ASCE SC Section News
American Society of Civil Engineers
June 2026 - September 2026

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President's Pen

As I conclude my term as President of the ASCE South Carolina Section for 2025-2026, I reflect on a year defined by the dedication, leadership, and volunteer spirit of members across our Section.

Serving as President has been both an honor and a privilege. Throughout the year, I had the opportunity to work alongside an outstanding Board of Directors, Branch leaders, committee chairs, and volunteers whose commitment advanced the civil engineering profession and served the citizens of South Carolina.

One of the year's most significant accomplishments was guiding the final stages of the 2026 South Carolina Infrastructure Report Card. During the summer, chapter reviews were completed, executive summaries developed, graphics finalized, and preparations coordinated for the statewide release. This effort required countless hours from volunteer authors, reviewers, chapter leads, and our Infrastructure Report Card leadership team. Their work ensured South Carolina's infrastructure story was accurately communicated to public officials, stakeholders, and citizens across the state.

I am especially grateful to the report card co-chairs, committee members, and volunteers who persevered through the many reviews, edits, and coordination efforts required to bring the project across the finish line. The Report Card demonstrates what can be accomplished when engineers from across our state unite around a common purpose. Planning for future report card cycles will begin earlier, allowing us to build upon lessons learned and better position future volunteers for success.

Beyond the Report Card, our Section continued important work supporting member engagement, professional recognition, scholarships, branch development, and future leadership. We advanced officer transition planning, promoted scholarship and grant opportunities, expanded award nominations, and strengthened communication between the Section and local branches. We also explored opportunities to engage members through conferences, student outreach, and programs such as Future City.

I am particularly proud of our efforts to strengthen the branches that form the foundation of ASCE in South Carolina. Branch leaders worked tirelessly to provide quality programs, networking opportunities, and professional development activities for our members. Their success reflects the strength of our volunteer organization and the value of local engagement.

Leadership transition is always an important milestone. This year, we worked to identify and encourage future leaders, ensuring the Section remains positioned for continued growth. I am confident the incoming Board will build on our momentum and continue moving the Section forward.

Most importantly, I thank every volunteer who dedicated time, expertise, and energy to ASCE this year. Whether you chaired a committee, authored a report card chapter, organized a branch meeting, mentored a younger engineer, reviewed award nominations, or participated in events and discussions, your contributions made a difference.

As I pass the gavel to our next President, I do so with confidence in the future of the South Carolina Section. Our profession faces tremendous opportunities and challenges ahead, and I know our members will continue to lead with professionalism, innovation, and service.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. It has truly been an honor.

Warm regards, Gwen Sollenberger

Preserving Our Civil Engineering Heritage: Recognizing the People and Places that Shaped Our Region

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) maintains an active History and Heritage Committee dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of the civil engineering profession. While ASCE oversees several national history and heritage recognition programs, it relies heavily on local Sections and Branches to identify and nominate deserving people, projects, and landmarks for recognition.

Some regions of the country have established robust History and Heritage programs, resulting in a high concentration of recognized civil engineering landmarks and notable engineers. Unfortunately, ASCE Region 4, which includes South Carolina and neighboring states, remains underrepresented in both categories despite its rich engineering history.

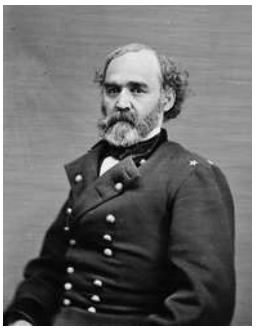
South Carolina Section is home to numerous significant civil engineering achievements and influential engineers whose contributions helped shape our communities, infrastructure, and profession. The South Carolina Section encourages members to help identify and document deserving candidates for future recognition at both the Section and National levels.

Members interested in supporting these efforts are encouraged to contact Cherri DeFigh-Price, P.E., F.ASCE, Chair of the South Carolina Section History and Heritage Committee, at cdefigh@gmail.com.

Notable Civil Engineers with Ties to Our Region

ASCE's list of Notable Civil Engineers includes 109 recognized individuals as of 2026, yet only four have significant connections to our region.

Montgomery C. Meigs (1816-1892)

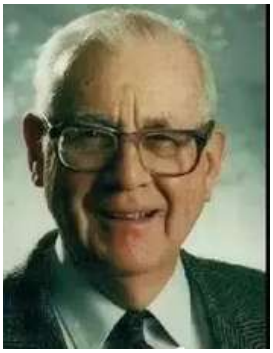


Born in Augusta, Georgia, Montgomery C. Meigs served as Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army during and after the Civil War. A distinguished military and civil engineer, Meigs played a key role in the construction of several iconic Washington, D.C., landmarks including the U.S. Capitol Dome, Arlington National, Cemetery, and the Cabin John Bridge, which held the distinction of being the world's longest single-span masonry arch bridge for more than four decades. His contributions extended beyond engineering to project management, innovation, and documentation, including the pioneering use of photography to record construction progress.

C. Shaler Smith (1836-1886)



A leading bridge engineer of the post-Civil War era, C. Shaler Smith designed and built some of the most significant bridges of the nineteenth century. During the Civil War, he constructed a powder manufacturing facility for the Confederacy in Augusta, Georgia. Later, he collaborated on major bridge projects across the United States and internationally, including innovative cantilever bridge designs spanning the Kentucky, Mississippi, and St. Lawrence Rivers.



George F. Sowers (1921-1996)

Widely regarded as one of the most influential geotechnical engineers of the twentieth century, George F. Sowers spent decades teaching at Georgia Tech while also serving as a respected consultant on projects around the world. His expertise ranged from dam engineering and foundation design to sinkhole investigations and infrastructure development. Throughout his distinguished career, Sowers authored more than 130 technical papers and eight books, including the influential textbook Introductory Soil Mechanics and Foundations.

J. Edgar Thomson (1808-1874)

J. Edgar Thomson was a pioneering railroad engineer and later President of the Pennsylvania Railroad. During his

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tenure as Chief Engineer of the Georgia Railroad, he oversaw construction of the Atlanta-to-Augusta rail line, at the time the longest railroad constructed by a single company. Thomson also contributed to the development of the Augusta Canal and is credited with co-designing the famous Horseshoe Curve in Pennsylvania, one of the most celebrated railroad engineering achievements in American history.

Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks in Region 4

Although Region 4 encompasses eight states with a rich engineering legacy, only a small percentage of ASCE-recognized historic civil engineering landmarks are located within the region. South Carolina currently boasts three recognized landmarks:

Charleston to Hamburg Railroad (1969)

Recognized by ASCE as a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, the Charleston-to-Hamburg Railroad was one of the earliest and most significant rail transportation projects in the United States, helping establish the importance of rail transportation throughout the Southeast.



Augusta Canal and Industrial District (2018)

Although officially listed under Georgia, the Augusta Canal and Industrial District significantly influenced economic and industrial development throughout the Augusta-Aiken region. The canal remains one of the South's most important examples of nineteenth-century civil engineering innovation.



Dreher Shoals Dam and Electrical Project (2025)

The newest ASCE-recognized historic landmark in South Carolina, the Dreher Shoals Dam and Electrical Project transformed electric power generation and water resource management across the Midlands while representing a significant engineering achievement for the state.



Help Tell South Carolina's Engineering Story

The South Carolina Section believes many engineers, structures, transportation facilities, dams, bridges, and water resource projects deserve recognition for their contributions to our state's development and the advancement of civil engineering.

If you know of a person, project, or landmark that should be considered for local or national recognition, the Section's History and Heritage Committee welcomes your involvement. By documenting and celebrating these achievements, we can ensure South Carolina's civil engineering legacy is preserved for future generations.

For more information or to participate, contact Cherri DeFigh-Price, P.E., F.ASCE, South Carolina Section History and Heritage Chair, at cdefigh@gmail.com.

ASCE South Carolina Section Publishes Updated Grant and Scholarship Guidelines

The ASCE South Carolina Section is pleased to announce the publication of updated Grant Request and Scholarship Application guidelines. Following a comprehensive review in 2026, the revised programs were presented to and approved by the South Carolina Section Board and will be implemented beginning in 2027.

These grants and scholarships have been developed to support STEM education initiatives across South Carolina while also assisting aspiring civil engineers pursuing advanced degrees in civil engineering or closely related fields.

Whether you are a student, educator, mentor, or ASCE volunteer leader, we encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities and apply for funding or scholarship assistance where eligible.

2027 Student Scholarship Program

The Section is accepting applications from eligible ASCE Student Chapter members for one or more $2,000 scholarship awards. Scholarship recipients will be recognized at a student chapter meeting of their choosing, and award winners will be notified in April 2027.

Eligible applicants must be active members of an ASCE Student Chapter within the South Carolina Section. Participating chapters include:

- The Citadel
- Clemson University
- Horry-Georgetown Technical College
- University of South Carolina
- South Carolina State University
- Bob Jones University

Click here for Scholarship Application.

Grants Supporting STEM Outreach

In addition to student scholarships, the Section's grant program provides funding opportunities that support K-12 STEM education and outreach activities throughout South Carolina. ASCE Branches, Student Chapters, and other eligible groups are encouraged to explore how these grants can support engineering education and community engagement initiatives.

Click here for Grant Application.

Learn More

For complete application requirements, eligibility criteria, submission deadlines, and program details, visit the ASCE South Carolina Section Resources webpage. Students interested in applying for a scholarship should consult the Resources page, while ASCE Branches and Chapters are encouraged to contact their leadership teams for information on submitting grant requests.

Catawba Branch Director: Brad Ross
CSRV Branch Director: Mark Lorah
Eastern Branch Director: Jonathan Ard
Grand Strand Branch Director: Ryan Harvey
Midlands Branch Director: Kiera Hughes
Upstate Branch Director: Ryan Holder

The South Carolina Section remains committed to investing in the next generation of civil engineers and promoting STEM education across the state. We look forward to supporting another outstanding group of students, educators, and outreach programs through these initiatives in 2027.

Note: Application deadlines, submission instructions, and links to application forms are available on the ASCE South Carolina Section website Resources tab. For additional information, visit the Resources page or contact your local Branch or Student Chapter leadership.



Celebrating the Team Behind South Carolina's 2026 Infrastructure Report Card

Following the successful release of the 2026 Report Card for South Carolina's Infrastructure, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) South Carolina Section is recognizing the many volunteers whose dedication, expertise, and commitment made the effort possible.

The Infrastructure Report Card is one of the most significant public outreach and advocacy initiatives undertaken by ASCE. While the final grades and recommendations often receive public attention, the report itself is the result of hundreds of volunteer hours contributed by civil engineers and infrastructure professionals from across South Carolina. These volunteers research data, analyze trends, collaborate with industry stakeholders, and develop recommendations aimed at improving the state's infrastructure systems.

The South Carolina Section extends its sincere appreciation to every volunteer who contributed to the development of the 2026 Report Card chapters. Their efforts helped produce a comprehensive assessment that informs policymakers, community leaders, and the public about infrastructure challenges and opportunities throughout the state.

Special recognition is also due to the Report Card co-chairs, Jonathan Ard and Renée Gardner, whose leadership, organization, and perseverance guided the initiative from concept to completion. Coordinating multiple chapter teams, maintaining schedules, and ensuring consistency across the report requires a tremendous commitment of time and energy. Their dedication was instrumental in bringing the 2026 Report Card across the finish line.

"The release of the Report Card represents the culmination of years of work by a passionate team of volunteers," said South Carolina Section leadership. "The success of this effort reflects the strength of our members and their commitment to advancing the civil engineering profession and improving quality of life for all South Carolinians."

Even as the 2026 Report Card is being shared across the state, planning for the next assessment has already begun. The South Carolina Section intends to start preparations early for the next Infrastructure Report Card, ensuring continuity, expanding volunteer participation, and building upon the lessons learned during this cycle.

ASCE encourages members interested in infrastructure advocacy, technical research, communications, public policy, or chapter leadership to become involved in future Report Card efforts. Participation provides a unique opportunity to collaborate with engineering professionals from across the state while helping shape conversations about South Carolina's infrastructure needs and priorities.

Individuals who would like to participate in future Infrastructure Report Card activities are encouraged to contact a South Carolina Section Board member to learn more about volunteer opportunities and upcoming planning efforts.

The South Carolina Section thanks every volunteer, chapter lead, reviewer, and co-chair who contributed to the 2026 Report Card and looks forward to building an even stronger team as work begins toward the next report card release. The Report Card can be accessed at InfrastructureReportCard/state-item/South-Carolina.org



Pictured l to r: Ryan Harvey, Renée Gardner, Jonathan Ard, and Gwen Sollenberger

Get Involved: Help Shape the Future of ASCE South Carolina

The strength of the ASCE South Carolina Section depends on the commitment and enthusiasm of its volunteers. Whether your passion is advocacy, membership engagement, professional development, or communications, there are numerous opportunities to make a meaningful impact on our profession and our communities in South Carolina.

The Section is currently seeking volunteers to support several important initiatives, including advocacy efforts that help promote sound infrastructure policy and raise awareness of the vital role civil engineers play in improving quality of life throughout South Carolina.

Current opportunities include supporting the Section's Advocacy Program and serving in two key leadership roles:

- **Membership Chair** – Help recruit, engage, and retain members across the state.
- **Communications Chair** – Assist with newsletters, website updates, social media, and member outreach.

Volunteering is a great way to expand your professional network, develop leadership skills, and make a lasting impact on civil engineering in South Carolina.

Interested in serving? Contact the ASCE South Carolina Section leadership team to learn more about these opportunities.

"The future of our profession depends on the members who step forward to lead today."



Meet Your 2026-2027 ASCE South Carolina Section Leadership Team



Thank you to all ASCE South Carolina Section members who participated in the 2026-2027 officer election.

Your vote helps shape the future of our Section and ensures we continue to be led by dedicated volunteers committed to serving our members and the civil engineering profession.

We appreciate your engagement and support, and we look forward to working with our newly elected leaders in the year ahead. Congratulations to all those elected, and thank you to everyone who was willing to serve and be considered for a leadership role.

Looking Ahead

As we begin the 2026-2027 year, our focus will be on strengthening connections among our Branches, expanding opportunities for member engagement and continuing to elevate the voice of civil engineers across South Carolina. I look forward to working with our new Board and members throughout the state as we build on the Section's strong foundations.

- Chris Mack

The SC Section Executive Board for the 2026-2027 are...

- President: Chris Mack
- President Elect: Ryan Mattie
- Vice-President: Laura Boisclair Criscio
- Past President: Gwen Sollenberger
- Secretary: Cherri DeFigh-Price
- Treasurer: Grant Hollis
- At-Large Director: Perry Green
- Catawba Branch Director: Brad Ross
- CSRV Branch Director: Mark Lorah
- Eastern Branch Director: Jonathan Ard
- Grand Strand Branch Director: Ryan Harvey
- Midlands Branch Director: Kiera Hughes
- Upstate Branch Director: Mathew Miller
- Younger Member Forum: Matheus Brandao

ASCE South Carolina Section Announces 2026 Annual Award Recipients

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) South Carolina Section is proud to announce the recipients of its 2026 annual awards program, recognizing outstanding achievements in engineering, leadership, education, community service, and project excellence throughout the state.

Each year, the ASCE South Carolina Section solicits nominations from its members and the engineering community. A committee carefully reviews all submitted applications and nominations before selecting recipients whose accomplishments exemplify excellence in civil engineering and service to society.

The annual awards honor individuals and projects that have made significant contributions to the profession and to the citizens of South Carolina.

This year's award recipients are:

Letelier Cup: Deepal S. Eliatamby

SC Civil Engineer of the Year: Yu Qian, PhD, PE

SC Young Civil Engineer of the Year: Kiera Hughes, PE

Section Leadership Award: Ben Morgan and Brian Maleck

Section Educator of the Year: Melih Calamak, PhD, PE, M.ASCE

Project of the Year: Magnolia Farms Residential Subdivision *DR Horton, Rowe Professional Services & City of Florence*

Technical Project of the Year: McKeithan Watershed Stormwater Improvements *City of Conway, Bolton & Menk and South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR)*

President's Award: Cherri DeFigh-Price

For more information regarding these awards and the ASCE South Carolina Section's recognition program, please visit the South Carolina Section website at www.asecsc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR:



- **November 5, 2026:** ASCE Day and kickoff for the 175th anniversary celebration
- **January 9, 2027:** Regional Future Cities Competition. Molinaroli College of Engineering and Computing at University of South Carolina (Columbia)
- **Feb 28-March 5, 2027:** ASCE 2027 "The Infrastructure and Engineering Experience" (Philadelphia, PA)
- **April 15-17, 2027:** 2027 Carolinas Student Symposium. (North Carolina State University)
- **April/May 2027 (TBD):** Region 4 Spring Meeting (Kentucky)
- **June 3-5, 2027:** SC Engineering Conference and Tradeshow (Greenville, SC)
- **October 2027 (TBD):** ERYMC/MRLC (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania)

ASCE SOUTH CAROLINA SECTION
SC SECTION (1934) Website
sections.asce.org/south-carolina