

## September 2020

ASCE Austin Branch Newsletter

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### President's Message by Travis Isaacson, P.E.

Welcome back to the start of another year with ASCE Austin Branch! I hope everyone enjoyed a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

September is our first month back after our summer break and our transition to our new board. At our September virtual meeting we will welcome ASCE Texas President, Susan Roth, to install our new President and Board members. I'll be handing the president's gavel off to our incoming President, Mr. Bradley East, and I know he will lead our Branch to great things in this coming year.

Please help us to start this year on a successful note by supporting and attending our annual Continuing Education workshop, planned for October 9th as a half day virtual seminar.

It has been an honor to serve as your Austin Branch President and I have greatly appreciated the opportunity. Thank you to all of the board members and committee chairs who have served alongside me this past year. It was definitely a challenging year, and I am so proud of all that we were able to overcome and accomplish as a team of dedicated volunteers.

Lastly, now is a great time to get involved! If you are interested in getting more involved with the Branch, please get in touch with me at 512-203-8767, [tisaacson@rios-group.com](mailto:tisaacson@rios-group.com).

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Linked In](#) and [Instagram](#) for news, and updates.

Travis S. Isaacson, P.E.



## UT Mentorship Program

by Robert Ramon, P.E.

*The ASCE Austin Branch continues its partnership with the University of Texas Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering in providing volunteers from the ASCE Austin Branch to serve as mentors for seniors in the civil engineering program. The ASCE Austin Branch (and others) have supported the school by providing 45 mentors this semester!*

*Students are organized into teams to work on real-world projects for real-world clients. Mentors will begin their participation with an orientation on September 4. Mentors will be assigned to each team to support students in developing a sound technical approach, preparing an oral presentation for a stakeholder meeting, and delivering a brief written report to their client. While mentors are asked to provide technical advice as the project develops, another important component of this course is to expose students to the non-technical aspects of our work as we collaborate with team members, clients, and stakeholder communities.*

*We have met our volunteer goal for this semester, but please keep this opportunity in mind for the Spring semester which typically requires a greater number of mentors. Serving as a mentor is an excellent opportunity to assist with public service projects in our community, identify potential new hires for your company, get your company name out in the local community, and earn three PDHs for licensure.*

*Thank you to all ASCE Austin Branch members who volunteered to participate this semester! And a special thank you to Garver for stepping up with 5 mentors!*

## September Branch Meeting by Sam Shorter, P.E.

Please join us for our September virtual branch meeting. We will receive a presentation on Geosynthetics from Ashley MacMillan, PE, with TenCate Geosynthetics. This presentation will explore using geosynthetics to enhance infrastructure, reduce construction schedule and costs and preserve natural resources.

Date: 9/15/2020 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Topic: Geosynthetics: Tame Your Terrain



[Register here](#)



Ashley MacMillan, P.E., is a geotechnical engineer with extensive experience providing guidance, design and planning for complex geotechnical projects. She is Engineering Business Manager (South Central) for TenCate Geosynthetics and resides in Austin, TX. Her expertise is in soft soil stabilization, retaining walls and excavation support systems. She was the recipient of the 2017 DFI Educational Trust Women in Deep Foundations Professional Development Grant and Utah ASCE Fresh Face of the Year in 2016.

## September Branch Meeting Sponsor by Sam Shorter, P.E.



With a company history over 300 years old, TenCate Mirafi Geosynthetics provides the geosynthetics industry with expert application knowledge, though the highest quality products, brands, and solutions that enhance the world's infrastructure, protect the environment and conserve natural resources. Through various geosynthetic applications, TenCate Geosynthetics products and support provide reliable and long-lasting solutions for many different modes of transportation. These applications consist of reinforcement of local and interstate road systems, ground improvement to increase usable rights-of-way, pavement restoration for maintenance of existing roadways, erosion control protection of steepened slopes, and vertical grade separation with retaining walls and slopes. The use of geosynthetics not only add value to the overall construction project, but also provide environmentally sustainable solutions.

## Support State DOT Revenue Needs Amid Pandemic

ASCE has urged Congress to provide \$50 billion in immediate, and necessary relief for state departments of transportation (state DOTs) as a way to ensure vital transportation projects can continue.

As the current COVID-19 pandemic continues, state DOTs are unable to generate the revenue needed to prevent major disruptions in their ability to operate and maintain their transportation systems. to impact ASCE members and creates prolonged economic uncertainty.

Under the current pandemic, individual state revenues are estimated to be impacted by 45% in the next 18 months. This is a result of expected decline of 50% for state motor fuel taxes, a 67% decline in toll road traffic, and a 77% decline in ferry traffic. Because of this sharp decline, state DOT's ability to provide a match for federal funds will be constrained and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has estimated that state DOTs require \$50 billion in order to continue to operate.

ASCE's 2017 Infrastructure Report Card identified an investment gap of \$2 trillion, half of which is for our nation's surface transportation infrastructure. Now is the time to urge your Members of Congress to support our nation's surface transportation infrastructure and our state DOTs by providing emergency relief.

TAKE ACTION TODAY

## The Continuing Education Conference is Going Virtual!

Are you still in need of PDHs?



**DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE**

**ASCE**  
TEXAS SECTION  
Austin Branch

**VIRTUAL CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCE**

**TOPICS & SPEAKERS:**

- Demographic Trends in Texas
  - Dr. Lila Valencia, Texas Demographic Center
- North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP)
  - Varuna Singh, P.E., TxDOT HOU
- Project Management and Leadership
  - Mark Cook, The Cross Group
- Project Brays - Reducing the Risk of Flooding Along Brays Bayou
  - Gary Zika, P.E., Harris County Flood Control District
- Austin Strategic Mobility Plan Update
  - Liane Miller, City of Austin

**Friday, October 9, 2020**  
**8:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**REGISTRATION:**  
**\$60 per person**  
**\$40 for students & government employees**  
Registration Link coming soon!!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**ASCE September Luncheon**  
[September 15, Zoom](#)

**ASCE Continuing Ed Workshop**  
[October 9](#)

**ASCE October Luncheon**  
[September 20, Zoom](#)

### ASCE 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 contact [Lily Aung](#).

### 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 2021-2022 Committee Chairs, as well as multiple open positions for 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).

#### ASCE Austin Branch

Continuing Ed Committee  
Contact: [president@austinasce.org](mailto:president@austinasce.org)

Community Outreach Committee  
Contact: Francisco Arce  
[communityoutreach@austinasce.org](mailto:communityoutreach@austinasce.org)

#### EWRI

Contact: [ewri@austinasce.org](mailto:ewri@austinasce.org)

#### SEI

Contact: [sei@austinasce.org](mailto:sei@austinasce.org)

## ASCE Austin Branch Sponsorship Opportunities Now Available! by Austin Helton, P.E.

2020-2021 ASCE Austin Branch Sponsorship Opportunities are STILL Available!



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!

#### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Annual Sponsors (\$300)
  - 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.
- Monthly Branch Meeting sponsors (\$350)
  - Company highlight in event promotion emails.
  - Special recognition at branch meeting event.
  - Opportunity to give a brief introduction of your Company during the event.
- Continuing Education (2021) Event (\$300)
  - Company highlight in event promotion emails.
  - Several additional levels of sponsorship available.
- SPECIAL BUNDLE RATE (\$850)
  - 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.

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).

Thank you,  
Austin Helton, P.E.  
Sponsorship Chair, ASCE Austin Branch

## 2020-2021 ASCE Austin Branch Officers

### PRESIDENT

Bradley East  
Polaris Forensics, Inc  
(512) 971-3911  
[president@austinasce.org](mailto:president@austinasce.org)

### PRESIDENT-ELECT

Sam Shorter  
Miller Gray, LLC  
(512) 861-5300  
[presidentelect@austinasce.org](mailto:presidentelect@austinasce.org)

### VICE PRESIDENT - PROGRAMS

Paul Hahn  
Aguirre & Fields  
(512) 609-1526  
[vicepresident@austinasce.org](mailto:vicepresident@austinasce.org)

### SECRETARY

Colton Fisher  
Aguirre & Fields  
(512) 609-1502  
[secretary@austinasce.org](mailto:secretary@austinasce.org)

### COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Leanne Cantalupo, EIT  
Garver  
(512) 485-0020  
[communications@austinasce.org](mailto:communications@austinasce.org)

### TREASURER

Tyler Dube  
Pape-Dawson Engineers  
(512) 454-8711  
[info@austinasce.org](mailto:info@austinasce.org)

### TREASURER-ELECT

Genest Landry  
City of Austin  
(512) 974-8749  
[info@austinasce.org](mailto:info@austinasce.org)

### TEXAS SECTION DIRECTOR

Kat Lauer  
Sunland Group, Inc  
(325) 617-6269  
[texassection@austinasce.org](mailto:texassection@austinasce.org)

### YOUNGER MEMBER DIRECTOR

Marita Moya  
Half Associates, Inc  
(512) 777-4596  
[ymfdirector@austinasce.org](mailto:ymfdirector@austinasce.org)

### PAST PRESIDENT

Travis Isaacson  
The Rios Group  
(512) 580-5440  
[pastpresident@austinasce.org](mailto:pastpresident@austinasce.org)

## Honors Committee by David Matocha, PE

My name is David Matocha and I have been a long-time member of the Austin Branch; having had the honor of serving as Austin Branch President in 2000-2001 and 2004-2205. I am a Senior Technical Services Manager for Forterra Pipe & Precast and have been dealing with concrete pipe and box culverts in the greater Austin area for almost 25 years. It is my honor to head up the Honors Committee for this year. I am doing so with some apprehensiveness as I have big shoes to fill. Garabed Hartunian did a wonderful job chairing this committee for years. Unfortunately, Garo's health has dictated he relinquish his chairmanship of this committee. I hope to make him proud.

Nominations for the 2021 Austin Branch Engineer of the Year Award are due January 8th, 2021. The winner will be announced as part of the Engineer's Week festivities in February. It is never too early to start thinking about the many wonderful engineers that serve the Austin Branch and the civil engineering profession. The past winners of this award are literally a "Who's Who" of the Austin civil engineering community. Surely you know someone deserving to be considered for this award.

Please reach out to me at [david.matocha@forterrabp.com](mailto:david.matocha@forterrabp.com) for a nomination form or if you have any questions.

## Younger Member Forum News by Katherine Smith, EIT

Keep an eye out for more upcoming events this fall. We look forward to (virtually) meeting you! If you are interested in learning more about ASCE YMF Austin, please contact our president Kaylyn Hudson at [Kaylyn.hudson@freese.com](mailto:Kaylyn.hudson@freese.com).

We are excited to start back up and have selected our leadership for this new 2020-2021 year! However, we are still looking for a Texas Section Liaison and Scholarship Committee members, so let your friends know!

2020 Leadership:

Director:	Marita Moya
President:	Kaylyn Hudson
Vice President:	David Contreras
Secretary:	Katherine Smith
Treasurer:	Matthew Gal
Social Chair:	Clayton McNeal
Rec Sports Chair:	Shelby Wiedrich
Seminar Chair:	Sofia Carrillo
Service Chair:	Claire LeGrow
Social Media Chair:	Jes Johnson
Student Chapter Liaison:	Josh Mata
Texas Section Liaison:	-----
PE Review Course Chair:	Raul Olvera
Golf Tournament Chair:	Sydnie Fiocca
Committee:	Arturo Terrazas, Casey Schneider, Samuel Levatino
Scholarship Chair:	Mica Garza
Committee:	-----
MRLC Chair:	Anali Martinez Gonzalez and Austin M.

If you or any of your friends are interested in joining, or want more information, please reach out to us on any of our social media platforms!

## 2020-2021 ASCE Austin Committee Chairs

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORD**  
Ayah Alomari & Coby Gee  
[communityoutreach@austinasce.org](mailto:communityoutreach@austinasce.org)

**MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR**  
Augustine Verrengia  
[membership@austinasce.org](mailto:membership@austinasce.org)

**SCHOLARSHIPS COORDINATOR**  
Genest Landry  
[scholarships@austinasce.org](mailto:scholarships@austinasce.org)

**SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR**  
Laura Friello & Andrea Bryant  
[sponsorship@austinasce.org](mailto:sponsorship@austinasce.org)

**WEBSITE COORDINATOR**  
Lily Aung  
[webmaster@austinasce.org](mailto:webmaster@austinasce.org)

**EWRI INSTITUTE**  
Travis Kaatz  
[ewri@austinasce.org](mailto:ewri@austinasce.org)

**SEI INSTITUTE**  
Eric Sammarco  
[sei@austinasce.org](mailto:sei@austinasce.org)

**YMF FORUM**  
Kaylyn Hudson  
[yfm@austinasce.org](mailto:yfm@austinasce.org)

## YMF Continued

Our website: <https://www.austinasce.org/younger-members/>  
Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ASCE.YMF.ATX/>  
Our Instagram profile: @ymfaustin

Unfortunately our Golf Tournament for 2020 has been cancelled, but we are looking forward to hosting it in the future when it's safe!

Thanks and here's to a safe and fun new year!



ASCE Texas  
STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

Innovation. Building the Future Together

Hosted by **ASCE**  
STUDENT CHAPTER  
University of Texas  
at Austin

**Save The Date**  
April 15-17, 2021 // Austin, Texas  
For more information contact [utexas.asce@gmail.com](mailto:utexas.asce@gmail.com)

**Thank You To Our Branch Sponsors!**



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