



April 2025
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ASCE's mission is to provide essential value to our members, their careers, our partners and the public by developing leadership, advancing technology, advocating lifelong learning and promoting the profession.

GREETINGS DULUTH SECTION!

Greetings Duluth Section,

Our next luncheon is on April 15th at noon at BARR Engineering in Duluth. Rose Kopecky (SEH) and Alex Popp (City of Duluth) will be presenting on the upcoming West Superior Street project in the West End. Please use the collaborate link (Sent March 28) to RSVP so we can plan an accurate lunch head count. If you are unable to use collaborate, please send me a message. The cost of this event is \$25 if you register before 5 pm on April 11 and \$30 at the door for professionals.

We recently held the Toothpick Bridge competition for high school students at UMD and the event went extremely well. We had over 40 teams compete from area schools. We plan on making the event larger next year and will start planning for the event this coming fall.

Our Younger Member Group continues to host happy hours, and the next one will be at Tavern on the Hill on April 15 at 5 pm. Please see the newsletter for more info.

Sponsorship request letters have gone out to firms asking to sponsor for this year. We have 8 firms signed up so far and need more so please check with your firm and get signed up as a sponsor, if you are able.

Our annual year end appreciation dinner will be held on May 20 at a venue in Duluth that will be decided soon. Please put the date on your calendar and try to attend. It should be a great time to meet with other engineers and do some networking. We will also announce our scholarship winners at this meeting.

We will start working on the 2026 ASCE Report Card. I sent out an email on how to help out if you can.

Hope to see you on the 15th for our monthly luncheon and please don't forget to RSVP.

Ryan Swanson
Duluth Section President

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Interested in submitting an article for the ASCE newsletter or becoming a Board Member?

Contact Pete Demshar (newsletter editor) for information at 952.913.6392 or pdemshar@barr.com



UPCOMING MEETING

Date: April 15th, 2025

Speaker: Rose Kopecky, PE and Alex Popp, PE

Topic: West Superior Street Reconstruction

Time: 12:00 p.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: Barr Engineering Co.

Bios:



Rose Kopecky is a civil engineer based in Duluth, MN, with over 11 years of experience in municipal and site design. She currently works at SEH, where she leads a team in designing roadway projects, heads the Fun! Committee, and is assisting in developing a Civil Technical Designer Training Program. Outside of work, she enjoys reading, hiking, and volunteering on the

ASCE Duluth Section board. You can reach her at rkopecky@sehinc.com or connect with her on LinkedIn



Alex is a senior engineer with the City of Duluth focusing on the design and construction of the City's state aid routes. He is the City's project manager for the West Superior Street reconstruction project. Before joining the City in 2021 he was a designer with SEH in their Duluth and Chippewa Falls offices.

Abstract:

This presentation will cover the planning, public involvement, and design of the 1.65-mile reconstruction of West Superior Street, spanning from Carlton Street to Michigan Street. The project includes comprehensive upgrades such as new storm sewers with green infrastructure, updated signals at Garfield Ave and 27th Ave West, and the replacement of the watermain with a new 20" HDPE pipe. Additionally, all lighting and fiber optic cables will be new, along with the installation of new BRT stations, bike paths, and an electric vehicle charging station. Enhanced streetscape elements, including plantings, furnishings, amenity spaces, and wayfinding signage, will also be incorporated to improve the area's overall aesthetic and functionality.

MEMBERSHIP AND BOARD MEETINGS FOR 2024-2025

Membership Meetings

April 15, 2025

May 20, 2025

Board Meetings

April 22, 2025

May 21, 2025

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2024-2025

President

Ryan Swanson, PE
Ulland Brothers, Inc.
(218) 966-9822
rswanson@ulland.com

President-Elect

Peter Demshar, PE
Barr Engineering Co.
952-913-6392
pdemshar@barr.com

Treasurer

Tyler Yngsdal, PE
SEH
218-279-3001
tyngsdal@sehinc.com

Secretary

Alex Popp, PE
apopp@DuluthMN.gov

Past President

Andrew Lund, PE
Barr Engineering
(218) 308-3077
alund@barr.com

BOARD CHAIRS

2023-2024

Younger Member Chair

Dalton Scharmer
TKDA
Dalton.Scharmer@tkda.com

Membership Chair

Vacant

Government Relations Chair

Vacant

Toothpick Bridge Chair

Travis Jensen
(612) 730-0580
jensio73@d.umn.edu

Web Updates

Rose Kopecky
SEH
(218)-249-1558
rkopecky@sehinc.com

Membership Outreach Chair

Rose Kopecky
SEH
(218)-249-1558
rkopecky@sehinc.com

FINANCIALS

National Bank of Commerce

Main Checking	\$4,977.00
Younger Member Checking	\$5,944.14
Savings	\$5,485.38

Other Assets

PayPal	\$133.68
Other cash/checks	\$0.00
Petty Cash	\$250.00
January 2025' Total Assets	\$16,790.20
Increase/(Decrease) in Assets	\$68.00

*Increase is from sponsorships, Duluth Section Allotment, & luncheon

*Decrease from luncheon food & beverage



ASCE DULUTH SECTION YMG (ROUNDUP)

April 2025

Last month, our Membership Chair Austin Willoughby traveled to Cleveland Ohio to attend the ASCE Multi Region Leadership Conference (MRLC). The two-day event consisted of multiple sessions aimed to help us improve our Younger Membership Group. We are excited to integrate advice from the ASCE Leader Training Committee as well as shared past success stories from peer groups in the near future.



Upcoming Events

ASCE Social - Happy Hour

Current YMG Board

Chair – Dalton Scharmer
Sappi Cloquet
(Dalton.Scharmer@sappi.com)

Vice Chair – Lukas Ellefson
Barr Engineering Co.
(lellefson@barr.com)

Membership Chair – Austin Willoughby
Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH)
(awilloughby@sehinc.com)

Events Co-Chair – Matt Henderson
Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH)
(mhenderson@sehinc.com)

Events Co-Chair – Josh Tomczak
Northland Consulting Engineers
(josh@nce-duluth.com)

Our next ASCE Happy Hour will be hosted at Tavern on the hill from 5 - 6:30 pm on Tuesday April 15th. Please join us to engage in networking or good conversation. Hope to see you there!



ASCE DULUTH SECTION BOARD MEETING AGENDA

February 25, 2025 - 5:00 PM
Blackwoods, Proctor

Call Meeting to Order:

- Meeting called to order at 5:01 p.m.
- Attendance:
 - Ryan Swanson –President
 - Peter Demshar – Vice President
 - Tyler Yngsdal – Treasurer
 - Alex Popp – Secretary
 - Dalton Scharmer – YMG Chair
 - Zach Huffacker – Student Section President
 - Rose Kopecky – Website and Outreach Chair

Approval of Agenda (Ryan)

- **A motion was made by Alex Popp, seconded by Dalton Scharmer to approve the agenda.**
 - The motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.

Approval of Minutes (Alex)

- **A motion was made by Ryan Swanson, seconded by Peter Demshar to approve the January Meeting Minutes.**
 - The motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.

Government Relations (Vacant)

- Chris was unable to attend this month
- Report card is coming in 2025 and will be lead by Peter
 - Chris and Peter will likely cover the Duluth items
 - AMI may assist with the Port
 - 2nd kickoff meeting on Thursday

Student section update (Zach H)

- 25 students attended monthly section luncheon at UMD
- 38 students are signed up for regional symposium
 - UMD supporting club attendance.
- Concrete canoe has been cast and is curing.
- Steel bridge is expecting to be completed around spring break.
- The board requested pictures of student section activities for presentation at end of year banquet.
- AMI presenting at next student chapter meeting about DCC seawall project.

Younger Member Discussion (Dalton)

- Joint happy hour with UMD was successful following the career fair with 25 attendees.
- 9 attendees at February curing event
 - Poor weather dampened turnout
 - Encouraging significant others to attend was beneficial
- Planning two more happy hours and potentially one more jobsite tour this spring.
- Planning to have a jobsite tour in September or October.
- Beginning to prepare for ethics presentation next year
 - Expect to hold it sometime in March



Treasurer's Report (Tyler)

- Main Checking \$4,593.03
- Younger Member Checking \$6,473.90
- Savings \$5,484.35
- PayPal \$70.92
- Petty Cash \$100.00
- **A motion was made by Pete Demshar, seconded by Ryan Swanson to approve the January's Treasurer's Report**
 - The motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.
- **A motion was made by Pete Demshar, seconded by Alex Popp to reimburse Ryan Swanson \$31.36 for soda at the February luncheon.**
 - The motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.

2024-2025 Speakers (Pete)

- March 18th – AMI @ BARR
- April 15th – West Superior Street recon @ BARR?
- May 20th End of year banquet @ Pier B or Blackwoods East End
- Sept ? – Storm chamber system from ACF West Geosynthetics

2024-2025 BOARD MEETING / LUNCHEON SCHEDULE (ALL MEETING SCHEDULED AT 12:00 PM)

<u>Luncheons</u>	<u>Board Meetings</u>
March 18th	February 25th
April 15th	March 25th
May 20th – Year End Dinner	April 22nd
	May 21st

Newsletter Update (Pete)

- President's message (Ryan), meeting minutes (Alex), YMG (Dalton), UMD section updates – including pictures (Zack), Sponsorship letter (Pete), Treasurer report (Tyler), Scholarship application (Pete/Alex)
- Submissions Due: Send to Pete by 3/3/2025, Send Newsletter out 3/7/2025

Membership Chair(Vacant)

- Contact list update
- At-risk members list from National

Website and Outreach Chair (Rose)

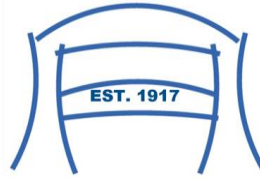
- Update
 - Toothpick bridge

Toothpick Bridge Chair (Travis)

- The event held March 25th with registration starting at 9 am
- We will need 10 volunteers to judge
- So far expecting teams from Denfeld and Cromwell
 - Travis has reached out to schools again
- **A motion was made by Peter Demshar, seconded by Tyler Yngsdal to provide up to \$500 to support toothpick bridge (supplies, awards, and food)**
 - The motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.

Ongoing Business:

- ASCE Archival documents
 - With Rose K. (SEH)
- Board Seat Email platform – New email ASCEDuluthMN@outlook.com
 - YMG has their own email setup.



- Board seat Cut sheet for positions.
- Review the Section Bylaws in comparison with the National Template for updates.
- A motion was made by Peter Demshar, seconded by Ryan Swanson to support food for a Board work session on cut sheet and Section Bylaws
 - A motion carried by the following vote: All in favor.
- Austin (YMG) is attending the next Multi region event.
 - He will provide an update for the newsletter

Matrix and Bylaw Review

- Completed
- Will need a move some items from February to January to fit Duluth Days schedule

New Business

- Update One Drive files
- Bad emails when inviting members to events (Rose)
 - Membership chair to reach out and ask people to update National with correct addresses.
- Sponsorship mailing (Tyler)
 - Four returned so far, this will be the last newsletter before removal
- Begin obtaining quotes for hosting the year end meeting (Pete)

Next Board Meeting: March 25, 2025 at Tavern on the Hill

Adjournment:

- Meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.



28TH TOOTHPICK BRIDGE COMPETITION IS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

By Craig W. Bursch, PE, F. ASCE

On Tuesday, March 25, 2025, the ASCE Duluth Section relaunched the Toothpick Bridge competition. Held at the UMD Swenson Civil Engineering Building, the event was deemed a resounding success by organizers. Thirty-eight (38) teams from 4 different area high schools descended upon the CE building to test their bridge designs in the categories of “Most Aesthetically Pleasing,” “Strongest,” and “Most Economical.” Competitors hailed from Cromwell, Duluth Denfeld, Superior and Lakeview Christian Academy.

A hardy crew of 10-12 ASCE and UMD volunteers were able to check in all participants, issue instructions, judge bridges, and conduct the weigh-ins all within the budgeted time.

The Most Aesthetically Pleasing bridge was constructed by a Denfeld High School student. Other award winning teams/schools are listed below:

Strongest Bridge:

- 3rd Place = 35.9 lb (Cromwell Wright)
- 2nd Place = 47.7 lb (Duluth Denfeld)
- 1st Place = 61.0 lb (Cromwell Wright) (Bridge weight = 0.114 lb) (It held 535 times its own weight!)

Most Economical: The three lightest bridges to hold a minimum of 20 lbs

- 3rd Place = Cromwell Wright (Bridge Weight = 0.098 lb; held 35.9 lb)
- 2nd Place = Superior (Bridge Weight = 0.089 lb; held 25.4 lb)
- 1st Place = Duluth Denfeld (Bridge Weight = 0.080 lb; held 28.8 lb)

This was the 28th running of the competition, a once annual event was suspended due to the COVID pandemic. Event organizers look to bring it back as an annual tradition, bigger and better in 2026. The “lessons learned” from the 2025 event will serve us well as we look to invite more teams and schools in the future. A greater pool of volunteers will be needed in the future also however! So, keep your eyes peeled to the pages of this newsletter for volunteer opportunities in 2026.

News Coverage:

<https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/local/students-put-toothpick-bridges-to-the-test>

<https://www.fox21online.com/2025/03/26/28th-annual-toothpick-bridge-competition/>

<https://www.northernnewsnow.com/2025/03/26/local-students-test-toothpick-bridges-umd-competition/>







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