



ASCE
PHILADELPHIA SECTION

THE

NEWS

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Our 113th Year

The Sidney Robin Memorial Newsletter of the Philadelphia Section ASCE

February 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.



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NON OMNIA POSSUMUS OMNES (WE CANNOT ALL DO EVERYTHING)

SECTION MEETING SCHEDULE 2025–26

The “finish line” for our Section Meeting program is literally around the bend and in sight at this point. We are not sure where the time has gone, but, after March, we have one meeting remaining (April), which will be our traditional multi-topic/breakout format, to finalize, but otherwise we have everything “in the book” and ready to go.

E-mail blasts will continue to be sent out on a regular basis to advise and remind of upcoming events and registration deadlines.

April 14 – multi-topic break-out sessions, topics to be finalized, Inn at Swarthmore

May 14 – Spring Social, The Lucy (Center City)

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Gusic, Schroeder Cited by Delco PSPE

The Delaware County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers (PSPE) recently announced the recipients of its Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year awards for 2026. Don Gusic was named as the Chapter’s 2026 Engineer of the Year. Don is an associate and senior client service leader at CDM Smith at its office in Wayne. He has built a distinguished 25-plus-year career delivering complex transportation solutions throughout the Greater Philadelphia region and across Pennsylvania. Over a decade of his career has been with CDM Smith, where he leads business development and growth strategies for the firm’s Pennsylvania transportation practice including design of major sections of the I-95 corridor.

Danielle Schroeder was cited as the Chapter’s 2026 Young Engineer of the Year. Dani is a senior engineer with Huitt-Zollars at its Philadelphia office. She serves as the assistant project manager for the PennDOT Transit Project where she leads planning and scoping efforts alongside transit agencies across Pennsylvania as part of this \$800 million construction program. She is highly involved in professional and technical societies at the local, regional, and society level.

The awards will be presented to Don and Dani at the Chapter’s Engineers Week banquet on February 26 at Anthony’s Restaurant in Springfield. We congratulate Don and Dani on these honors.

FEBRUARY SECTION MEETING

There is no scheduled Section meeting for February, as is our usual plan, to avoid potential conflicts with **Engineers Week** activities and events. We encourage you to attend the Delaware Valley Engineers Week Opening Ceremony, information on which is provided elsewhere in this edition.

HOLD THESE DATES

ENGINEERS WEEK EVENTS SCHEDULED

The Engineers’ Club of Philadelphia, through its Delaware Valley Engineers Week Committee, will be celebrating **Engineers Week 2026** from **February 19 through February 28**. The Opening Ceremony for Engineers Week will kick off the celebrations locally and highlight the various contributions of Engineers and Engineering students in the Delaware Valley.

Thursday, February 19

5:00 PM Networking, 6:00 PM Dinner, Formal Program and Awards following Hilton Philadelphia Hotel at Penns Landing, 201 S. Christopher Columbus Blvd. (Delaware Avenue)

PRICE: \$100 (\$80 for government agency employees and students)

Reservation deadline February 6, with prices increasing after that date

We will introduce and formally induct the **Delaware Valley Engineer of the Year**, our own **Sarah McInnes** of PennDOT District 6, and **Delaware Valley Young Engineer of the Year**, **Faye Majekodunmi** of Amtrak, as well as highlight the various contributions of Engineers and Engineering students. All Engineers Week award and scholarship recipients will be cited at the Ceremony. Further details on the event and RSVP/payment process are provided on the Engineers’ Club website, www.engrclub.org.

You may recall that Engineers Week included a Young Engineers Social event during Engineers Week in the past. That event is being revamped and will not be occurring during Engineers Week. We will provide updates on the new timing and format when this becomes available.

Please note this in your calendar and plan to participate.

MARCH SECTION MEETING

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

Maggiano’s Little Italy, 1201 Filbert Street (corner of 12th Street), Center City
Cocktails 5:30 PM, Dinner 6:30 PM, Meeting Presentation Follows (approximately 7:30 PM)

An update on the Philadelphia Water Department restoration project on the Manayunk Canal will be provided.

More information on this will be included in the March edition of *THE NEWS* and upcoming e-blasts.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It's February, so love is in the air... love for our profession that is.

On behalf of myself and the ASCE Philadelphia Section Board, I want to wish all of you a very happy Engineers' Week!

This year marks the 75th celebration of this week of recognition, which was founded by the National Society of Professional Engineers in 1951. It honors not just Civil Engineers—though we happen to be my favorite—but Engineers of all discipline. Be sure to take a moment during the festivities to acknowledge

yourself and your colleagues for the hard work you all do for the public good and betterment of society. You're inspirations—problem solvers in a world with plenty of problems. Thank you for being you!

The Section does not have any planned activities this month, though our Institute Chapters and Technical Groups have several things planned. Check out our website for more details. We hope to see many of you at these events, as well as at the events planned by our sister organizations to celebrate E Week. We'll see you in March back at our usual haunt (Maggiano's Philadelphia) for our next dinner meeting.

All the Best,
Jesse Gormley
President, ASCE Philadelphia Section

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

We as usual would like to thank the 14 firms participating in our Section sponsorship program this season for their financial commitment and support.

Sponsor's business cards are printed in each edition of *THE NEWS*. Their logos are displayed in a special Sponsors section of our website, where we provide direct links to their own sites so prospective employees can review all available and up-to-date positions. We also offer sponsors the opportunity to have a "spotlight" article in an edition of *THE NEWS*.

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

TIME TO PAY YOUR DUES... OR RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER? OR UPGRADE?

As a reminder, if you have not paid your dues, you are a little tardy at this point. You may have seen the pesky (...) e-mail reminders on this. If you have not yet done so, please pay your dues and avoid any problems that may occur with you losing your membership.

And, please keep in mind that ASCE isn't just for Civil Engineers. While you may be surprised to learn this, ASCE allows Non-Engineers to be members as well. With the new requirements for the now-consolidated grade of Member, one can now join at this level, which is available to those having "an interest in the advancement of the purposes and objectives of the Society" as well as Civil Engineering-degreed individuals. Non-CE-degree applicants were previously accepted at the Affiliate Member grade, but this has been folded into the Member grade with the noted recent revisions.

At the other end of the "spectrum", for those of you more senior and experienced members, the Fellow grade of membership is worth consideration. This is the highest level of membership one can attain on one's own and is a laudable and esteemed achievement.

Of the more than 160,000 members in 177 countries that are represented by ASCE, just 3 percent hold the prestigious honor of being an ASCE Fellow. These individuals have made celebrated contributions to the profession and developed creative solutions that have changed lives around the world.

The specific requirements for application for Fellow are listed on asce.org.

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Mohamed Elghawy, TPD

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.

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FEBRUARY 20, 2026**

SECTION COMMITTEES

Our Section has several Committees that assist our operation through their particular focus on certain operations, activities and aspects of our offerings. Participation in a committee is a way to volunteer with the Section without committing to a Board position.

Additionally, if you have a goal to be part of our Section governance and joining the Board, service on a committee is one way to get you a step closer to that goal.

Our current active committees are:

- **Awards**, responsible for soliciting and evaluating nominations for our Section's annual awards program
- **General Membership Meetings**, responsible for planning, organizing, and executing our Section monthly dinner meeting program
- **Government Affairs**, responsible for organizing events that engage local, state, and federal government officials
- **JEDI**, responsible for a focus on our Section's operations, communication to our members, updated documents such as bylaws and operations manuals, and event planning procedures and then provide recommendations to our Section on how it can be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive in its operations
- **Scholarship**, responsible for soliciting and evaluating nominations for any scholarships sponsored by our Section
- **Section Newsletter**, responsible for compiling content for and drafting our monthly Section newsletter, The News
- **Sponsorship**, responsible for developing/maintaining a sponsorship program and soliciting paid sponsors for our Section
- **Spring Social**, responsible for planning, organizing, and executing our annual Spring Social

JANUARY SECTION JOINT MEETING

January 21, 2026

Crowne Plaza, Hotel, King of Prussia

Pottstown Bypass Reconstruction Program (SR 422 Sections M01, M02, M03)

By Robert Wright, Editor



Our first meeting of the 2026 half of the current season was a bit late in January and much like an expected January day, cold and cloudy. And, as has been the case for over 35 years, January on our Section calendar means a joint meeting with our colleagues and friends at the **Delaware Valley Section of the American Society of Highway Engineers (ASHE)**. This also means an "away game" for our members, as ASHE hosts this event at its meeting spot at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia. And, as it tends to be, it was a popular meeting, with over 170 participants showing up to

hear about the reconstruction program of US 422 in the Pottstown area.

ASHE Section President Kevin Rice opened the meeting, once all were settled, with a warm welcome and several announcements, and handed things off to **President Jesse Gormley** for our Section's updates. Past President (of each Section...) **Bob Wright** was brought to front and center to both offer a blessing of the meal as well as a short tribute to Section Past President **Joe Syrnick** (please see Joe's obituary elsewhere in this edition).

As dinner wound down, ASHE Section President Rice returned to the podium to start the featured presentation. PennDOT Assistant District Construction Engineer **Sal Ali** opened the session with a general overview of the program, which began design in 2008 and has advanced through the development phase as three sections, expanding to seven sections for construction. He was assisted by members of the design and construction team from Jacobs, the project consultant, who each presented on different aspects of the work and current progress. Four of the seven construction sections are in active construction at present, with the remaining three sections planned for lettings over the next three years. The combined efforts under this program have a construction value of over \$260 million to date.

The work will address bridges that are in need of replacement and rehabilitation as they are at or near the ends of their service lives, roadway reconstruction to improve substandard highway curvature, geometry and guide rail/barriers, and related work, including the expansion of ITS capability to allow PennDOT to better monitor traffic from its King of Prussia control center. Each of the project team leaders explained aspects of the work in detail and showed progress photos of the work, including a flyover video (but not including a blasting video, which, for whatever reason, could not be made to work).

The project team, shown from left to right in the photo below, includes **Dilip Radadia** (Jacobs, Project Manager), **Chris Naab** (Jacobs, Structural Project Engineer), **Sal Ali** (PennDOT), and **Tom Cornell** (Jacobs, Highway Group Manager).

Several questions were posed by the audience, to which the presentation team ably responded.

President Rice wrapped up the evening with thanks to the team for its good work, offering them speaker's gifts of appreciation for their efforts.

BRIDGE PHOTO CONTEST

Our Section is looking for striking photographs of bridges, taken in the United States or abroad, that highlight design and engineering achievements of Civil Engineers.

Applicants must be individuals over 18 years of age or engineering firms, and they must be the creator or owner of submitted photographs. Applicants may enter up to three photos; each individual photo may be entered in only one category. Cash prizes will be awarded, and all submissions are eligible for inclusion in National ASCE's next Bridges Calendar.

Judges will recognize two winners from each the following categories:

Multimodal Bridges: Any bridge designed for bike and pedestrian use only

On the Job: Under construction, during an inspection

Judges will recognize four winners from the following category:

Philadelphia Region Bridges: Any bridge, open category. Limited to Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties.

To enter, applicants must complete the Google submission form below, and upload the photographs as directed: [Bridge Photo Contest Submission Form](#)

Contest rules and requirements are available on our website.



N-ASCE*

VOGUE MAGAZINE NAMES POPE LEO XIV AS ONE OF THE BEST DRESSED PEOPLE OF 2025

We at *THE NEWS* do our best to avoid coverage and/or inclusion of certain topics, especially those which will, despite any attempt to remain unbiased and fair, have the possibility of wandering into the swamp of controversy (thus, politics and religion are two) and in which we have little or no knowledge to sufficiently form an objective viewpoint (with your Editor being an Engineer for over two generations (and you can do the math...), you will not be surprised that fashion and wardrobe fall into this area). Then again, most of our loyal readers (the tens of them...) know that we tend to not be strict rule-followers either, still looking to be that rebel with no cause... and with no knowledge why.

Thus, we venture into said swamp on a topic that encompasses religion and fashion and offer this for your edification and enjoyment. As noted and qualified, we have next to no fashion sense (we know this because we have been told this, and we are not insulted by that comment, because we know it to be very true), so there is not much we can add with any authority. On the topic of religion, we can firmly state we have lots of knowledge on it, but most of it in a single denomination.

Since being elected in May 2025, Pope Leo XIV has made headlines for raising the alarm on climate change, appearing on priest-led DJ sets, and being a proud White Sox fan. Now, he's gaining recognition for something even more unexpected, his personal style. The Pope was

named one of the **55 Best Dressed People of 2025** by Vogue magazine, a unique recognition for the leader of the Catholic Church.

Despite the limited outfit options the Pope has, he has given his attire a personal touch. Vogue points out that Pope Leo XIV has become known for "breaking with the humble tastes of his predecessor, Pope Francis, but keeping his tailor and maintaining the papal legacy for fine-fitting liturgical vestments." They also note that by inviting Monica Bellucci and Cate Blanchett to the Vatican, he has tried his best to modernize the church's image.

Vogue named what Pope Leo XIV wore on his first appearance as Pope, on the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, as his best outfit of the year. He stepped out wearing a red satin mozzetta cape and wine-red, gold-embroidered stole paired with a cross pendant on a gold silk cord. Beyond these details, it's his unexpected accessories that have caught the eye of fashion enthusiasts and experts alike. When the new Pope donned a White Sox hat with his papal robes, or when filmmaker Spike Lee presented him a Knicks jersey as the team boasted three players from the Pope's alma mater, Villanova University, these are the moments that allow him to stand out.

The Pope's robes are also made by Italian designer and tailor Filippo Sorcinelli at atelier LAVS in Santarcangelo di Romagna in Rimini. Sorcinelli

grew up in a family of weavers and seamstresses, and has a background in sacred art and historical weaving. At 50, he has dressed the last three Popes, including Leo XIV, a natural choice given their shared history. "I've known Pope Leo XIV for 30 years," Sorcinelli told *Le Monde*. "We first met in 1995 in the city of Tolentino, not far from my hometown. At the time, I was playing organ in churches and he was an Augustinian friar in the region."

Other personalities on the Best Dressed list are former First Lady Michelle Obama, singer Bad Bunny, actor Jeremy Strong, and basketball star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander. While most of the people listed can flaunt their styles often on red carpets, fashion lovers may have to settle with only catching a glimpse of the Pope's OOTD (outfit of the day) during Mass or when he's riding around in the Popemobile.

[And, since we fully understand and believe the concept of papal infallibility, and know the Pope is very close to the "Big Guy", we will not disagree with this assessment. We are fairly certain there are a few other little-know papal fiats out there that cover this situation as well, and since they are usually in Latin it would be easy enough to "loosely" interpret the intent – Ed., as you know, a product of our Catholic schools and an altar boy. Also, for those of you not of the One True Church, please know that papal fiats are not what the Pope drives (he does not drive, but is transported in the famous Popemobile...)]

You can see the full Best Dressed People of 2025 list on Vogue.

Thanks to *Vogue* and *My Modern Met* for this information.

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

SECTION AWARDS — NOMINATIONS OPEN

As we typically do this time of year, we are opening our Section's 2026 Awards Program for nominations. These allow us to recognize Section members and others for their contributions to the Civil Engineering profession. All awards will be presented at the Spring Social, scheduled for May 14.

We encourage you to submit nominations for those deserving individuals who should be recognized for their various contributions, achievements, and career milestones, appropriately.

We have a slightly different approach this year, with the nomination form being available via Google form. Please view the Awards criteria on the **Awards** page of our website for your use. Please download the **Google nomination form** for submission of your nomination(s) and supporting information/package.

GUIDELINES/RULES

Nominations must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 27. Nominations should be submitted on the Google form.

Individuals may be nominated for awards by a member in any grade of membership. Nominators are NOT required to be members of the Philadelphia Section but must be ASCE members in good standing.

Individuals may receive only one award in a single year, but may be nominated for more than one award in a single year.

Award recipients are subject to the approval of our Section's Board of Directors.

Awards are presented only during years in which, in the judgement of the Awards Committee or the Board, there is at least one suitable candidate.

The Awards Committee, at its discretion, may nominate a candidate or an alternate for each award for Board consideration.

The Awards Committee will recommend to the Board whether the recipient should also be nominated for applicable National or Regional awards by our Section.

A nominee for an award MUST be a member in good standing of the Philadelphia Section in the

year in which the nomination is made, with three exceptions - for Educator of the Year, Government Service Award, and Philadelphia History and Heritage Award, nominees need not be members of ASCE and/or the Philadelphia Section.

AWARDS

The Section has a total of 14 awards which cover various specialty areas. In addition, the Section President can nominate an individual for the Presidential Award at his/her discretion. All award descriptions can be found on our website (noted above).

The awards are as follows:

- Philadelphia Civil Engineer of the Year
- Philadelphia Young Civil Engineer of the Year
- Philadelphia Government Engineer of the Year
- Philadelphia Young Government Engineer of the Year
- Government Service Award
- Educator of the Year
- Philadelphia History and Heritage Award
- Community Outreach and Service Award

Joseph R. Syrnick



We are sad to report the passing of Joe Syrnick on January 17. Joe leaves behind a legacy marked by his professional talents, devout faith, and loving family.

Joe is certainly a legend and leaves a legacy in our Section, where he was very active and held

several different positions including Section President (1980-81) and National District Director in the mid-1980's, as well as a frequent presenter for his many projects. His "paying" job was his distinguished 34-year career with the Philadelphia Streets Department, where he ultimately rose to the role of Chief Engineer and Surveyor, a position he held for 18 years. Following his retirement from the City, he entered his second career as the President and Chief Executive Officer for the Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRDC). He directed SRDC, also known as Schuylkill Banks, for the past 20 years, leading the mission to revitalize the lower Schuylkill River corridor. His work with SRDC was motivated by his strong desire to bring access to Philadelphia's "hidden river" for all to enjoy. While his primary role involved the advocating for trail development or advancing capital projects, you could also find him on the Banks setting up movie nights, helping kayakers off the docks, and narrating riverboat tours where he enthusiastically shared the rich history of the tidal Schuylkill.

Joe served in numerous capacities within his professional and local communities. He served as the President of the Department of Streets' Board of Surveyors, as a Commissioner of Fairmount Park, and as a member as of Philadelphia's City Planning Commission, rising to position of Vice Chairman. In addition to our Section and ASCE he was also active with the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia, and other local Engineering organizations. He was honored with many awards over the course of his career, including being named as the Delaware Valley Engineer of the Year in 1997, but he especially cherished the honor bestowed on him by Drexel University in 2024 when he received an Honorary Doctorate for his visionary leadership in engaging diverse civic partners to revive the promise of a waterfront jewel in Philadelphia. He was a proud Drexel alum, obtaining his Bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1969 and a Master's degree the following year. He would proudly tell you he was in the last graduating class from the Drexel Institute of Technology before its transformation into University status.

Joe shared 55 years of marriage with his beloved wife, Mary Beth. His family includes his three daughters and seven grandchildren. His most important role was that as a husband and father. When his girls were young, he could be found building massive sandcastles on the beach, behind the plate umpiring softball games, helping with homework, and on the sidelines of sporting events and dance recitals cheering them on.

Memorial donations can be made in Joe's name to the Basilica Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal or Holy Family Church, his parish, in Manayunk.

YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM NEWS

Laurel Welch, Forum Editor

Kevin Walsh, Forum President 2025-26

HNTB, jkwalsh@hntb.com

Speed Networking Happy Hour

January 6

YMF and Section members met at **Ladder 15** for a speed networking event. Attendees met in a rotation of small groups throughout the evening to discuss topics such as work-life balance, career development, and technical knowledge. This event brought together Engineers of all career stages and backgrounds to learn from each other and make new connections. There was a great turnout and we were so glad to have so many Section members attend.

ERYMC

January 8-10

Several YMF members attended the **ASCE National Eastern Region Younger Member Council (ERYMC)** in Jacksonville, FL. The multi-day conference included technical tours, informative sessions, and networking opportunities with other ASCE Regions. YMF was honored to receive the Peers Group Award at the awards dinner during the conference. Thank you to Emma Youngs, Kayla Nelson, Kerianne Chen, and Nooraldean Dabdoub, pictured with National President Marsha Anderson Bomar and Interim Executive Director Maria Lehman, for representing the Philly YMF at the ERYMC!



Future City Competition

January 24

The **Civil Engineering (CivE) Club** at **Marian Anderson Neighborhood Academy** competed in the **Philadelphia Regional Future City Competition** held at Archbishop John Carroll High School in Radnor. Over the past few months our CivE Club Co-Chairs, **Emma Youngs** and **Katie Wade**, served as the students' mentors assisting the team in developing a vision, building a city-model, writing a paper, and practicing their presentations. With the help of Emma, Katie, and the students' advisor, Marian Anderson Neighborhood Academy competed in their first **Future City Competition** and won the **Outstanding Project Team Work Special Award!**

Additionally, **Kayla Nelson** (Secretary), served as a preliminary judge for several City Model and Q&A Presentations and **Laurel Welch** (Public Relations Chair) served as a Special Awards judge. YMF sponsored the Resilient Public Places Special Award, which was presented to the students of **St. Francis of Assisi School**.

Upcoming Event: Life Do Grow Farm

March 14

Join YMF to volunteer at the **Life Do Grow Farm** in North Philly! Life Do Grow is a **Neighborhood Creative Commons** comprised of an urban farm, public park, outdoor classroom, community space, and more. The campus is entirely off-grid sustainability, utilizing energy from solar panels and water from rain catchment systems.

Volunteers will help out around the farm as needed. Some garden tasks may include planting, weeding, watering, etc. Snacks will be provided to volunteers.



SECTION AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Continued from page 4

Individual Technical Awards:

- Civil Engineering Manager of the Year
- Construction Engineer of the Year
- Geotechnical Engineer of the Year
- Structural Engineer of the Year
- Transportation Engineer of the Year
- Water Resources Engineer of the Year

We are additionally offering a Project of the Year award/competition. This is intended to recognize a Philadelphia Section member and his/her project team who have served in a major role on an innovative, challenging, unique, and/or complex project located in the geographic boundaries of the Section (the five county Philadelphia area). If you wish to nominate a project, please read the rules and criteria, which are posted on our website along with the nomination form.

If you have any questions on the nomination process or would like more information, please contact: **Joe Natale**, Awards Committee Chair at **215-847-7624** or **jnatale@dvrpc.org**.

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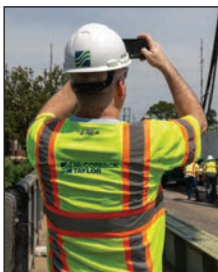
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SECTION AGENCY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

As you may be aware, our Section offers a Section Sponsorship Program to allow firms to help provide our various activities and programs for our membership and the Civil Engineering community in the Philadelphia area. This involves

a financial commitment which is reflected in the placement of the participant's logo and business card in *THE NEWS* and on the Section's website, along with several other benefits. Additionally, we have established an informal

recognition of government and quasi-government agencies for the assistance they have provided us, through volunteer assistance and award recognition among other things. Our Agency Partners' logos are shown below.

