



TEXAS SECTION
Austin Branch

ASCE AUSTIN BRANCH NEWSLETTER

December 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

4 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4 DECEMBER
BRANCH MEETING

5 EWRI UPDATE

5 GOVERNMENT
AFFAIRS UPDATE

5 CHRISTMAS IN
MARBLE FALLS

6 YMF UPDATE

7 ASCE TEXAS
SECTION UPDATE

8 HONORS COMMITTEE
UPDATE

8 ASCE JOB BOARD

8 OUTREACH
COMMITTEE UPDATE

9 SEI UPDATE

10 ASCE AUSTIN LEADERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES

10 ASCE AUSTIN OFFICERS
& COMMITTEE CHAIRS

11 SPONSORSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES

11 THANK YOU TO
OUR SPONSORS

12 FOLLOW US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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



With the holidays upon us and 2020 coming to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Austin Branch members, volunteers, officers, and committee chairs for making ASCE such a special organization to be a part of. Thank you for making this past year a success! I am so grateful for the opportunity to be engaged with this great organization, and I will continue to work with all of you to advance our engineering profession in 2021. As you think about upcoming New Year's resolutions, please consider a professional one – becoming more involved with ASCE! It is easy, fun, rewarding and appreciated.

I want to remind everyone that in lieu of a registration fee, we continue to accept donations at each of our upcoming luncheons. \$5 of each donation amount will be directed toward funding branch operations. The remaining donation amount will be given to the Central Texas Food Bank (throughout the rest of the calendar year). Please consider donating. I also want to mention that the ASCE Austin Branch will be hosting a virtual fundraising event/competition. Stay tuned for more details.

At this month's Branch meeting, we feature our annual Ethics presentation conducted by the Texas Board of Professional Engineers. Please join us and get your ethics PDH required for your P.E. license renewal.

We continue our search for the 2021 Civil Engineer of the Year. Nominations are currently open and we are accepting nominations through January 8, 2021. This award will be presented at the upcoming Texas Society of Professional Engineers' banquet in February. Please reach out to David Matocha at david.matocha@forterrabp.com to make a nomination.

If you have not renewed your ASCE membership for 2021, please take the time to complete the membership process. And encourage your peers to join ASCE as a way to stay plugged into the profession. If you're not feeling the benefits behind membership, let us know – we're here to help you get plugged in! The new year will bring a lot of new opportunities and activities at the Austin Branch including planning for the ASCE Texas Student Symposium and attending the ASCE Texas Legislative Drive-In, among others. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at me at (512) 971-3911 or beast@polarisforensics.com.

I wish each of you a joyous and safe holiday season and Happy New Year!

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 12/1 Food Bank Fundraising Begins
- 12/10 Hanukkah Begins
- 12/10 YMF Seed Bombs Service Event
- 12/15 ASCE Austin December Luncheon
- 12/25 Christmas Day
- 12/26 Kwanza Begins
- 12/31 New Year's Eve



DECEMBER BRANCH MEETING

END-OF-YEAR ETHICS SESSION

BY PAUL HAHN, P.E.

Please join us for our December virtual branch meeting. Mr. Rick Valdes, PE, Supervising Investigator with the TBPELS Compliance & Enforcement Department will give a presentation on professional practice updates and ethics.

REGISTRATION LINK

(\$10 suggested donation)

DATE 12/15/2020, 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

LOCATION Zoom Virtual Meeting

THIS MONTH'S MEETING SPONSOR:



Durability. Reliability. Dependability. AmeriTex puts their customers first with products that are second-to-none.

They're revolutionizing the way concrete pipe is made. AmeriTex controls every aspect of production from start to finish, so they deliver the highest quality products on time, every time. As an independent supplier, they have the capacity and flexibility to serve a broad range of needs – from small residential developments to massive highway projects.

With locations in Seguin, Conroe and Dallas, AmeriTex is the premier supplier of reinforced concrete pipe and box in Texas. They stock ready-to-ship products in many standard sizes and configurations. And when your project calls for specific dimensions, joint types and strength ratings, they can easily re-tool production to meet your exact specifications. It's AmeriTex's job to make your project a success.



Rick Valdes, P.E.

Rick Valdes is an Investigator V with the Compliance & Enforcement Department, Texas Board of Professional Engineers. He has over 25 years of experience as an investigator with the State of Texas; thirteen of those years with the Board.

As an investigator, Rick ensures that the TPBE Act and Board Rules are followed and also investigates complaints that are received by the Board regarding violations to the Act and or Board Rules.

Rick has worked for the Travis County Sheriff's Department, and the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation and while there, was the Program Manager of Professional Boxing for the State of Texas. Additionally, Rick was also the Supervising Investigator for the Texas Real Estate Commission before joining our team.

Rick has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Southwest Texas State University '86.



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 your 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 ANNOUNCEMENT

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 ever-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. We are currently planning for two trainings opportunities to be held in the weeks leading up to the virtual drive-in event to best prepare our membership for the event. More information will be released here soon.

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 GovernmentRelations@austinasce.org

CHRISTMAS IN MARBLE FALLS

THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IS FULL OF SMALL TOWN CHARM IN MARBLE FALLS

BY ERIN BURKS

Make your holiday bucket list and check it twice.

This season, Marble Falls magic is sprinkled all throughout the town, with the Walkway of Lights in Lakeside Park, plus the Downtown Sip N' Shops, a Christmas parade, live music, and the soon-to-be family tradition of the Winter Ice Skating Rink.

For more information, please visit VisitMarbleFalls.org/Christmas



BY KATHERINE SMITH, EIT



SERVICE EVENT: WILDFLOW SEED BOMBS CRAFT-ALONG

One of the easiest, and, arguably, most fun ways to keep Austin beautiful is to protect and promote the amazing biodiversity of plant and animal life we have in our city.

Seed balls are a method for distributing seeds by encasing them in a mixture of clay and soil humus, or compost. These seed balls are important because they are a great way to plant native wildflowers and grasses, which helps to protect the local biodiversity here in our urban ecosystem.

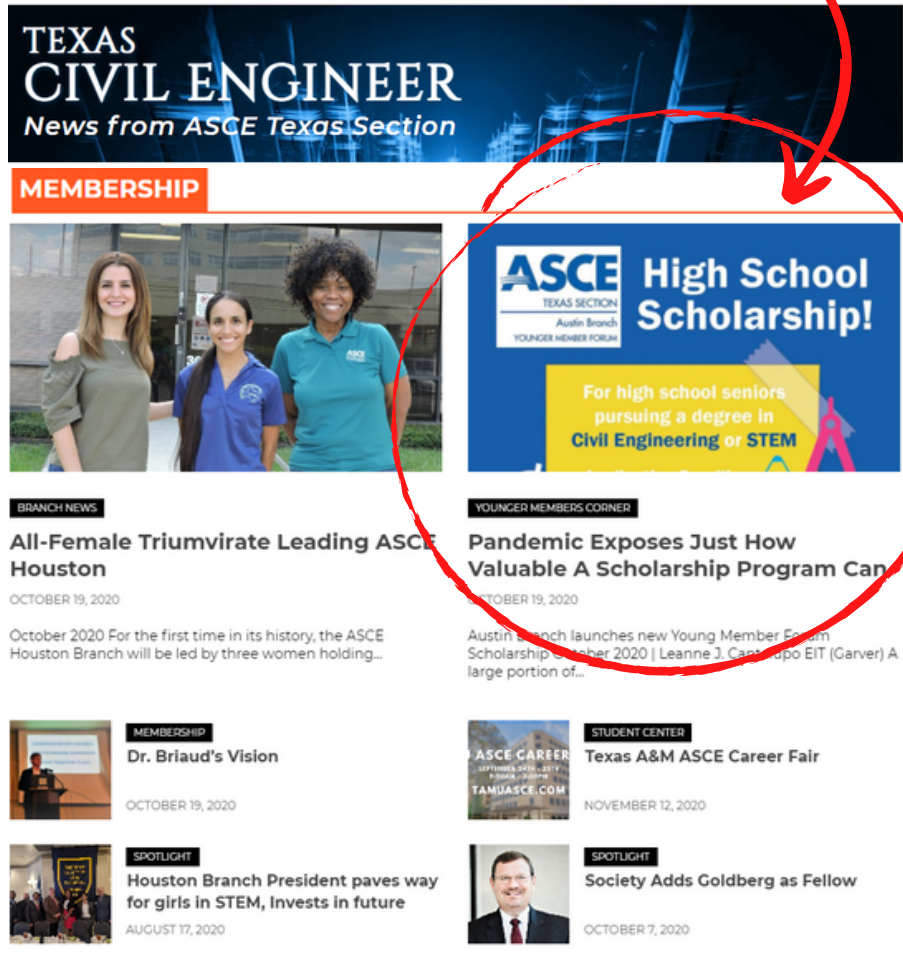
If you have any questions you can email the event coordinator Claire LeGrow at claire.legrow@austin.utexas.edu



what	Seed bombs & happy hour!
when	Thursday, December 10th, 2020 7PM-8PM
where	Zoom - Link: utexas.zoom.us/j/97880906401 Meeting ID: 978 8090 6401
register	www.eventbrite.com/e/wildflower-seed-bombs-craft-along-tickets-129765280447

FEATURE IN TCE ONLINE MAGAZINE

YMF was featured in October's issue of TCE! Check out the article here: <https://www.texasce.org/tce-news/austin-ymf-scholarship/>



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[ASCE YMF ATX](https://www.facebook.com/ASCE.YMF.ATX)



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.



ASCE TEXAS SECTION UPDATE

BY ASCE TEXAS SECTION PRESIDENT SEAN MERRELL PE

COMING SOON: YOUNGER MEMBER NETWORKING ROULETTE

ASCE Texas Section's Younger Member Committee is developing a new way to interact virtually, "Networking Roulette." Participants will be paired with one of their fellow ASCE Texas members to virtually meet, chat and get to know one another. It's a simple, but powerful way to bring people together and create new connections. This program aims to foster better connectivity and new relationships between our various ASCE Texas Branches. Participants will receive their first pairing within a few weeks of signing up, then they'll meet their pair at your convenience via phone, Zoom, Teams, etc. Each quarter Participants will be randomly matched with someone outside of their branch/discipline and invited to get to know each other. More details coming January 2021!

SAVE THE DATE: ASCE TEXAS LEGISLATIVE DRIVE-IN

Every other spring, ASCE Texas Section holds its Legislative Drive-In program, concurrent with Texas Legislative Sessions. This intensive program provides our members with an inside look at the public policy process. The Section's Government Affairs Committee invites you to join them on February 22 through 26, 2021 as they hold the ASCE Texas Legislative Drive-In. This virtual event will include briefing sessions on key legislation and ASCE's legislative priorities, along with training on lobbying and influencing your elected leaders over the course of one week. All attendees will be asked to schedule meetings with their respective elected officials. Registration coming soon. Please check this site in the coming weeks: www.texasce.org/our-programs/legislative-drive-in/

STATUS UPDATE: TEXAS INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD

Infrastructure is a critical issue impacting Texas's economy, society, security and future. The Texas Section's goal is to craft a report card depicting the condition and performance of Texas's infrastructure in the familiar form of a school report card – assigning letter grades based on the physical condition and needed investments for improvement.

ASCE Texas Section's Infrastructure Report Card Committee is in the final stages of developing the 2021 Report Card for Texas' Infrastructure. This 55-member committee divided in subcommittees based on their engineering expertise and drafted 12 infrastructure chapters. They have also assigned grades using available data and following ASCE's strict procedures for creating state report cards. The IRC Committee received the ASCE Texas Section's 2020 President's Special Recognition Award during CECON 2020 in November for their outstanding work.

The report will be released in conjunction with the 2021 ASCE Texas Legislative Drive-In. Please visit www.texasce.org/irc to learn more about past reports.

2021 ASCE TEXAS STUDENT SYMPOSIUM IS GOING VIRTUAL

The next Student Symposium will be held virtually on April 15-17, 2021 hosted by the ASCE Student Chapter at The University of Texas at Austin. The annual event fosters close association between engineering professionals and over 400 university students. The Student Symposium combines the Texas-Mexico Student Conference's concrete canoe student competition as well as a variety of other student competitions, a career fair, and seminars into one event. The planning team is also working with ASCE's Committee on Student Conferences and Competitions to adjust the rules for a virtual environment. They look forward to your support and encourage you to save the date for the Student Symposium. And don't forget, the Student Symposium Career Fair is a must for all those seeking new hires >> both full-time graduates and part-time interns!

MORE NEWS FROM ASCE TEXAS SECTION: TEXAS CIVIL ENGINEER

View industry and Section news online, for free at www.texasce.org/news. Recent articles include a message from Section President Sean P. Merrell PE, PTOE, RAS, F.ASCE; a fun get-to-know Yan Linwood PE – one of four Section Directors at Large; and an article on the History of Rainfall Studies.

HONORS COMMITTEE UPDATE

BY DAVID MATOCHA

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.

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. Surely you know someone deserving to be considered for this award.

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



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 submit your job posting here: <https://www.austinasce.org/job-board>

OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE

BY AYAH ALOMARI

CENTRAL AREA FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERING



Consider volunteering as an individual, with friends, or with family members for this month of November!

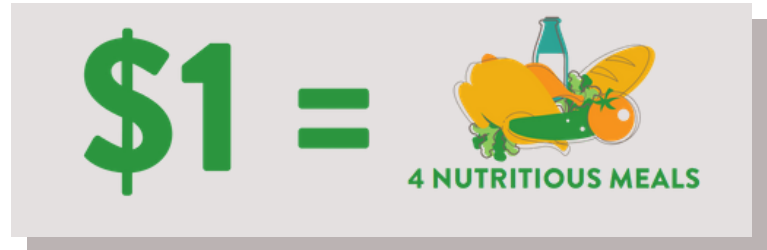
Volunteers are needed almost every day sorting food in warehouses or in serving food in community kitchens.

Central Area Foodbank is taking extra steps to be COVID safe at all of their events! Check out these opportunities at the link below.

Please note this is not an ASCE Austin sponsored event.

VOLUNTEER LINK

centraltexasfoodbank.org/get-involved/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 December 1st - 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>



Although the ongoing pandemic has made it difficult to maintain an understanding of what time of year it is, celebrating Thanksgiving provided a road sign that we are into the holiday season. We hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and took the time to consider all that we have for which to be thankful. For me, that list includes working in a relatively COVID-resistant profession and being able to engage with the Structural Engineering community. As part of our mission to advance and serve the Structural Engineering profession, SEI Austin is continuing to offer Professional Meetings, Structural Engineering Talks (SET) and on-line resources. We wish you Happy Holidays and hope the details below, leading to an abundance of resources, are beneficial to you as you advance in the profession. Happy Holidays and best wishes for a great New Year!

PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

Our last Professional meeting of the year was held on November 19th. Assistant Professor Cameron D. Murray, Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas presented the latest advancements in the use of Belitic Calcium Sulfoaluminate (BCSA) cement as an alternative to Portland Cement in precast, prestressed concrete. He highlighted how its features, like rapid strength gain (exceeding 4,000-psi in two hours), very low shrinkage (virtually none) and durability benefits, make it attractive as a potential game-changer in the future for the concrete industry. Additional information on our next Professional Meeting (January 2021) will be provided in the upcoming SEI e-blast and on the SEI Austin website (<https://www.austinasce.org/sei/>).

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING TALKS (SET) 2021

Planning continues for SET 2021. We hope to hold it next Spring but will adjust based on the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Updates and all available information will be maintained at <https://www.austinasce.org/sei/set>



ADDITIONAL ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

1. Past favorite SET presentations

Although SET 2020 has been cancelled, you can catch up on some of the favorite SET presentations from previous events at: <https://www.austinasce.org/sei/set>. This is our homepage for SET, and thus you may also visit this site to find updates on SET 2021 in the coming months.

2. Career Path Series: Insights with Glenn Bell and SE Industry Leaders ([link](#))

<https://www.asce.org/structural-engineering/virtual-events/> 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 ([link](#))

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 ([link](#))

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

5. ASCE Collaborate ([link](#))

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

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

Enjoy the holidays 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.

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.

2020-2021 ASCE AUSTIN OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Garabed (Garo) Harutunian, P.E., F.ASCE

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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

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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.



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!



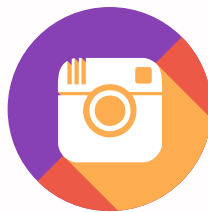
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