



ASCE PHILADELPHIA SECTION THE

NEWS

Vol 99-1

Our 114th Year

The Sidney Robin Memorial Newsletter of the Philadelphia Section ASCE

Summer 2026



ASCE Vision

Civil Engineers are global leaders building a better quality of life.



ASCE Mission

Provide essential value to our members and partners, advance Civil Engineering, and serve the public good.



<http://www.asce-philly.org>

National ASCE Central Number:
1-800-548-ASCE • Toll Free.

NON OMNIA POSSUMUS OMNES (WE CANNOT ALL DO EVERYTHING)

SECTION MEETING SCHEDULE 2026–27

The Section Meeting program for the upcoming season is currently in the very preliminary stages and our meeting program committee is busy lining up speakers and topics for what we hope will be an interesting and informative series of meetings. The information we have at this point is provided below for your planning purposes. We would suggest that you use this to mark your calendar at this time and hold the dates.

In coming issues of *THE NEWS*, this information will be “fine-tuned” to provide updates as they are available. We also suggest you visit the Section website for the latest changes in our meeting program. As we have done, each month’s edition of *THE NEWS* will feature detailed information on that month’s meeting along with as much information as is available for the following month’s meeting, and the “look-ahead” schedule will show details that are available at that time for your advance awareness. E-mail blasts will be sent out on a regular basis to advise and remind of upcoming events and registration deadlines.

We also note the advantage of joint meetings with other societies and will continue to schedule these as we can.

Also, our Technical Groups and Institutes will have their usual programs of meetings and events which will be noted in e-blasts.

2026

October 8

November 12

December, to be determined

2027

January 20 (Wednesday) – joint meeting with American Society of Highway Engineers, Schuylkill River Trail Swing Bridge, Crowne Plaza King of Prussia

February, to be determined

March 11

April, to be determined

May – Spring Social, to be determined

**Remember, remember always, that
all of us, and you and I especially,
are descended from immigrants
and revolutionists.**

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

FROM THE SURPRISINGLY NOT-ALL-THAT CLUTTERED DESK OF THE EDITOR...

Somehow the calendar, which rarely if ever lies, tells us we are now in July (if the heat hasn’t already been a big clue on this...), and in the midst of our semiquincentennial celebration. It has been interesting to see, as the celebrations were cranking up, the throwbacks to the bicentennial events and activities (and at least a few of us still remember these to some degree first-hand – the year started off with the Liberty Bell being moved from Independence Hall across Chestnut Street to its “permanent” home in the new glass house in an intense rainstorm, before it was once again moved to its current “permanent” home a few hundred feet to the south in 2003). It is in many ways hard to fathom this was 50 years ago, but... (along the same lines it is hard to fathom that 2026 is already halfway through).

We were able to conduct another successful season in 2025-26, capping it off with the well-attended Spring Social, itself not quite two months ago, which put us into our summer hibernation of sorts. A handful of us made the trip to Harrisburg as June started for our annual visits to our legislators, and these, as usual, were productive in building and continuing good relationships with our representatives and senators. Also, as usual, there is a differentiator of sorts between our approach to these visits and how most other groups conduct their visits. We provide our information, offer our ideas, and then go on our way, but unlike other groups, we offer to remain available to be resources to the electeds when they may need our help. And the electeds are very willing to listen and often take us up on our offer. This continues to work well.

Independence Day, unlike the other summer holidays (Memorial Day, the “unofficial” start of the summer season, and Labor Day, when summer similarly unofficially ends), tends to not be a weekend. When July 4 falls is when July 4 is cited. This year, with the 4th being on a Saturday, the “observed” holiday for many is the Friday before, thus an extended weekend. Next year it will fall on a Sunday, thus many will get Monday the 5th off for the 3-day weekend. After next year it will be four years until this can happen again, so enjoy it while you can.

In much the same way, while Memorial Day unofficially starts summer, the season does not technically begin until the summer solstice (this year, June 21) and ends a couple of weeks after Labor Day (September 22).

Meteorologically speaking, the weather guessers will tell you summer is June through August, coinciding neither with the solstices nor the holidays. It is little wonder we are as confused as we are.

Back to the subject at hand (whatever that was...). It was nice to honor

Continued on page 3

SPRING SOCIAL A SUCCESS

We conducted our Spring Social on Thursday, May 14 at the Lucy in Center City. Roughly 100 attendees enjoyed the venue, the great food (and large quantities of it!), and a nice spring evening. We additionally were able to cite our Delaware Valley Science Fairs awardees, Section Scholarship winners, and Section Awardees (eight individuals and, for the first time, a project!).

As part of evening there was also the traditional "changing of the guard". Our outgoing Section President, Jesse Gormley, handed things off to incoming President Dennis Wilson, and the 2026-27 Section Officers and Board of Directors was officially inducted.

A more detailed report on the activities and awardees at the Social will be included in the October edition of *THE NEWS*.



MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Celebrating the Next Adventure for Falcone

Frank Falcone, Director of Professional Development and Experiential Education and Professor in Villanova's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, retired this spring and was honored by his colleagues and friends at a ceremony in Drosdick Hall at the University on May 6. His decades of service have left a lasting mark on Villanova University and the College of Engineering. His work with Villanova NROTC and his dedication to preparing students for life beyond the classroom through the College's professional development program, Career Compass, have shaped generations of students as engineers and leaders in both service and industry.

Frank's journey with Villanova University began as a "day hop" student in the Class of 1970, where he balanced a rigorous Civil Engineering curriculum with his responsibilities in the NROTC. After earning his degree and commissioning as a Navy officer, he served for 30 years on active and reserve duty, eventually retiring with the rank of Captain. His professional life has been a remarkable "triple threat" of success, spanning 23 years in the engineering consulting industry, over a decade as a consultant for the US Department of State in international arms control, and more than 40 years as a beloved faculty member and leader within the College of Engineering. At the heart of his academic legacy is his dedication to the "whole person," a philosophy that led him to found and direct the Career Compass professional development program. This initiative has become a cornerstone of the Villanova Engineering experience, ensuring students graduate with the essential leadership, ethics and communication skills needed to excel in their careers. His retirement marks the transition to his next chapter with Villanova.

We congratulate Frank on his retirement.

CLOSED FOR THE SUMMER, BACK IN SEPTEMBER...

While our Section is by design more or less dormant during the summer, at least for offerings to members, we provide our usual abbreviated summertime edition of *THE NEWS* to bring you up to speed. We know our loyal readers are always in search of information, thus we provide this for your enjoyment and reading pleasure. Plus, while there are few activities, there is lots of planning going on, so it is helpful to give you advance notice of what is being planned when we can.

With this, we will now dutifully get out from behind the Editor's desk and resume our break, having taken a break from it to do this, and we promise we will be back in September with our usual full issues. We hope you are enjoying your summer thus far.

ASCE, PHILADELPHIA SECTION OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTION — 2026–27 SEASON

PRESIDENT

Dennis Wilson, McCormick Taylor

PRESIDENT ELECT

Katrina Budischak, McCormick Taylor

VICE PRESIDENT

Archie Filshill, Aero Aggregates

SECRETARY

Sean McCreesh, STV Inc.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Assunta Aprano, AECOM

TREASURER

Timothy Abel, Amtrak

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Ajin Fatima, Amtrak

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Danielle Schroeder McCaskey, Huitt-Zollars

DIRECTORS

Darren Black, Jacobs, 2026-28

Nooraldean Dabdoub, TPD, 2025-27

Robin Dominick, CDM Smith, 2025-27

Andrew Hartmann, HNTB, 2026-28

Caroline Voigtsberger, Pennoni, 2025–27

Martin Williams, RVE, 2026–28

PAST PRESIDENTS

Jesse Gormley, Pennoni

Kevin Brown, GFT

Joseph Natale, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

In accordance with our Constitution and Bylaws, only the immediate Past President will serve on the Board, and only for a one-year term. We show the most recent three Past Presidents as has become our tradition.

We thank these folks for their service and wish them well in their spots.

Contact Us:

President—Dennis E. Wilson, PE

McCormick Taylor

1818 Market Street, 16th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19103

dewilson@mccormicktaylor.com

Secretary—Sean McCreesh, PE

STV, Inc.

1818 Market Street, Suite 2300

Philadelphia, PA 19103

sean.mccreesh@stvinc.com

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Editor of *THE NEWS*

Robert Wright

Section Outreach

Jesse Gormley, Dennis Wilson

SEND COPY TO:

ASCE, c/o Urban Engineers, Inc.,
530 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

**COPY DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER 2026 ISSUE
SEPTEMBER 18, 2026**

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

The votes are in, and as a result **Rossana D'Antonio** will serve as ASCE's next President-Elect. D'Antonio serves as the executive director of NV5, a global consulting firm. Before that, she worked 33 years for Los Angeles County Public Works in a variety of roles, including as deputy director of municipal services and emergency management from 2016 to 2023.

She served on the ASCE Board of Direction as an at-large director, 2022-25, and has been active in many other Society activities, from advocacy to sustainability over the years. She has also been a longtime leader in Region 9, California, and her hometown of Los Angeles. "I want to serve as ASCE president-elect ... because this profession has shaped my life in ways that go far beyond projects or job titles," she noted. "My career has been shaped by service, resilience, and a belief that leadership must be both technically sound and profoundly human."

ASCE will induct D'Antonio as 2027 president-elect at the annual business meeting this October in Reston, VA, setting the stage for her to assume the role of Society president in 2028.

Also on the election ballot, **Shirley Clark** of the Central Pennsylvania Section will serve as a new Technical Region director and Nicholas Giglio of the Lehigh Valley Section will begin a term as Region 2 Governor.

We wish good luck to these folks and thank them for their service to ASCE and our profession.

PA COUNCIL IN THE NEWS

As has been done for many years, representatives from the four Pennsylvania Sections of ASCE participated in the annual Legislative Day at the State Capitol in Harrisburg, coordinated by the PA Council. The day-long event, conducted on June 1, included meetings with over 20 elected representatives and staffs to talk on current issues for our profession in our state, including transportation funding. In addition, background and informational materials were delivered to the offices of roughly a dozen other representatives who were not in attendance, but were interested in our message and supporting our issues. Thanks to those who were able to take part in this, shown in the photo.



Front row – Matt Gunther (Lehigh Valley), Elaine Elbich (Philadelphia), Cathy Farrell (Philadelphia), Michelle Madzelan (Central Pennsylvania), Loujin Naylor (Central Pennsylvania)

Second row – Peter Berthold (Philadelphia), Jesse Gormley (Philadelphia), Alexis Isenberg (Central Pennsylvania), David DiGioia (Pittsburgh), Karen Armfield (Lehigh Valley)

Back row – Justin Komp (Pittsburgh), John Caperilla (Lehigh Valley), Andrew Kline (Lehigh Valley/Reading), Michael Waldron (Lehigh Valley), Kushal Adhikari (Lehigh Valley/Reading), Bob Wright (Philadelphia)

NOT-SO-CLUTTERED DESK

Continued from page 1

those who were nominated for Section awards at the Social (and more will be coming on that in the next edition of *THE NEWS*) and to take the time and recognize those who do great things which are often not noticed by those outside of our profession. We also cite scholarship winners and our Science Fairs special awards recipients. These two groups in particular tend to pique my interest in a few ways, one of which is how they got the "bug", inspiration, etc to pursue engineering as a career. We know too well what we do is nearly a well-guarded secret to many, although we are getting a little better at increasing recognition and notice of our contributions. Our older Science Fairs winner advised when we interviewed her at the Fairs on her project, which was related to roadway drainage and superelevation/grading, that her interest came out of being driven by her parents and seeing how the roadways drained (or didn't...) and began to look into the science and standards of roadway design, which led to her effort. These "lightbulb" moments are what I like to hear, as they can be very random and spawn out of a simple experience and follow-up curiosity. In the case of our Fairs winner, this has developed into her interest in majoring in civil engineering when she starts to look at colleges and a potential career in transportation design.

Many of us can harken back to similar thoughts and ideas which led us to this profession and where we happen to be. It was usually also enhanced by having Lego sets, Lincoln logs, and in my own case, the handy-dandy Kenner buildings and bridges set (plastic beams and girders, you may be able to find one on eBay...) which kept us busy and mainly out of trouble... Also in my case, with I-95 being built a half-block from my house when I was growing up, spending at least part of every summer day (on the days we weren't at the public pool) watching construction and no doubt having this being engrained in the brain... In some ways it doesn't make me feel all that great that that particular section of I-95 is in preliminary design for reconstruction (I can't be that old...), but...

With more on the computer and less on paper, there is reduced clutter (hence the title of this article), despite my recent return to the office after nearly two weeks away. I suppose this is progress. Not too long ago a return after being away usually meant a literal mountain of paper, mail, etc waiting for you to get back – now it's a ton of e-mails, but at least not clutter on the desk.

Interesting that, with my trip involving three flights, only one of them involved a paper boarding pass (with a QR code so no one likely even had to read it), the others being loaded into my virtual wallet and displayed to be verified as we boarded the planes. Technology...

As I get older I see the effects of it (and am often not happy with those), with one of these being the "ability" to forget more, resulting in my writing more down and keeping notes on devices, etc. as reminders (thus, forcing me to remember to check those reminders, so this only compounds the vicious circle...). However, I do clearly recall inheriting the title of Editor in summer 2003, following my "field promotion" of sorts from being the unofficial (there it is again...) assistant to the esteemed Sid Robin upon his unfortunate demise. Thus I will be starting year 24 in this capacity. I remain unconvinced I am adequately filling the big shoes that Sid left, and I can almost hear him telling me to quit it with the run-on sentences like this one already.... As the Latins say, *tempus fugit*, especially when you're having fun... In much the same way our Section is entering Year 114 of being around, very impressive, and still going strong.

We hope to see you during our coming season's events, and if you have time and energy to help us do what we do, please let us know. We can always use more help.

Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.

— Theodore Roosevelt

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

We are happy to report that our Section Sponsorship Program enjoyed another successful season in 2025-26, with 14 firms making the commitment this season. Many of these generous companies have been supporting our Section consistently for several years.

Additionally, we continued the higher level of support this season and these firms were our VIP Title Sponsors:

- Aero Aggregates
- GFT
- Pennoni
- TPD

Our other sponsors included these companies:

- ARM Group
- Bowman
- CDM Smith
- HNTB
- JBC Associates
- Langan Engineering and Environmental Sciences
- McCormick Taylor
- Michael Baker International
- Urban Engineers
- Villanova University Stormwater Program

Sponsor logos are displayed in a special Sponsors section of our website. Additionally, we provide direct links to sponsors' own websites so prospective employees can review all available and up-to-date positions. We do not show the sponsors' logos in the Summer edition of *THE NEWS* but will pick it up again in the fall. And speaking of this, we will be contacting current sponsors later this summer with more information on the program for the coming season. We hope the program will be as successful then as well.

If you have an interest in joining our sponsorship program, please contact **Bob Wright** at newseditor@asce-philly.org for more details.

Also, as you may be aware, our Section recognizes government and quasi-government agencies for the assistance they have provided. We are proud to cite last season's Agency Partners:

- Amtrak
- City of Philadelphia Department of Licenses & Inspections
- City of Philadelphia Department of Streets
- Delaware River Port Authority/Port Authority Transit Corporation
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 6-0
- Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM NEWS

Belen Labarta, Forum Editor

Christopher (C.J.) Medora, Forum President 2026-27
AECOM, christopher.medora@aecom.com

K-12 Outreach at Neshaminy High School STEAM Expo

April 15

YMF participated in the **Neshaminy High School STEAM Expo**, engaging with students through a hands-on structural challenge. Participants explored engineering principles by building various structures using only toothpicks and marshmallows, testing different geometries like trusses and towers for stability and height. Because families were invited to participate, parents and guardians got to see firsthand their children's excitement as they applied creative problem-solving to these hands-on engineering models.

Mentor Program Year-End Celebration

April 15

YMF's Mentor Program hosted an **End of Program Celebration**. Mentor/Mentee pairs had the opportunity to meet and network with other pairs. Additionally, members of our YMF Board and Outreach Committee presented to the group about the importance of mentorship in your early career. Be on the lookout for next year's Mentor Program with information coming out at the end of the summer!

K-12 Outreach at Mastery Charter School – Thomas Campus

April 24

YMF visited **Mastery Charter School's Thomas Campus** to lead a professional development workshop for 10th grade students. Volunteers assisted with resume building and conducted mock interviews, providing students with practical tools and confidence for future career opportunities. By equipping these young leaders with the foundations of professionalism, we are helping them bridge the gap between their current potential and their future impact on the world. We would like to give a huge thanks to the **Philadelphia Youth Network** for their invaluable help in making this event a success.

ASCE/ASHE Spring Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup

May 2

Nine members of **ASHE Delaware Valley's Young Members Committee** and YMF joined forces to clean up our two-mile co-adopted stretch of Bethlehem Pike between Lafayette Avenue Connector and Butler Pike in Ambler. Our volunteers enjoyed clear weather, conversation, and lunch at Fireside Bar & Grille. Thank you to our volunteers and Fireside Bar & Grille for providing the meeting location! We look forward to doing it all again in the fall!



CivE Club Field Trip

May 13

The **Civil Engineering Club at Marian Anderson Neighborhood Academy** toured the **SEPTA Control Center** at 1234 Market Street. During this visit, students learned about the critical responsibilities of Control Center staff, including train, bus, and trolley scheduling, as well as incident management and system coordination. Special thanks to **Rayshawn Johnson**, Senior Director of Control Center Operations at SEPTA, and his team for providing an informative and engaging tour.

On the way to the field trip, the group also stopped at City Hall to admire its architecture and take photos with the ASCE National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark plaques recognizing Philadelphia City Hall and Philadelphia's Municipal Water System.



Continued on page 5

YOUNGER MEMBERS

Continued from page 4

Election Happy Hour

May 19

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the YMF Election Happy Hour held at Brauhaus Schmitz! With around 30 attendees, it was a great evening of networking, celebration, and connecting with fellow members of the YMF community.

This year, we have a Board of 25 members, including eight new members, **Liv Brown, Ivan Burashnikov, Ryan DeMent, Karan Doshi, Callum Grealy, Sam Griffin, Dane Hagstrom, and Belen Labarta**. Please join us in welcoming them and congratulate them on joining our team! We would also like to thank our outgoing Board members, **Zach Abbas, Cory Bogas, Lexi Gawelko, Assunta Kearns, Alyssa Pizzi, and Laurel Welch**. Thank you for your service to the ASCE Philadelphia Younger Member Forum!



JEDI Event – Equity in Practice

June 2

YMF's JEDI Committee hosted "Equity in Practice," a discussion about what equity in our field can look like. Our speakers provided presentations of various case studies to prove how intentional, inclusive, and creative community engagement can lead to better project outcomes. Then, facilitated by **Elvira Mikhael** (TPD), our attendees engaged in conversation about the speakers' experiences in their field and what we as young engineers can do to encourage better community engagement strategies at the start of our projects. Thank you to our speakers, **Christina Arlt** (McCormick Taylor), **Mia Held** (C&S Companies), **Meg Prier** (Connect the Dots), and **Julia Whyte** (Connect the Dots) for their time and expertise, to McCormick Taylor for hosting our group, and to our volunteers, **Hannah Booz, Kevin Conway, Callum Grealy, Danielle Schroeder, and Laurel Welch** for all their help in making this event a success!

Upcoming Events

YMF has an exciting lineup of events planned for the remainder of the summer! Join us for opportunities to network, volunteer, and connect with

fellow professionals, including our **Phillies game and Tailgate on September 25**.

Be sure to keep an eye on your email and the Philadelphia YMF's social media channels for event announcements, registration information, and additional details as they become available. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event this summer!

The YMF is pleased to announce its 2026-2027 (FY27) Board:

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Christopher Medora, AECOM
Vice President: Kayla Nelson, Schnabel Engineering
Secretary: Christian Antisell, PhilaPort
Treasurer: Kerianne Chen, TPD
Past President: Kevin Walsh, HNTB

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Information Technology Chair: Noor Dabdoub, TPD
Public Relations Chair: Belen Labarta, AECOM
Social Media Chair: Gina Venuto, STV
Awards Chair: Tyler Farley, TPD

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

College Contact Chair: Dane Hagstrom, McCormick Taylor
K-12 Outreach Chairs: Tony Ableman, ARH and Liv Brown, AECOM
Civil Engineering Club Chairs: Katie Wade, JMT and Sam Griffin, H&H
Student Member Transition Chairs: Hannah Booz, McCormick Taylor and Karan Doshi, Terracon

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Social Events Chairs: Kevin Malley, PWD and Callum Grealy, HNTB
Technical Events Chairs: Anthony Rizzo, Michael Baker and Shane Leiphart, Pennoni
Professional Development Chairs: Andrew Edwins, Mott MacDonald and Elvira Mikhael, TPD
Community Service Chairs: Emma Youngs, Amtrak and Ivan Burashnikov, PWD

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION (JEDI) COMMITTEE

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Ryan DeMent, Amtrak

We're excited for the upcoming board year and look forward to another great year ahead for the Philly YMF!

N-ASCE*

THE PAY PHONE/PHONE BOOTH

Wondering where Clark Kent goes to change into Superman (or Superman back into Clark Kent) as there are no "nearby phone booths," as the Superman TV show used to say...

The phone booth as well as the pay phone have become a couple of those things that are not there any more. As late as 1999 there were 2 million of these installations in the US, a number that dropped to 100,000 in 2016 and which has not been tracked since then. The ubiquity of cell phones no doubt hastened their demise, and some unofficial estimates have noted there are still a few hundred pay phones still around somewhere. Of course this is nowhere near what once was...

The pay phone got its start with one William Gray, an amateur tinkerer (and not the namesake of 30th Street Station), could not find a phone to call a doctor for his wife. He patented the device in 1889 and these over time became essential for those who could not afford a landline of their own as well as travelers who had to keep others advised of delays and travel status. Much later these became convenient (some say a little too convenient) way for ne'er-do-wells such as pimps and drug dealers to conduct their "business" and connect with customers. The last pay phone in New York was removed in 2022.

Thanks to AARP for this.

* N-ASCE – not always something concerning engineering...