

## **Region 9 is the Best!**

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ASCE Region 9 Director



Three years ago, this very month, I was sworn in as your Region 9 Director at the ASCE Annual Convention. It has been a great three years! As I began my term as a member of the 18-member Board of Direction and Chair of the 7-member Region 9 Board of Governors, I prepared my first article and initiated that article with a heartfelt thank you to all ASCE Members! And, I noted I had the distinct and humbling honor to have been newly sworn in as your Region 9 Director. Here, again, I must begin this article with many offers of thank you to all ASCE members and volunteers! ASCE and Region 9 are great and it has been my honor to serve you. I know from experience that one gets much more out of volunteering than the organization and, collectively, our volunteerism allows this organization to excel. Without your support and participation, ASCE would not be the premier professional civil engineering organization that it is. There are many volunteer opportunities available with local and regional ASCE groups and you are encouraged to reap the rewards of giving some of your time.

It is my pleasure to introduce and welcome to the helm your new Director, Yazdan Emrani, P.E., and two new Governors, John Rogers, P.E., representing the Los Angeles Section and Elizabeth Bialek, P.E., serving in an At-large capacity. I have known all three of these outstanding individuals for many years and Region 9 continues to be in very good hands! Please join me in giving your support to our new leaders.

I give a lot of credit for our success to the two outgoing Governors and thank them for their service, Tapas Dutta, P.E., from the Los Angeles Section and Christine Rice, P.E., serving in an At-large capacity. I also thank the continuing Governors for their service, Patricia McColl, P.E., representing the San Diego Section, Rune Storesund, P.E., PhD, representing the San Francisco Section, Sue Hida, P.E., representing the Sacramento Section and Kathereen Shinkai, P.E., in an At-large capacity and Vice-chair of Region 9. Thank you all for your service to ASCE and Region 9!

Region 9 is a very unique geographic region in all of ASCE. We are the only Region that is a single State. Our membership represents more than 10% of the entirety of ASCE! We consist of four Sections, 17 Branches, 12 Younger Member Groups, 24 Student Chapters and 1 Life Member Group. We are also home to two Student Symposia, Mid-Pac and Pacific Southwest. California is home to impressive breadth and depth, with a long history, of remarkable civil engineering!

My role as Director followed the great lead of those that came before me and the good stewardship model of this organization. Previous Region 9 Directors include Kwame Agyare, Jay Higgins, Jennifer Epp and Chuck Spinks. I have had the pleasure to work with every one of these previous Directors and I give them credit for providing an excellent example of leadership.

My term did coincide with the Covid-19 Pandemic, which caused us to modify our operations. We did, however, keep our commitment to offering the annual California Infrastructure Symposium (CAIS) and the Region 9 Awards event. The 15<sup>th</sup> annual CAIS hosted by the Los Angeles Section had to be held in a virtual format as did the Awards event. We pivoted to a successful event in a new format. Last year, the 16<sup>th</sup> annual CAIS, hosted by the San Francisco Section, and the Region 9 Awards event was able to be held in person with a virtual attendance option. This year's 17<sup>th</sup> annual CAIS, hosted by the San Diego Section, and the Region 9 Awards event was held solely in person with some of the highest attendance ever recorded. Thank you, to each Section leadership for carrying on the CAIS during these difficult times and thank you to Christine Rice for annually chairing the successful Region 9 Awards events! The next CAIS will be hosted by the Sacramento Section and the Awards event will be held in person in Spring 2024. Watch for the announcement of the date for these Region 9 signature events and plan to attend!

During my term, due to Covid-19, our membership numbers sagged but I am pleased to inform you that our membership has again grown to more than 18,000 members in California. As a member of the ASCE Board of Direction, significant achievements were also accomplished. Among them, the Society adopted an updated Code of Ethics and adopted a new Strategic Plan, which is responsive to the times in which we live. And, ASCE had significant input to the Federal legislative success of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, providing a generational investment in infrastructure. This just reminds me that we are members of the greatest profession serving to protect the public health, safety and welfare, improving everyone's quality of life and being great contributors to the economic engines of society.

One of the responsibilities of our Governors is to visit with the Sections, Branches, Younger Member Groups, Student Chapters, Institute Chapters, and Life Member Groups to gain an understanding of their needs and challenges. The Region is happy to help in any way we can. We are your link to the Society's Board of Direction and can bring to the attention of the Society Board any issues that may require action. For your Governors to learn more about your successes, needs, and challenges, please invite a Governor to your next event.

As I end my term at the conclusion of the Annual Convention, October 18-21, 2023, in Chicago, Illinois, I again thank you for the opportunity to have served you. I will continue to support ASCE and hope to see you at the Convention and at future events. Thank you, all!