charge.

### 6. ASCE free virtual lectures ([Click here for details](#))

Center for Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Space (CBIPS) at Columbia University offers lectures on COVID-19 and technical topics.

Start your year off right and stay plugged into the SEI Austin Chapter via our website, where you'll find the latest and greatest on upcoming events. We always welcome your thoughts on future technical presentations and other special events – particularly during these challenging times. If there is something you would like to do, then we would like to hear about it. Please drop us a line at [sei@austinasce.org](mailto:sei@austinasce.org).



# SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**START THE NEW YEAR OFF STRONG - SPONSOR THE ASCE AUSTIN BRANCH FOR 2021!**

BY AUSTIN HELTON, P.E.

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!

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](mailto:sponsorship@austinasce.org).



## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**\$300**

### ANNUAL SPONSORS

- 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.

**\$350**

### MONTHLY BRANCH MEETING SPONSORS

- Company highlight in event promotion emails.
- Special recognition at branch meeting event.
- Opportunity to give a brief introduction of your company during the event.

**\$300**

### CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENT (2021)

- Company highlight in event promotion emails.
- Several additional levels of sponsorship available.

**\$850**

### SPECIAL BUNDLE RATE

- 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.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!





# 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 multiple open positions for ASCE Austin, EWRI, SEI, and more. If you are interested in any of our committees, please contact our and our Nominations Committee Chair, Travis Isaacson, at [tisaacson@rios-group.com](mailto:tisaacson@rios-group.com).

## 2020-2021 ASCE AUSTIN OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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*Jacobs Engineering Group*  
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Garabed (Garo) Harutunian, P.E., F.ASCE

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*MWM DesignGroup*  
Jane Ellen Carter, E.I.T.  
*Aguirre & Fields*

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*Garver*  
[governmentrelations@austinasce.org](mailto:governmentrelations@austinasce.org)

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*MWM Design Group*

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*Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc.*  
Paul Hahn, P.E. (Practitioner Advisor 2)  
*Aguirre & Fields*

### **STUDENT CHAPTER CONTACT COMMITTEE**

Jacob Gay, P.E.  
*Dashiell Corporation*



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