

# ASCE

WISCONSIN SECTION



## President's Message

By: Ken Mika, P.E.

Greetings,

First and foremost, I hope everyone of our members and their families are staying safe and healthy during these challenging times. While COVID-19 has been affecting everyone's work and personal lives, it is also affecting our Society. As a community of engineers, we encourage you to share how COVID-19 has affected you. Please go to ASCE Collaborate and comment in the Wisconsin Section forum on how COVID-19 has affected you. More information on this is in Gregory Schroeder's article in this newsletter.

I am excited to announce that we are closing in on the release of the 2020 Wisconsin Section Report Card! Just over a year ago we had our first meeting to kick off the effort. Many volunteers dedicated hours away from family and friends to research, report and grade our infrastructure. This is a huge undertaking, one that hasn't happened since 2007 in Wisconsin! The planning committee has been carefully weighing our options between an in-person release event and a virtual



event. We have watched other states such as Mississippi, push out virtual release events. Based on conversations with our public relations consultant, we feel we could leverage the most impact out of our report card through an in-person event prior to the election cycle (October 1, 2020). We will continue to work with our public relations consultant in monitoring the situation in our state and will finalize our plans when the timing is right. Please continue to monitor your emails and social media for more information on the release.

Another bright spot is the approval of The University of Wisconsin Green Bay Student Chapter! With official recognition from the Society they can participate in all ASCE events and activities. Congratulations to the students and professors who have worked hard to achieve this goal! This is the first Student Chapter in the Fox River Valley Branch and the sixth for the Wisconsin Section! When we return to in-person meetings and events, make sure to congratulate their student chapter members for their efforts!

One of the great things about engineers is our ability to adapt and be resilient. The Southeast Branch is showing us that right now as they are planning to host the 2020 Wisconsin Section Annual Meeting. Due to the unknowns that are to come in the fall of 2020 due to COVID-19, the Southeast Branch is working on developing a virtual format for the meeting. More to come in the next few months on what the virtual event will look like.

[Read Full Article](#)



## ASCE Activities and Events Announcement in Light of Coronavirus

In response to the global outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), ASCE is committed to reducing the risk of adverse health impacts to the thousands of ASCE members, guests and staff that participate in numerous ASCE committee meetings, conferences and events. In addition to urging that business be conducted via teleconference or video conference whenever possible, we have reviewed and updated our event policies and procedures. For the most updated ASCE event information, please visit

[COVID-19 ASCE Event Cancellations and Updates.](#)



### GET TO KNOW

## Get to Know

Tom Walther, P.E., F.ASCE

Way back in high school Tom decided he wanted to 'build roads'. After a bit of research he realized that the best way he could do that was to become a civil engineer. With that in mind he gained admission to UW-Platteville and began his studies. In spring of 1967 he became a Charter Member of the Platteville Student Chapter of ASCE. In December, 1967 Tom attended the first ever "computer dance" (the precursor to today's on-line dating apps) sponsored by the ASCE student chapter. Here he met Bonnie and in 1969 they married.



In January, 1971 Tom earned his BS degree in civil engineering and took his first job with the Iowa DOT. He stayed in Iowa for 10 years where he earned his P.E. licenses for both Iowa and Wisconsin. Tom then accepted the position of Eau Claire County Highway Commissioner where he served for 28 years. During this tenure the County Board delegated to Tom oversight of what is now the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport for 5 years and overseeing operations of the county landfill for 15 years. Tom followed his tenure in public service with a few brief, post-retirement stints with Chippewa County, TEC Design and Ayres Associates.

Tom has been active in ASCE ever since his student days. He became most active after he moved back to Wisconsin when he was encouraged to take on various positions with the Northwest Branch including Secretary / Treasurer and eventually Branch President. From here Tom transitioned into positions with the Wisconsin Section including Branch Director, Director at Large, several committees and eventually Section President. As a member of the Wisconsin Section he has been awarded the Engineer in Government Service Award and the Distinguished Service Award.



[Read Full Article](#)



## In Memoriam

[Dr. Thomas B. Nelson, M.ASCE](#)

Dr. Thomas B. Nelson, 70, of Platteville, Wisconsin, died on Sunday, April 26, 2020. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Platteville Community Evangelical Free Church at a later date. The Melby Funeral Home & Crematory, Platteville, is serving the family. Memorials may be made to the Thomas B. Nelson Memorial fund at PO Box 245, Platteville, WI 53818. This money will be used to establish a scholarship for civil engineering students at UW-Platteville. Online condolences can be made at [www.melbyfh.com](http://www.melbyfh.com).

Tom was born June 1, 1949 in Racine, Wisconsin, son of William D. and Marilyn (Binn) Nelson. Tom was united in marriage to Carol Ause on July 1, 1972 in La Grange, Illinois. He graduated from the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York and served in the United States Army for ten years. He received his MS and PhD from Purdue University. Tom began his teaching career at Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont. He came to UW-Platteville in 1993 where he was professor of Civil Engineering until his retirement in 2012. He was a member of Chi Epsilon, a civil engineering honor society, serving at the national level for a number of years. He was an active member of the Platteville Community Evangelical Free Church and was involved in many community activities over the years, most recently the veteran's memorial and PCA trail. He enjoyed playing golf and traveling. For the past few years he and Carol enjoyed spending a few months every winter in Tucson, Arizona.

Tom is survived by his wife, Carol; three children, Beth (Josh) Urban, Matt (Tracy) Nelson, and Megan (Dr. Eric) Slane; eight grandchildren, Elliott, Caroline, Alex, Jake, Madeline, Chad, Graham and Evan; two brothers, Peter (Linda) Nelson and Bill "Willie" Nelson. He was preceded in death by his parents.

## Section Considering Formation of Architectural Engineering Technical Committee or Institute Chapter

The Wisconsin Section is considering formation of an Architectural Engineering Technical Committee or Institute Chapter for the benefit of its membership. The ASCE Architectural Institute Director contacted the Section earlier this year to indicate the Institute had received an expression of interest from a small group of individuals in joining a Technical Committee or Institute Chapter in our Section if one existed. The Section has researched the steps necessary to establish such a committee/institute chapter and if there is enough interest expressed by the membership in joining that group, the Section will further pursue completing those formation steps.

If you have interest in joining an Architectural Engineering Technical Committee or Institute Chapter, please email the Section at [wi.sec.asce@gmail.com](mailto:wi.sec.asce@gmail.com).

---

## Nominations

The ASCE Wisconsin Section is looking for a few good people to join the 2020-2021 Board of Directors. This is a great opportunity to be involved in the Society at the Section level and become a part of growing the Wisconsin Section.

The Board of Director's is comprised of members from the 4 Branches of the Wisconsin Section and meets every 2 months. Some of the benefits are:

- Advancing your career by working with other leaders in the civil engineering community.
- Advancing the profession by guiding the Section's activities.
- Enhancing skills by participating in well-run business meetings.
- Providing opportunities to participate in ASCE on a state or national level.

The Board has 4 openings for terms beginning in October for the following positions:

- Director-at-Large: 2-year term
- Director-at-Large: 2-year term
- Secretary: 3-year term
- President Elect: 1-year term, followed by 1-year as President and 1-year as past-president

Please see the administrative manual on the ASCE Wisconsin Section Website under **Resources** for more information on the duties and responsibilities for each position. Current board members would also be happy to have discussions to give more information on their roles. Their contact information can be found on the ASCE Wisconsin Section Website under **Contacts**. If you would like to be a part of the ASCE Wisconsin Section Board of Directors or have a suggestion for a candidate, please contact Jared Wendt at [jwendt@alliant-inc.com](mailto:jwendt@alliant-inc.com) or 414-313-7339.

---



# 2020 ASCE WISCONSIN SECTION ENGINEERING AWARDS

To honor members and career professionals, projects, and journalists.  
Please consider supporting your colleagues, employees, and students by making them  
candidates for one or more Section Award!

**Nominate Today**



## Outstanding Senior Engineering Student Awards

by: Jennifer Schaff, ASCE Wisconsin Section Secretary

It is always a pleasure to see the nominations for the Outstanding Senior Civil Engineering Student Awards. The 2020 awards, including a \$1,000 check for each award, went to two really deserving students: Amanda Elizabeth Kaiser (UW-Platteville) and Luke Royal (UW-Milwaukee).

Amanda graduated in 2019 with a strong GPA and a very active service record with her ASCE Chapter. She coordinated reoccurring volunteer efforts including highway clean-up events each semester and bi-yearly work at local homes under construction with Habitat for Humanity. Amanda begins graduate studies this year and is currently employed as a structural engineer with Computerized Structural Design in Milwaukee, WI.

Luke Royal also had an impressive academic and service history. He received a glowing recommendation from his professor: “Based on my observations and almost multi-years’ experience of working with Luke, I can unreservedly nominate him for the ASCE award. His dedication and passion for research, engineering, challenges, and learning new materials and test methods would most certainly be an advantage for his success in accomplishing all of his academic and professional goals. Luke is the best candidate for the award.” – Konstantin Sobolev, PhD, FACI, AMC.

For those of you who don’t get to see the wonderful job that Darrell Berry does behind the scenes, know he is outstanding and makes the recipients feel appreciated. Since we were not able to present the awards in person, Darrell personally reached out to Luke and Amanda to congratulate them on behalf of the Wisconsin Section of ASCE. He wrapped up their award certificates and checks, shipping to their preferred addresses from Arizona! He kept contact making sure everything was received.

Thank you, Darrell, for your leadership and continued efforts.

**Congratulations to Luke and Amanda!**

## Committee

By: Jennifer Schaff and Ken Mika

The Infrastructure Report Card is nearly drafted! It is a big task, but we have amazing volunteers! ASCE has conducted their review of the Chapters and the Technical Teams are finalizing them.

The Second fundraising event was held in March in conjunction with the Southeast Branch at City Lights Brewing Company in Milwaukee, WI. The event was successful, with about 60 attendees. Thank you to all the attendees and volunteers, with special thanks to Jill Miller, Nick Bobinski, Tony Castle, Ken Mika and Carl Sutter. A third event is in the works for Madison, however the date has not been finalized due to COVID-19.

Platform Communications has been engaged to assist with release activities and make the most of our volunteer's hard work. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the release in Madison has been delayed. We are reviewing our options and planning for a September 2020 release. If you feel you are too remote to assist or just can't spare a lot of time, we will be looking for volunteers to help with social media related to the release.

If you are interested in helping raise funds or helping in any other way, please reach out to Jennifer ([Jennifer.Schaff@countymaterials.com](mailto:Jennifer.Schaff@countymaterials.com)) or Ken ([KMika@Geosyntec.com](mailto:KMika@Geosyntec.com)).

---

## COVID-19 Webinar Recap

By: Jennifer Schaff

Thank you to all who were able to attend the COVID-19 Webinar on April 9th! The webinar was hosted by Ariel Christenson, Director of Communications ASCE-MN, Hannah Albertus Benham, Director of Awards ASCE-MN and Jennifer Schaff, Section Secretary ASCE-WI. A big thanks to Ariel and Hannah for their tech savvy abilities and passion to help connect the ASCE community. There were 100 people registered, which was the limit on registration. It was great to see membership from both Minnesota and Wisconsin Sections engaged and participating throughout the webinar using mentimeter.com.

It was noted at the beginning of the presentation that:

*This is a call to action for civil engineers. During a pandemic in which hand washing is the #1 recommendation, we need to be advocates for better infrastructure like drinking water.*

*We as civil engineers have the responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.*

[Read Full Article](#)

---

**Be A Part of The Annual Election**





Show your support for those willing to serve. Join other members and weigh in on ASCE's future leaders.

## [Vote Today!](#)

*Eligible ASCE members can vote in the election through 5:00 p.m. CDT on **June 1, 2020**. ASCE login information is required to participate. If you need assistance, please contact customer service at [1-800-548-2723](tel:1-800-548-2723).*

## **WICCI Infrastructure Working Group Report to ASCE WI**

The Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) was actually created in 2007. Over the years various working groups have been created to focus on specific areas of importance. The WICCI web site can be found at <https://www.wicci.wisc.edu/>. The kick off meeting of the Infrastructure Working Group of was held on January 20, 2020 on the campus of the University of Wisconsin. Twenty eight attendees came from an extremely wide spectrum of entities ranging from local, state and federal agencies to academia to consulting engineers to contractor groups to environmental conservation groups. ASCE Wisconsin Section Board member Tom Walther attended as contact member for the Board. The entire infrastructure working group is chaired by long time Wisconsin Section member Rob Montgomery, P.E., D.WRE, M.ASCE.

At this first meeting it was stated right away that the overall WICCI Charter had already been expanded to include adaption to climate change plus actions which can be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or otherwise mitigate climate change. At the initial meeting 5 teams were targeted with data gathering toward the development of a report and relevant recommendations. The following summary is based upon information created and supplied by Mr. Montgomery on May 8, 2020.

[Read Full Article](#)



## **Membership At A Glance**

**Total WI section members: 1,848**

**Affiliate: 60**

**Assoc: 303**

**Distinguished: 6**

**Fellow: 58**

**Member: 1,065**

**Student: 356**

**New Members (since last newsletter): 17**

## **Pandemic**

**Opinion by Public Affairs Chairman, Gregory Schroeder, P.E., M.ASCE**

Hello fellow ASCE members. My last article in February was very focused on

the issue of climate change. My high level of concern for the world's climate has not changed at all, but a lot of other things have changed immensely. The pandemic has brought about the most rapid changes in our lives. Small things that seemed big may no longer matter. In other cases, we now recognize small things that really matter.

I suspect that you all have some new perspectives and observations to share. Based upon my past articles, I think you know where I am going with this. Once more I am requesting that we put ASCE Collaborate to good use and speak to one another using this powerful forum.

Like other essential workers, engineers are key to the public safety and well-being. I am interested in how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted you and engineering in Wisconsin. We each have unique perspectives. You may have questions to ask your peers. The following are a few of mine.

How has the pandemic impacted you personally? How has it impacted your company? Are there unique ways in which the pandemic has affected you? Are your projects on hold, or delayed, or cancelled? What do you think might be the impact of the decrease in tax revenues to the communities that you serve? What are your deepest concerns? What are your concerns regarding successfully preventing a resurgence of the virus? What are your concerns for the economic impacts of the shut down? How do we as engineers lead in the management of these risks? Finally, what has been missed or not emphasized enough in the public discord to help us beat COVID-19?

We would like to hear from you. Please log in to ASCE Collaborate and share your thoughts. Comment and reply to this article here: [ASCE Collaborate, Pandemic](#)

*The opinions expressed here are those of the author only, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Wisconsin Section or ASCE.*



## **Mark Your Calendar: UW Platteville ASCE Benchmark Open Golf Tournament is planned for Friday September 11, 2020**

ASCE UW-Platteville Chapter would like to cordially invite alumni and friends to join our 27th Annual Golf Tournament on Friday, September 11, 2020. Although there are still uncertainties due to COVID-19, the preparation is in good progress. More information will be announced in the summer. At this time, we would like you to mark your calendar for attendance to support the civil engineering program at UW-Platteville. Be safe, be strong, be Pioneers!







**ASCE CONCRETE CANOE COMPETITION**  
University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Platteville, Wisconsin  
June 26-28, 2021

*Congratulations*

Congratulations to the University of Wisconsin-Platteville American Society of Civil Engineers Student Chapter on earning the 2020 Certificate of Commendation as an outstanding student Chapter of the ASCE! Dr. Philip Parker serves as the ASCE Student Chapter Faculty Advisor.




This is to certify that

**University of Wisconsin-Platteville**


Has been awarded a

**2020 Certificate of Commendation**

In Recognition by the Committee on Student Members as an Outstanding Student Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers

  
Thomas W. Smith, III, ENV SP, CAE, F.ASCE  
ASCE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



  
K.N. Gunalan, Ph.D., P.E., D.GE, F.ASCE  
ASCE President 2020

NSPE-WI, formerly WSPE, will be offering continuing education courses as their 2020 Virtual Discovery Conference from June 10 to July 30. There are currently 16 courses planned over these weeks. The session days and times vary; 4 sessions Tuesday at noon, 4 sessions Wednesdays 10:00 a.m., 4 sessions Thursday at noon, and 4 sessions Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. The sessions are 1PDH each for \$15 each, including 2 sessions on professional ethics, or all sessions for \$150. The sessions will be live using Zoom and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of each session. Registration is scheduled to open on May 26, 2020. Watch the NSPE-WI website (<http://wspe.org>) for the latest information on topics and speakers.



Consider mentoring in this new year! ASCE Mentor Match connects ASCE members based on topics of interest and experience level.

<https://collaborate.asce.org/mentoring/home>

#### ASCE Leader Resources

Check out the Society's many resources – from webinars to publications to talking points and handbooks – [here](#).



## ASCE Wisconsin Section 2019-2020 Board of Directors

#### **President**

Ken Mika, P.E.  
Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.  
[KMika@geosyntec.com](mailto:KMika@geosyntec.com)

#### **President Elect**

Larry Buechel, P.E.  
Waste Management  
[lbuechel@wm.com](mailto:lbuechel@wm.com)

#### **Past President**

Jared Wendt, P.E.  
Toole Design  
[jwendt@tooledesign.com](mailto:jwendt@tooledesign.com)

#### **Secretary**

Jennifer Schaff, P.E.

#### **Director at Large**

Danny Xiao, Ph.D.  
UW Platteville  
[xiaoxi@uwplatt.edu](mailto:xiaoxi@uwplatt.edu)

#### **Director at Large**

Gary Amel, P.E.  
The Foth Companies  
[gary.amel@foth.com](mailto:gary.amel@foth.com)

#### **Director at Large**

Thomas Walther, P.E.  
[walthetr@charter.net](mailto:walthetr@charter.net)

#### **Director at Large**

Andrew Walters, P.E.  
American Engineer Testing, Inc.

#### **Branch Director, Southeast Branch**

Kyle Bareither, P.E.  
Ramboll  
[kyle.bareither@ramboll.com](mailto:kyle.bareither@ramboll.com)

#### **Branch Director, Northwest Branch**

Corona Woychik  
ISG  
[corona.woychik@is-grp.com](mailto:corona.woychik@is-grp.com)

#### **Branch Director, Southwest Branch**

Ann Thielmann, P.E.  
DAAR Engineering, Inc.  
[aethielmann@gmail.com](mailto:aethielmann@gmail.com)

#### **Branch Director, Fox River Valley**



County Materials Corporation

[awalters@amengtest.com](mailto:awalters@amengtest.com)

Branch

[Jennifer.Schaff@countymaterials.com](mailto:Jennifer.Schaff@countymaterials.com)

Ryan Trzinski, P.E.

m

Robert E. Lee & Associates, Inc.

[rtrzinski@releeinc.com](mailto:rtrzinski@releeinc.com)

#### Treasurer

Marty Hanson, P.E., F.ASCE

Starboard Tack Consulting

[Treas\\_ASCE\\_WI@outlook.com](mailto:Treas_ASCE_WI@outlook.com)



ASCE Collaborate is a place to get advice about a project, talk shop, and discuss topics relating to our profession. You may know there are five forums for ASCE members, but did you know the Wisconsin Section has its own online community for you to connect with other engineers in the Section? I encourage you to visit the community and introduce yourself by clicking the “add” button in the discussion header.

ASCE Collaborate also allows you to

Find other ASCE Members using the exclusive ASCE Member Directory.

Find or become amentor to accelerate your career development or guide others from your experience.

Have questions? Visit the New User page.

---

ASCE Wisconsin Section | [www.ASCEWI.org](http://www.ASCEWI.org)

