

LOUISIANA CIVIL ENGINEER

Journal of the Louisiana Section

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**Right of Way Acquisition 101 for Engineers, Transmission line structure,
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**FEBRUARY 2024
VOLUME 32 • NO 2**

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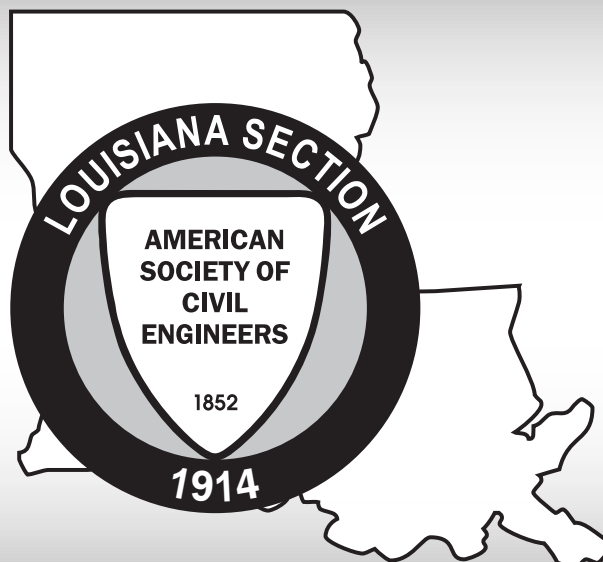
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The Louisiana Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers was founded in 1914 and has since been in continuous operation. The Section consists of the entire state of Louisiana and is divided into four branches that directly serve over 2000 members. They are the Acadiana Branch centered in Lafayette, the Baton Rouge Branch, the New Orleans Branch, and the Shreveport Branch.

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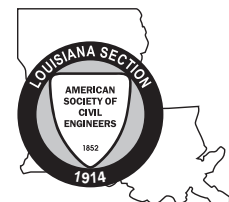
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President's Message

By Marcus Taylor, PE, Section President

Welcome to 2024!

The first quarter of the fiscal year has been exceptional eventful. Let's highlight our achievements:

1. **In-Person Section Board Meetings:** We successfully conducted two in-person Section Board meetings.
2. **Branches and Institutes Participation:** All the branches and institutes have been meeting regularly and persevere in their effort.
3. **Upcoming Conferences in March:** I'm thrilled to share with you the details of the upcoming conferences in this quarter's journal.

Call for Abstracts:

If anyone is interested in contributing, consider writing an abstract for potential inclusion in future journal issues. Reach out to Katherine Foreman kforeman@royalengineering.net and the Publication Committee.

Louisiana Infrastructure Report Card:

The Louisiana Infrastructure Report Card is in review and will be issued this year. There will be updates to the Aviation, Bridge, Dams, Drinking Water, Coastal Protection, Levees, Ports, Inland Waterways, Roads and Wastewater sections. There will also be a new Broadband section that will be evaluated and added to the Report Card. Jan Evans, PE, and the other dedicated volunteers deserve a heartfelt expression of gratitude for their diligent work in completing the Report Card."

Upcoming Conferences:

This year, ASCE is offering numerous opportunities for our society to come together. Alongside these gatherings, we have some exciting and informative conferences lined up. Let's dive into the details:

1. Student Symposium:

Hosted by UNO, the Student Symposium is rapidly approaching. Mark your calendars for March 7th through 9th in New Orleans. It's a fantastic chance to connect with fellow students and professionals. There is also still time to sign up as a sponsor! By doing so, you become an integral part of shaping the future of our engineers as they embark on their journey of professional and personal development. (See pages INSERT)

2. Join Us at the ASCE Spring Conference in Baton Rouge!

Mark your calendars for the annual ASCE Spring Conference, hosted by the Baton Rouge Branch. This year promises a blend of learning, networking, and fun. Here are the details:

- i. **Date:** March 20th and 21st
- ii. **Location:** Embassy Suites By Hilton in Baton Rouge
- iii. **Conference Highlights:**
- iv. **Attendee Registration:** There's still time to sign up and secure your spot.
- v. **Exhibitors and Sponsors:** Interested in showcasing your expertise? Consider being an exhibitor or a sponsor.

Let's make this conference a memorable gathering of professionals and enthusiasts. See you there!

Main Article

In this month's journal, Jim L. Bradford III and Matthew C. Melancon will discuss right-of-way acquisition and the procedures and multifaceted problems associated with right-of-way acquisition for large projects. They will also dive into the legal, environmental, social, economic and temporal challenges that projects will face. (See pages INSERT)

Closing Message

I would like encourage all our colleagues to volunteer to speak at our Student Branch events and at our local Branch luncheons. It would be so beneficial for us to hear and learn of the exciting projects we get to be a part of across the state or even nationally. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as the Louisiana Section president and I hope see you in the Student Symposium or at Spring Conference in March!



Marcus Taylor, PE

Right of Way Acquisition 101 for Engineers

By James L. Bradford, III and Matthew C. Melancon

Introduction

In the new age of infrastructure improvements, EPC contracting has become enormously popular. An EPC contract is a contract structure in which a prime contractor is responsible for the entire project, including its design, engineering, procurement, and construction. Given the resulting transfers of the burdens of project management and coordination, overhead and labor costs, as well as legal responsibility, EPC contracts are likely here to stay. Engineers, with their unique ability to handle the early-stage project issues of design and engineering, are increasingly the winners of the EPC competitive process. With EPC contracts, engineers must now assume responsibility for the land acquisition components of a project, often termed right-of-way acquisition.

Right-of-way acquisition is a critical phase in the development of any project and often misunderstood by engineers. Whether for the construction of roads, bridges, levees, electrical transmission lines, pipelines, or telecommunication networks, acquiring the necessary land rights is a complex and often contentious process, without which no construction can proceed. Land rights may be defined as any ownership, servitude or easement, lease, or any other interest in real estate providing the sponsoring agency or client with necessary rights to access, install, replace, maintain, inspect, test, repair, own, operate, or remove improvements required by the relevant project. This article provides an overview of both the procedures and multifaceted problems associated with right-of-way acquisition for large projects, touching on the legal, environmental, social, economic, and temporal challenges that projects will face. The successful right-of-way project combines adherence to a process and schedule with an equal measure of understanding human psychology and fostering trust through real human discourse and interaction.



Figure 1. Louisiana Property Acquisition Company, LLC Transmission Line Right of Way Project



Jim Bradford



Matthew Melancon



Figure 2. Louisiana Property Acquisition Company, LLC Transmission Line Structure

The Mechanical Process of Land Acquisition

The process of acquiring right of way begins with a sponsoring agency or client settling on a project footprint or route. From there, the land acquisition contractor determines who owns that footprint, gains legal access of the subject properties for survey and environmental investigations, determines the properties' value, negotiates their purchase from the landowners, and then closes the transactions turning over clean title to the sponsoring agency or client for project construction. The process is generally linear; however, the best land acquisition companies can overlap these linear tasks to create temporal compression and stay on schedule.

Determining Ownership

Determining property ownership starts with preparation of a full title abstract for each parcel to be acquired, consistent with current professional, industry, or client standards for land acquisitions. The title work requires public research both online and typically at the courthouse of the parish in which the project is located to identify the current ownership in the land records. Physical research in the books at the courthouse is necessary in almost all projects because

the digital record of land transactions go back only 20 to 40 years depending upon the parish. Each have different beginning dates in their digital records. This can be a painstaking process sometimes requiring research of the title transactions on a single property back more than a hundred years. Worse still, some properties can have hundreds of undivided ownerships, with each potential name needing to be searched for potential selloffs from the original parent tract.

Often, the client, be it corporate or governmental, will have its own defined title standard to which you must adhere. The term “standards” is perhaps a misnomer as those standards are anything but uniform. For example, the Louisiana State Bar Association publishes its standard for the period of time to be researched, stating, “[t]he marketability of title shall be determined based upon a search and examination of the public records in the names of the record owners of the subject property for a period of 35 years or such longer period of time as may be necessary to commence the examination with a conveyance for consideration.” LSBA Louisiana Uniform Title Standards, Standard 2.1: Period of Time. In contrast, the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development requires title research spanning only three bona fide transfers of the property reaching back at least eleven years, and never more than thirty years if three transfers do not occur within the prior thirty-year period. Thus, knowing and understanding the applicable title research standard is critically important. Regardless of the title standard employed, that standard should be confirmed as part of the contracting process so that the risk of any standard is clearly allocated. An example of the failure to allocate such a risk occurred on a recent Louisiana state project where the land acquisition company researched only to a 35-year standard with no confirmation of the applicable title standard in its contract. Unfortunately, a transaction occurring 50 years prior had created an entire second line of property transfers for the same parent tract with the 50-year line being the legal ownership. The land acquisition company had purchased the property for the state from whom it believed to be the owner, and the state agency was eventually forced to buy the property a second time from its legal owner. An errors and omissions claim was made by the state against the contractor. Contracting the applicable title standard would have avoided the liability.

Once completed, the title research is shared with the project survey team for preparation of final right-of way maps, with the appraisers for inclusion in their reports, and with the negotiation agents for the acquisition of all needed land rights.

Determining Property Values

The Concept of Just Compensation

One of the foremost challenges in land right-of-way acquisition stems from the intricate legal framework governing property rights and the amount of compensation that must be paid, often termed “just compensation” in reference to the U.S. Constitution’s Fifth Amendment. Each state has its own diverse laws and regulations that dictate the process of acquiring land for public infrastructure projects. In Louisiana, a landowner is entitled to be compensated for any land right “to the full extent of his loss.” La. Const. art. I, §4. The terms “full extent of the loss” mean that the landowner must be put in the same financial position as he was in prior to the acquisition.

Thus, if the landowner can prove that as a result of the taking of his property, he has or will suffer a loss or damage, he is entitled to recover it under Louisiana law. This could include, for example, lost profits if the landowner’s business will be adversely affected by the project. This is in stark contrast to the compensation standard under the U.S. Federal Constitution which allows a landowner to be compensated only for the “fair market value” of the property acquired. In addition to the standards for compensation, Louisiana has its own procedures for the acquisition of property. The required procedures are prerequisites to the ability to file eminent domain actions to take the property on an involuntary basis. If federal dollars are funding the project, the project will also be governed by the statutory regime and adopted regulations promulgated under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (“Uniform Act”). 42 U.S.C. §4601 *et seq* and 49 C.F.R. Part 24. By way of example, the Uniform Act requires that every property valued over \$10,000 be appraised in a written appraisal report and that appraised report be reviewed by a separate and independent appraiser in what is termed a “review appraisal report.” These legal complexities can lead to delays and increase costs for project developers if not understood and incorporated into the right-of-way acquisition process from the outset. Worse still, a project can actually be defunded as a result of a post-acquisition federal audit of files where the land agents failed to comply with federal law.

The Appraisal Process

The land acquisition contractor will initially prepare an “appraisal plan” for the project specifically identifying the number and type of each required appraisal (if any). This step is important because some parcels require more complex appraisal analyses than others. For example, a simple strip taking for the widening of an existing road that has little to no impact on the property remainder will require only an analysis of the value of the part to be acquired (aka the “part taken”). Other parcels, where the taking or the project itself has adverse effects on the value of the remaining property, for example, where remaining property is too small for development or where the taking removes a substantial area of a parking lot needed for a commercial enterprise, will require a full before and after analysis. A before and after analysis is essentially the preparation of two appraisals in a single report – the first being the value of the property before the acquisition and the second appraisal being the value of the remaining property after the acquisition assuming the project has been constructed as designed. Any decrease in the expected value of the remaining property is known as a “severance” damage and must be paid to the landowner even though no acquisition or future use of the remainder is to be made. After finalizing the plan, the land acquisition contractor will schedule an approved and Louisiana licensed appraiser to provide one (or two, if needed for an expropriation) independent appraisals of each project parcel. Under the Uniform Act, a compensation estimate may be used in lieu of an appraisal report if the estimated value of the individual property parcel is less than \$10,000. The compensation estimate must be prepared by someone with knowledge of and competency in land values of the project area. If proceeding under the Uniform Act, an independent, licensed appraiser will then perform the required review appraisal for each parcel appraised. The independent appraisals and review appraisals must be performed by licensed

appraisers, and on certain projects, such as those for DOTD road projects by state licensed appraisers with a “General Certification.” Ideally, the appraisers used should have extensive experience in appraising property for eminent domain purposes which requires unique and specialized techniques.

Business Valuation / Lost Profits Analysis

If the appraisal plan reveals that a planned property taking may cause damage to a commercial business, or an economic interest beyond property value, then a Business Valuation or Lost Profits analysis report should be prepared by an approved consultant, typically a certified public accountant with experience in analyzing business valuation and lost profits issues. The damage estimate determined by the Business Valuation/Lost Profit consultant will be included within the overall just compensation to be paid to the property owner. Business loss issues require early and careful handling as they are most likely to result in eminent domain litigation.

Building/Construction Cost and Cost to Cure Estimates

If the appraisal plan reveals that a planned taking will impact existing residential or commercial buildings, signs, or other improvements, and the damage caused can be mitigated, then the project may require construction cost estimates, parking studies, and/or cost to cure estimates be prepared by approved independent consultants to support reductions in either the appraisal estimates and/or the determination of Just Compensation to the property owner. In effect, if the original resulting damage can be cured for an amount less than that damage, the cost of the cure is the appropriate measure of just compensation. Oftentimes, in partial acquisitions of commercial tracts, it is a combination of the value of the property taken, severance damage, and cost to cure that together constitutes just compensation.

Setting Just Compensation

Once all of the needed valuation techniques have been applied, then the land acquisition contractor makes a recommendation to the government agency or client sponsoring the project as to the amount of just compensation to be paid for a parcel. It is always the agency or client who actually sets just compensation and authorizes the contractor to offer the amount.

Negotiation

After the client has approved the just compensation amount, negotiations can commence. Under the Uniform Act and under standards imposed by many state agencies, for example under DOTD’s Real Estate Manual, all offers must be made in writing. Likewise, in order to expropriate under Louisiana law, evidence of the offers having been made in writing is required. Thus, it is a best practice to present all offers in writing or, if not practicable, then to at least confirm any oral offers with a follow-up writing restating the offer. The negotiating agent typically prepares an offer package for each parcel to include a just compensation letter and the summary of the just compensation to be transmitted to each property owner. In lieu of the summary, some clients and agencies prefer to produce the full appraisal report with the offer. These communications with the property owner begin the negotiated acquisition process, in which each contact is fully documented within each parcel’s

negotiation log. Again, the Uniform Act requires a log of all contacts with a property owner. A contact log also helps in proving a good faith negotiation occurred, which is a prerequisite for eminent domain proceedings under Louisiana law. In light of these requirements, land acquisition companies typically keep a contact log on every project. All counteroffers are presented to the sponsoring agency or client, typically with a written recommendation for either acceptance or rejection. The agency or client ultimately decides whether to administratively settle any just compensation claim.

Relocation Assistance

Relocation assistance services are required under both Louisiana and federal law where a project displaces either residents or businesses. If authorized, the land acquisition contractor will develop all data to begin Relocation Assistance Services with the affected displacee and will prepare a relocation file for each displacee. The file will identify the needs and federal entitlements of each displacee under the Uniform Act, as well as all contacts made with each displacee. Among the services and benefits a displacee might be entitled to are the following: relocation advisory services (i.e., help in finding a replacement dwelling or business location); reimbursement of moving expenses; replacement housing payments (i.e., payable if the cost of a comparable replacement dwelling exceeds the just compensation paid for the one acquired); and for businesses, reestablishment expenses (e.g., the cost of new stationary, updates to business location listings, new utility deposits, etc.). Like all just compensation offers, all relocation assistance benefits are approved by the sponsoring agency, and all offers are to be presented to the displacee in writing.

Closing the Acquisition

Once the negotiation is successful, the transaction must be closed. The land acquisition contractor will then re-examine the title abstract and, if necessary, update it if it is state to confirm ownership and encumbrances prior to closing. Typically, all encumbrances, such as mortgages and liens, are cleared and taxes are to be prorated in accordance with current professional and industry requirements. The land acquisition contractor prepares any vouchers or receipts required by the sponsoring agency or client and delivers a closing check to the landowner in exchange for signed transactional document. If title insurance is required under the sponsoring agency’s land acquisition standards, then a closing performed by a licensed title insurance agent is scheduled at which the foregoing actions are completed. Finally, the land acquisition contractor records all acquisition documents (e.g., act of sale, servitude, temporary construction servitude, etc.) in land record of the parish where the project is located and the use of the property for the project can commence.

Preparing for Expropriation

In those instances, where amicable negotiations with property owners are not successful in acquiring the required right-of-way, the land acquisition contractor typically prepares an expropriation package of necessary information to assist the retained lawyers in acquiring the property in an eminent domain action. An expropriation package will ordinarily include the title abstract including a statement of all known interests in the property (e.g.,

a listing of owners, including all undivided ownerships, lessees, servitudes, mortgages, liens, etc.), a legal description of the parcel, the parcel survey, the appraisals and the sponsoring agency's determination of just compensation, all communications with the landowners including all offers and counteroffers, the negotiator's log of contacts, and a brief memorandum explaining the reasons for termination of negotiations.

Problems Confronting Right-of-Way Acquisition

Competing Land Uses and Limited Availability

As populations grow, urban areas expand, and rural landscapes evolve, the demand for land increases across the board. This surge in competing land uses makes securing right-of-way for utility projects a challenging task. The limited availability of suitable land can lead to increased competition among projects, driving up costs and causing delays.

In densely populated urban areas, acquiring land for utility projects can be especially problematic. Existing infrastructure, residential communities, and commercial developments often leave little room for the expansion of roads or utility networks, necessitating creative solutions to navigate the tight spatial constraints. The challenge is exacerbated by the dense network of existing infrastructure, requiring meticulous planning to minimize disruptions. Additionally, engineering complexities, such as the need for specialized construction techniques or adherence to stringent safety standards, can impact the choice of available land and intensify the competition for suitable right-of-way. These challenges not only extend the timeline for acquisition but can also escalate costs, posing significant hurdles for project developers seeking to balance engineering requirements with the intricacies of land right-of-way acquisition. In this context, a nuanced and collaborative approach involving both the engineers and the land acquisition agents becomes paramount to navigate these complexities effectively.

Regulatory and Permitting Hurdles

Furthermore, ensuring compliance with environmental and permitting regulations adds another layer of complexity to the right-of-way process. Striking a balance between the needs of the large public or utility project and the protection of the environment often results in protracted negotiations and legal battles.

Large public projects often traverse ecologically sensitive areas, raising concerns about environmental impact. The potential disruption to ecosystems, water sources, and wildlife habitats can trigger opposition from environmental advocacy groups and local communities. Striking a balance between the need for essential infrastructure and environmental preservation becomes a delicate and contentious process. Stakeholder opposition, including protests and legal challenges, can significantly impede the progress of land right-of-way acquisition. Public awareness campaigns, environmental impact assessments, and community engagement efforts are crucial components in mitigating opposition and fostering a collaborative approach to utility project development.

On the permitting side, right-of-way acquisition often involves navigating a complex web of bureaucratic processes, permits, and approvals. Delays in obtaining necessary clearances from government

agencies can significantly impede project timelines and escalate costs. Targeting these permits early and often is the only way to bring the permitting process into alignment with any reasonable project schedule. By way of example, the prototypical initial response from US federal agencies when a permit or servitude is sought that will even touch, much less cross, any federally managed land area is that "the process is difficult and will take at least two years." In this way, the federal agency can discourage the use of its property without actually analyzing the merits of the proposed servitude or permit. Moreover, the lack of coordination among different government departments can lead to conflicting requirements and redundant paperwork. Land acquisition contractors can still be successful in obtaining permits and servitudes from these federal agencies, but early and regular, diligent contact with them is imperative to have any chance of timely success. A more integrated and collaborative approach to regulatory approvals with both the land acquisition contractor and the sponsoring agency or client fully engaged can alleviate procedural bottlenecks and enhance the overall efficiency of the land acquisition process. Even then, it sometimes takes political power to bring the demands of federal bureaucracies within reason.

Compensation and Fair Valuation

Determining fair compensation for landowners affected by right-of-way acquisition is a constant issue. The valuation process involves assessing the market value of the land, considering factors such as location, current land use, and potential for future development. However, discrepancies in valuation methodologies and perceptions of fair compensation often lead to disputes and protracted negotiations. In addition to financial compensation, non-monetary factors such as emotional attachment to the land, cultural significance, and disruption to livelihoods must be considered. Striking a balance that satisfies both landowners and project sponsors is a delicate process, requiring transparent communication and a commitment to fair and just compensation.

Eminent Domain as a Last Resort

In some cases, project sponsors must resort to eminent domain – the legal authority to expropriate private land for public use. While eminent domain in theory can expedite the acquisition process, it often sparks controversy and protracted legal challenges. Striking a balance between the public interest and individual property rights, with perhaps a lean in favor of private property rights, is essential to avoid protracted legal battles and public backlash. No matter how the project planning or negotiations develop, sometimes, a landowner remains unwilling to sign a transactional document granting the needed land rights and eminent domain must be pursued if available. This should always be a last resort as it is costly for all parties and its results uncertain. In dealing with private property owners who often do not share the same perspective on projects, it is vital to remember that the goal of some people is to maximize compensation by threatening delays. In such cases, eminent domain, or at least the willingness to initiate it, might be necessary. Unless the right to "quick take" expropriation exists (which is limited by statute in Louisiana to only certain public acquisitions), the expropriation process takes some time. Although it is required by law to be tried expeditiously and with preference to other civil proceedings, expropriation proceedings often take six months

or more to get to a final judgment which transfers the property rights to the acquiring agency. The proceedings are completed in two separate trials. The first being a trial over the public purpose of the project (i.e., does it meet a legitimate public need) and the route or footprint of the project (i.e., where the project is located), if challenged. The second trial addresses the compensation to be paid to the landowner for the property right being acquired. Only after the second trial and payment of the amount determined to be just compensation is title to the property actually transferred. Only then, can the project sponsor build anything on it.

Successful Right-of-Way Acquisition and the Human Factor

Landowner relations is the single most important factor in ensuring a successful project. Many projects are significantly opposed by landowners and, yet, a good land acquisition company, working with the sponsoring agency or client, can manage to take these difficult projects to completion by developing and maintaining genuine relationships with the residents and owners. Often for engineers, deadlines are the driving impetus in how projects are approached, and which strategies are implemented. These timelines are often based upon the assumption that an amicable agreement will be made with the necessary landowners. However, it is critically important to remember that landowners are entitled to private property rights, and many will do whatever is necessary to protect their property. Assuming that landowners will accept the project, however beneficial the project may be for the community at large, can often be a detriment to the planned schedule of a project. Instead, the assumption should always be made that there will be some owners who do not intend on working with the team and to account for the time it takes to work through these difficult issues.

Including in any plan or schedule for right-of-way acquisition should be developing good landowner relationships. It can start with public meetings or hearings to announce and explain the project but must include individual one on one time with each landowner. There is no doubt that empathy, understanding, and perspective is necessary. The landowners must know that you hear their concerns

and that you address them to the greatest extent feasible. By way of example, if there is legacy tree within the right of way on a landowners’ property, they must know that the project designers at least considered the tree in its route or project design and, if cannot be saved, a legitimate explanation must be provided. Similarly, proximity of the project to residential properties is also a typical concern and must be addressed early and in-person. Likewise, the owners of land needed for large infrastructure projects are often elderly and do not wish to communicate electronically, making in person negotiations necessary. Even in person, elderly landowners often display unwillingness to trust what is communicated. It takes time and more than one exchange to develop the needed trust. These discussions often occur sitting at a kitchen table. The land agent must always have enough time to listen to and understand the objections of the landowner, even if the objections are not ones to which he can agree. Finding some common ground is often the breakthrough needed. These types of negotiations can often take months or even years to reach a successful resolution, making the initial planning of the right-of-way process critical.

Conclusion

Land right-of-way acquisition for public projects is a complex and multifaceted process, rife with legal, environmental, social, and economic challenges. Project developers must navigate a myriad of issues, from regulatory hurdles and competing land uses to environmental concerns and stakeholder opposition. Addressing these challenges requires an integrated approach that encompasses transparent communication, fair compensation, environmental stewardship, and community engagement. Engineers, as project designers and managers, working together with their government and private clients as well as the local, affected communities, must strike a balance between the need for essential public projects and the protection of individual rights, the environment, and the social fabric of affected communities. Only through a concerted effort can we build a future where infrastructure development is both efficient and socially responsible.

James L. Bradford, III
James is a Manager and Principal of Louisiana Property Acquisition Company, LLC, a turnkey right-of-way acquisition company founded in 2005. Mr. Bradford also serves as Managing Partner of Daigle, Fisse & Kessenich, APLC, a full-service law firm, where he concentrates his practice in the area of eminent domain.

Matthew C. Melancon
Matthew is a Project Manager for Louisiana Property Acquisition Company, LLC, and serves as project lead on all right-of-way acquisition for utility projects.

ASCE Region 5 News



Christopher G. Humphreys, PE
Region 5 Governor

This correspondence serves as a formal record of the recent Multi-Region Leadership Conference (MRLC) that transpired from January 25 to 27 in Miami, Florida, in which we interacted with members from Regions 1, 2, 4, and 5. A Region 5 Assembly was also convened on January 25, 2024, within the convention venue. The participation at the MRLC was instrumental in fostering new alliances and disseminating pivotal resources integral to our leadership roles within the engineering sphere.

Additionally, I would like to issue a reminder regarding the upcoming Gulf Coast Student Symposium, scheduled to be held at the University of New Orleans from March 7 to 9, 2024. Gianna Cothren, PhD, PE, acting as the Faculty Advisor, has expressed the necessity for additional sponsorship and volunteer support, particularly for the roles of adjudicators and event facilitators. The Section is requested to disseminate a subsequent communiqué featuring the Symposium Information Brochure and the Sponsor Information Sheet to all our Section members. Although an initial announcement has been broadcast, a subsequent reminder is anticipated to be of significant benefit.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the Louisiana Section's

substantial sponsorship commitment. It is imperative that our representation is pronounced throughout the Symposium, including the presence of ASCE informational tables and, if possible, the display of the Louisiana Section Banner.

Those who wish to volunteer their services at the ASCE tables or other symposium activities should establish communication with Javohn Washington, Chair, or Dr. Cothren, Faculty Advisor, whose contact particulars are delineated in the symposium brochure on page #.

For professionals with an interest in serving as judges for the Concrete Canoe competition, please engage with Chris Humphreys or Ronnie Schumann. For adjudication roles in the Steel Bridge and other competitions, Dr. Cothren or Javohn Washington will be your points of contact.

Looking ahead, the Louisiana Civil Engineering Conference and Show is slated for September 18 – 19, 2024, at the Pontchartrain Center in Kenner. Please be cognizant of the advanced scheduling relative to previous years, which may coincide with Branch Award Meetings. Early planning is advised. Additionally, we are in the pursuit of high-caliber presentations and encourage the dissemination of this opportunity within your professional networks.

Your attention to these matters is not only appreciated but essential to the ongoing success and collaboration within our engineering community.

Cities of the Future

ASCE and MacGillivray Freeman Films – the team that brought *Dream Big: Engineering Our World* to giant screens around the world – have united to produce a new film inspired by ASCE's Future World Vision initiative: *Cities of the Future*. The film's immersive IMAX experience allows audiences to "step into the future."

Cities of the Future features five young ASCE members working to solve the world's most pressing challenges with inspiring solutions. It also follows a team of middle school students as they compete in the [Future City Competition](https://futurecity.org/). (<https://futurecity.org/>)

Science centers and museums across the country are already booking the film. [Find a theatre near you](https://citiesofthefuturefilm.com/). (<https://citiesofthefuturefilm.com/>) Feeling inspired by Future World Vision? Spark enthusiasm for *Cities of the Future* within your local ASCE section, branch, younger member group, or student chapter with [event resources](https://www.futureworldvision.org/resources) (<https://www.futureworldvision.org/resources>) or [apply for a Cities of the Future grant](https://www.futureworldvision.org/cities-future-grants) to feature the film at an upcoming event. (<https://www.futureworldvision.org/cities-future-grants>)

Cities of the Future Grants

Share the excitement of Cities of the Future

ASCE's new IMAX film, *Cities of the Future*, will soon be showing in science centers and museums across the country. And you can join in the excitement by sharing the film with your community. ASCE has put together a *Cities of the Future* resource library to help you feature the movie at local ASCE events. (<https://www.futureworldvision.org/resources>)

ASCE is also offering grants of up to \$1,500 to ASCE groups for film screenings or educational programs that include a film screening. Interested in featuring *Cities of the Future* at an upcoming section, branch, or younger member group event? Review grant application guidelines and submit your proposal by March 29. (<https://www.futureworldvision.org/cities-future-grants>)



Imagine stepping 50 years into the future and finding smart cities designed to optimize sustainability and resilience. Renewable energy is a primary power source, space-based solar power provides energy all day, and getting around is as easy as stepping into individualized travel pods that run on little or no energy. This isn't science fiction. Engineers are making plans for this future world right now, and it's coming to the giant screen!

In Memoriam

Thomas Willis Obituary



Tom, a dedicated civil and environmental engineer, and a proud alumnus of the Polytechnic Institute of New York and LSU, where he earned his B.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering and an MBA, passed away at the age of 67. His engineering journey was distinguished by his work on key infrastructure projects, including hydraulic and hydrologic analysis, and the design for the North Terminal Expansion of Louis Armstrong

New Orleans International Airport. He was also deeply involved in an aquatic litter abatement project in collaboration with LSU Ag Center and his daughter, Tia.

His passion for engineering was evident, often remarking on bridges and waterways he had a hand in crafting. Tom's lifelong learning ethos extended to earning a nursing degree by proxy to support his wife's education. His legacy in engineering is matched by the mentorship and knowledge he passed on to his family and colleagues. Tom will be remembered for his contributions to the field and his enduring spirit of learning and improvement.

In Memoriam

Lucila "Lucy" Silva



Lucila "Lucy" Castro de Paula e Silva, a revered figure in the engineering community, passed away on January 27, 2024, at the age of 67. A chemical engineer educated at Carnegie Mellon University; Lucy's relentless dedication led her to overcome gender barriers in a demanding industry since her arrival in Baton Rouge in 1979. Lucy's career was marked by a refusal to accept concessions, her professional attire belying the admiration she

commanded for her intelligence and work ethic.

Her journey began in São Paulo, Brazil, and was enriched by international experiences, including a formative year in Strasbourg, France, which cemented her multilingual proficiency. Lucy's professional ascent saw her excel in operations across various firms before establishing her own successful environmental engineering consultancy. She was

deeply involved in the significant Coastal Restoration efforts in Louisiana, contributing notably to the 2012 Coastal Master Plan.

In her later years, Lucy served as a Senior Project Manager for Brown & Root, where she spearheaded key safety projects at the Honeywell Chemical Plant, enhancing operational and community safety. Esteemed for her meticulous attention to detail and leadership, she left a lasting impact on her colleagues and the engineering field.

Lucy's resilience was further exemplified by her triumph over pancreatic cancer, offering hope and support to others battling the illness. She is remembered for her mentorship to many, especially young women in engineering.

Lucy's legacy is carried on by her son, Richard Leonidas "Lee" Biles IV, her extended family, and a multitude of friends and colleagues who admired her tenacity and spirit. Her life's work, extending beyond professional achievements to personal courage and mentorship, remains an inspiration to all.



General Conference Individual Registration Form
2024 ASCE Louisiana Section Spring Conference:
March 20-21 2024

Embassy Suites Baton Rouge, 4914 Constitution Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

ASCE MEMBER REGISTRATION

COST

SELECTION

Full Conference Registration

- ❖ Includes full access to conference, breakfasts, lunches, and crawfish boil.

\$325

One Day Registration

- ❖ Includes access to one day at the conference, one breakfast, and one lunch.
- ❖ Does not include crawfish boil admission.

\$150

NON-MEMBER REGISTRATION

COST

SELECTION

Full Conference Registration

- ❖ Includes full access to conference, breakfasts, lunches, and crawfish boil.

\$375

One Day Registration

- ❖ Includes access to one day at the conference, one breakfast, and one lunch.
- ❖ Does not include crawfish boil admission.

\$200

ADDITIONAL MEAL TICKETS

Wednesday Lunch

\$50

Thursday Lunch

\$50

Crawfish Boil

\$50

Name: _____ Company: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to: **ASCE Baton Rouge Branch**

Mail this form & payment to:

ASCE Spring Conference

P.O. Box 80047, Baton Rouge, LA 70898

For questions concerning registration, contact: venu@amesouth.com



General Conference Sponsor & Exhibitor Form
2024 ASCE Louisiana Section Spring Conference: March 20-21 2024
 Embassy Suites Baton Rouge, 4914 Constitution Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

SPONSORSHIPS	COST	SELECTION
<u>Platinum</u>		
❖ Logo featured in conference program.		
❖ Large logo displayed on conference signage, at breakfast, and at lunch.	\$1,850	_____
❖ One exhibitor booth.		
❖ Two registrations with recognition as a sponsor at the conference and crawfish boil.		
<u>Gold</u>		
❖ Logo included in conference program.		
❖ Logo displayed on conference signage and at crawfish boil.	\$1,000	_____
❖ One registration with recognition as a sponsor at the conference and crawfish boil.		
<u>Silver</u>		
❖ Logo included in conference program.	\$500	_____
❖ Logo displayed on conference signage.		
<u>Lanyard Sponsor (1 available)</u>	\$1,000	_____
<u>Crawfish Boil Sponsor (2 available)</u>		
❖ Logo displayed on crawfish boil signage.	\$750	_____
❖ Includes recognition as a sponsor at the conference.		
<u>Lunch Sponsor (2 available)</u>		
❖ Logo displayed on signage during lunch for both days.	\$500	_____
❖ Includes recognition as a sponsor at the conference.		
<u>Breakfast Sponsor (2 available)</u>		
❖ Logo displayed on signage during breakfast for both days.	\$300	_____
❖ Includes recognition as a sponsor at the conference.		

EXHIBITORS

Exhibitor Package

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| ❖ Reserved 6' table and two chairs for the entire conference. | | |
| ❖ Includes breakfast and lunch both days. | \$750 | _____ |
| ❖ Admission to crawfish boil for two people. | | |

Name: _____ Company: _____ Email: _____
 Phone: _____ Mailing Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to: **ASCE Baton Rouge Branch**

Mail this form & payment to:
ASCE Spring Conference
P.O. Box 80047, Baton Rouge, LA 70898

For questions concerning sponsorship or exhibits, contact: venu@amesouth.com

ASCE-COPRI Louisiana Chapter News

By Kiara Horton, EI, Director – Communications



COAST, OCEANS,
PORTS AND RIVERS
INSTITUTE

Louisiana Chapter



Kiara Horton, EI
Director – Communications

The Louisiana Chapter of the Coasts, Oceans, Ports, and Rivers Institute (L.COPRI) of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) promotes membership, professional development, and visibility throughout the State of Louisiana by conducting virtual webinars and in-person events.

YPG and Student Chapter Updates

On February 24, 2024, COPRI YPG will be volunteering for the Jefferson Parish Ecosystem and Coastal management annual “Coastal Tree-Cycling” event. Each year thousands of Christmas trees are donated by residents and diverted from landfills to protect wetland habitat within the Barataria Basin. These recycled trees are used to build wave dampening fences located off the shore, helping to reduce coastal erosion.

Both the L.COPRI YPG and LSU COPRI Student Chapter are excited to kick the year off with many events and lectures this year. Please reach out to Hayden Franklin (Student Chapter President, hfran15@lsu.edu) and Yelitza Ceden (YPG Director, Yelitza.ceden@hdrinc.com) for information on how to get involved as an LSU Student or Younger Member.

Scholarship Announcement

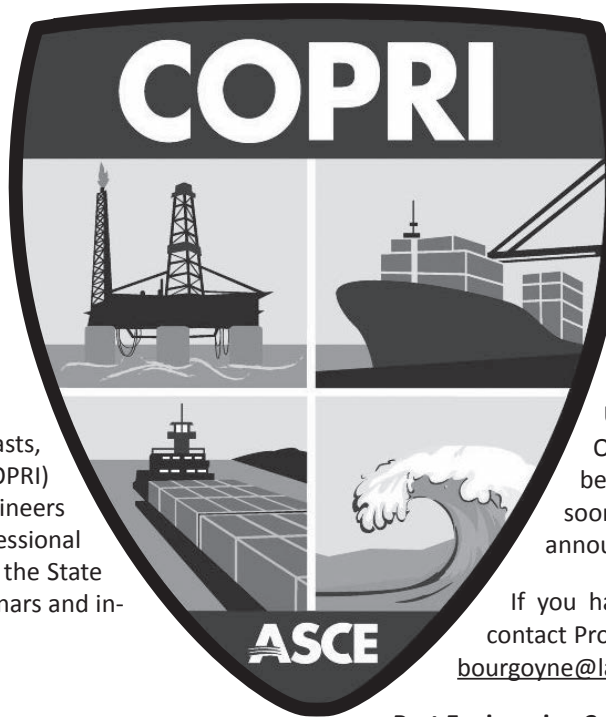
L.COPRI traditionally awards annual scholarships to students (1 graduate and 1 undergraduate) studying Civil, Coastal, Ocean or Environmental Engineering, or a Coasts, Oceans, Ports, or rivers related field. Be on the lookout for scholarship application form. Scholarship winners are typically presented their checks during L.COPRI’s annual spring seminar.

For application inquiries please contact Kylie Beadle, Scholarship Director at kyliehbeadle@gmail.com

Past Events

Educational Webinar

L.COPRI hosted a Webinar on January 30, 2024 presented by Rick Bauer from Systems Integration Consultant, Environmental Science Services, Inc. (Es2). Bauer discussed the ever-evolving



world of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs) and Unmanned Surface Vehicles (USVs) in coastal engineering and the advancements in drone space and its exciting path towards Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations. Special thanks to Rick Bauer for providing COPRI with the opportunity to gain valuable insights into the future coastal engineering with UAVs and USVs.

Upcoming Events

Our half-day Spring Seminar is currently being planned and updates will be coming soon. Keep a look out for future event announcements via email and LinkedIn.

If you have any general event questions, please contact Programs director Molly Bourgoyne at molly.bourgoyne@la.gov.

Port Engineering Certificate Program

ASCE’s Port Engineering Certificate Program is a series of career-focused courses taught by practicing engineers and university professors providing professional engineers in-demand skills used in the field of port engineering. You will learn the fundamental concepts of port engineering, the design, construction, and management of port facilities, types of seismic design classifications, and how to interpret geotechnical data.

Other Information

The activities of L.COPRI includes seminars, workshops, and other activities to benefit all ASCE and COPRI members. Members do not have to be an engineer to join COPRI. The Institutes of ASCE are formed for the benefit of ASCE and non-ASCE members to participate and interact with other professionals interested in coastal, oceans, ports, and riverine efforts in Louisiana. We would like to extend an invitation to our members to submit feedback and ideas for upcoming webinars and events. Please submit these ideas to kiara.horton@freese.com, and stay-tuned for a meeting invite if you are a member of our L.COPRI email list.

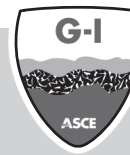
Also, please don’t forget to follow us on LinkedIn! We have a new L.COPRI page!!

Professional Achievement Awards

National COPRI offers several opportunities to recognize our colleagues for their professional achievements. For more information on individual, project, research, and younger member award opportunities, please visit <https://www.asce.org/communities/institutes-and-technical-groups/coasts-oceans-ports-rivers-institute/awards>.

ASCE-G-I Louisiana Chapter News

By George F. Segré Quilichini, PE, Chair



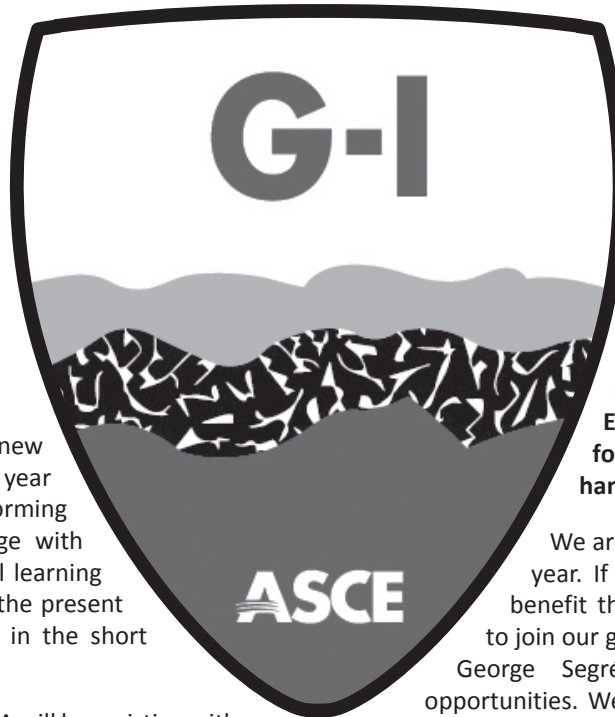
GEO-
INSTITUTE
LOUISIANA CHAPTER



George F. Segré Quilichini, PE
G-I Chair

As the GI-LA Chapter looks ahead at the new we are optimistic, kind of like the “new year new me” group. We are actively brainstorming ideas to promote our Chapter, engage with the community, and provide additional learning opportunities for our membership. At the present time, we have two activities planned in the short term:

1. March 7 through 9, 2024, the GI-LA will be assisting with ASCE’s Gulf Coast Student Symposium



If you would like to volunteer as a judge, we would love to have you. We are in need of assistance with design paper reviews, as well as the Geo-Wall competition itself. If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact George Segré at george.segre@terracon.com.

2. **March 7, 2024, the GI-LA will be hosting a webinar to be presented by Jeremy P. Daigle, PE a Geotechnical Engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The webinar will focus on how permitting efforts are handled at the USACE.**

We are also building our list of speakers for the year. If you have a topic that you think would benefit the community, or maybe you would like to join our group or sponsor a lecture, please contact George Segré at george.segre@terracon.com for opportunities. We are actively looking for volunteers and opportunities to engage with the community.

ASCE Government Relations Committee



Janet L. Evans, PE
Government Relations Chair

The ASCE Louisiana 2024 Report Card will be unveiled this year. I have been honored with this position to spear head that effort. Thank you to all who volunteered and helped this great effort which once again points to our need for money for infrastructure. You can see why we need it. Government Relations Committee Chair, Jan Evans at jan.evans@volkert.com.

The Louisiana Shuffle

The election of Governor Jeff Landry for the next four years will

have an impact on the state of Louisiana. I believe that we are going to be watching for the rest of the year as ideas developed by the transition teams before the inauguration. We have new cabinet appointments for major Departments of the State, including DEQ, CPRA, LADOTD, WLF, DHH just to name a few. We will also see the prioritization of the new Administrations priorities, such as moving up coastal work and the award of the Calcasieu Bridge PPP. We hear talks of cutting budgets and combination of division such as ports (not intermodal) being moved under economic development.

We will all watch and learn as this new administration takes place and new policies and procedures are implemented. Just as 8 years ago, we will learn the lay of the land. Some of our friends are in high places and some of our friends are no longer in high places.

At the federal level, the redistricting of the state to implement an additional minority district appeared to be solved in the legislature somewhat easily this go around. The redrawn map will have some ramification of having politicians making tough decisions on what district to run in and a group of concerned citizens have sued to have it reversed.

As always never a dull moment in Louisiana politics.

ASCE-T&DI Louisiana Chapter News

By Elba Hamilton - Newsletter Editor



TRANSPORTATION
& DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE
LOUISIANA CHAPTER



Elba Hamilton
T&DI Chair

Louisiana T&DI Scholarship Program

Since 2012 T&DI has been awarding two \$500 scholarships to junior and senior level university students who intend to pursue a career in the field of transportation. Funding for the scholarships is provided by the T&DI seminar proceeds. Applicants are required to submit a transcript with two academic recommendations, along with an essay regarding their interest in transportation studies to their advisers early in the Fall semester. The applications are then reviewed, and the recipients are selected by the T&DI Scholarship Subcommittee.

In December, the scholarship subcommittee selected Christina Canale and Brandon Bergeron as the recipients of the 2023-2024 T&DI scholarships. Canale is pursuing a BS in Civil Engineering from McNeese University and Bergeron is pursuing a BS in Civil Engineering from Louisiana State University. Congratulations to the 2023-2024 scholarship recipients!

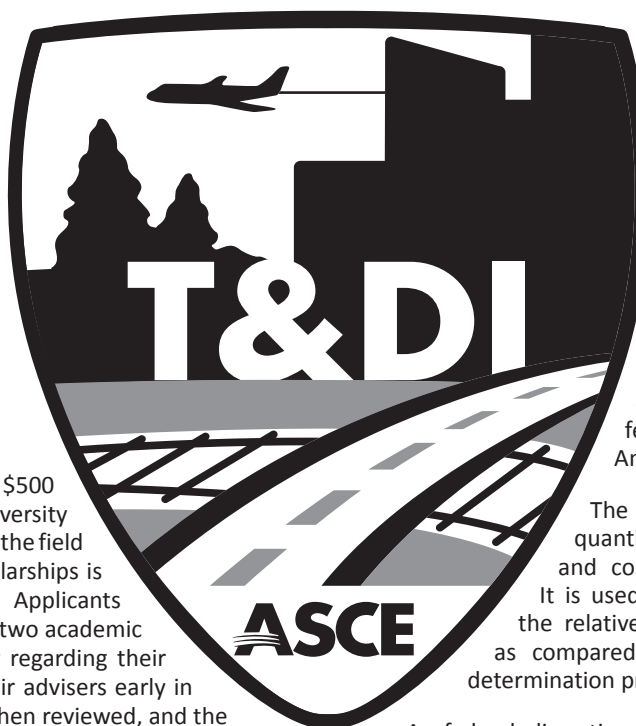


Ethics, Virtual Seminar

On December 4th, the T&DI Louisiana Chapter hosted our annual virtual seminar on the topic of Ethics. Our common purpose as professional engineers is to safeguard life, health, and property and to promote the public welfare. Professional ethics concerns the standard of professional conduct and responsibility required of a professional engineer. Our seminar discussion addressed issues like perception of wrong-doing, correcting mistakes, character, competency, accountability, conflicts of interest, trust, integrity, and avoiding deceptive acts.

The seminar was presented by Jeff A. Pike, PE. Jeff is an emeritus member of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) and the Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board (LAPELS) where he actively served from 2016 to 2022. Jeff's organizational involvement includes the Louisiana Engineering Society (LES) State. Pike retired in 2007 as a Lieutenant Colonel with over 22 years of active-duty U.S. Army service as an Airborne Ranger in the Infantry. While on active duty, he earned his Master of Science in Engineering at the University of Texas. Following military retirement, he practiced in the private sector for two years as a project engineer in Lufkin, TX.

Pike has twenty-three years of investment in undergraduate education at three different institutions. This includes Louisiana Tech University where he retired after fourteen years in 2023; Stephen F. Austin State



University in Nacogdoches, TX; and twice at his alma mater, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY.

Federal Benefit-Cost Analysis for Grant Applications Seminar

On January 24th, the T&DI Louisiana Chapter hosted the Federal Benefit-Cost Analysis for Grant Application seminar. Federal grant obligations have nearly tripled in the past five years. Much of that is due to the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*. A major component of the federal grant application is the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA).

The BCA is a systematic process for identifying, quantifying, and comparing expected benefits and costs of an investment, action, or policy. It is used by federal agencies to help understand the relative level of quantified benefits of projects as compared to each other as part of the award determination process.

As federal discretionary grant programs rise in quantity, the importance of understanding the BCA process is increasing for both planners and engineers. In this seminar, our speakers provided an overview of BCAs, their application, and best practices in support of successful grant applications.

The speakers were Mr. Sean Daly and Mr. Dennis Lambert, PE, F. ASCE. Both Sean and Dennis are members of the Executive Committee of T&DI. We are grateful for their years of service to our profession and our Institute.

Sean has 21 years of public sector and professional consulting experience in transportation planning and currently serves as Senior Manager of the Mobility Consulting Solutions Group at Iteris, Inc. Sean has served as lead coordinator of several transportation capital and planning grant applications and BCAs to USDOT, FRA, FHWA, and MARAD. In the past two years, Sean has authored grants that received a total of \$188 million in awards.

Dennis is a Benefit-Cost Analyst for IEM and has extensive experience with BCAs for federal grant applications. Mr. Lambert's experience in civil and environmental engineering, construction, and emergency management facilitates his understanding of the BCA process. He has direct experience in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of \$6B+ mitigation projects for the GOHSEP Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program (HMA). His significant project experience has included reviewing over 600 BCAs, obtaining 562 Phase I and 82 Phase II approvals. Mr. Lambert's expertise has enabled him to effectively evaluate various approaches and strategies for BCAs, making him an asset in the field of infrastructure development and mitigation.

Louisiana State Science and Engineering Fair

T&DI will again be participating in the Louisiana State Science and Engineering Fair this year. The event will take place March 25-27. As in past years, members of T&DI will serve as judges and present awards to the students with the top transportation and development related projects. The awardees will be announced in the next Newsletter issue.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

"Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise. I rise. I rise."

— Maya Angelou

Rising above significant societal and professional challenges, the civil engineers listed below accomplished impressive careers. This month provides the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of African Americans who had an impact on the civil engineering profession and helped pave the way for future generations of engineers.

Howard P. Grant (1925 – 1997)

First black student to graduate from the Berkeley College of Engineering Became the first known black member of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1948 Became the first African-American civil engineer for the City and County of San Francisco The second African-American civil engineer to be licensed by California Past president and treasurer of the California Society of Professional Engineers In 1970 hosted the first meeting of Northern California's black engineers at his home Grant served as the council's president from 1971 to 1973. The group evolved into the Northern California Council of Black Professional Engineers, an organization devoted to encouraging African-American youth to consider careers in engineering. Founding member of the Engineering Societies Committee for Manpower Training Board member for Big Brothers, Hunter's Point Boy's Club, and the San Francisco Urban League's scholarship committee

Shelly Nathan Bailey (1928-2012)

Co-founded Northern California Council of Black Professional Engineers Served as President of the Sacramento Section of ASCE In 1968, ASCE named Bailey California Outstanding Engineer of the Year As manager of the concrete materials lab at the the California State Department of Water Resources, helped to develop a new type of concrete for building dams Was one of the first five African American civil engineers in the state of California

George Biddle Kelley (1884-1962)

The first African American engineer registered in the state of New York Founding member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity- oldest black Greek fraternal organization Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity first president

Elijah McCoy (1844 – 1929)

Engineer and inventor, holder of over 50 patents Born free in Colchester, Ontario, the son of fugitive slaves who had escaped from Kentucky through the Underground Railroad At age 15, traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland for an apprenticeship and study, and was certified as a mechanical engineer before returning to the US Worked in Michigan in a home-based shop, where he developed inventions and improvements on them He obtained his first patent On July 12, 1872, for his automatic lubricator for oiling steam engines on locomotives and ships, an invention that greatly benefitted the railroad industry by enabling trains to run more efficiently. (U.S. Patent 129,843) Recognized by Booker T. Washington in Story of the Negro as having produced more patents than any other black inventor up to that time Continued inventing throughout his life and obtained 50 patents for lubrication and a number of others including household items a folding ironing board and a lawn sprinkler In 1920 he formed the Elijah McCoy Manufacturing Company The United States Patent and Trademark Office plans to open the Elijah J. McCoy United States Patent and Trademark Office in Detroit during July 2012

William H. Dammond (1873 – 1956)

Educator, civil engineer and inventor holding several important patents The first African-American graduate of the Western University of Pennsylvania (University of Pittsburgh) in June 1893. Graduated with honors Worked as an assistant bridge engineer at the Michigan Central Railroad, where he invented an electric signaling system that earned a patent on December 29, 1903 Issued a patent for a railroad operating safety system in 1906 Recognized for his work in a 1915 issue of The Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress, a publication of notable African-Americans in Michigan

Archie Alexander (1888 – 1958)

First black graduate from the University of Iowa engineering program 1929: Formed Alexander & Repass where he spent his life working Alexander & Repass were responsible for the construction of many roads and bridges in the DC area, including the Whitehurst Freeway, the Tidal Basin Bridge, and an extension to the Baltimore-Washington Parkway

Alaska Highway Veterans (1942)

The Alaska Highway was authorized by Franklin D. Roosevelt in February 1942 and was assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers for completion While the military was segregated at the time, the War Department made the unprecedented decision to assign three regiments of African-American troops to work with four white

regiments Despite working on the same project, the regiments were still kept segregated, and the white regiments often received preferential treatment in regard to equipment. For example, the African-American 95th Regiment, despite being more experienced with machinery, was given no machinery and provided only with hand tools Due to the intense schedule and climate conditions, an estimated thirty men died during the construction of the highway On Oct. 25, 1942, an African-American soldier and a white soldier shook hands to mark the completion of the Alaska Highway, a moment captured in an iconic photograph The Black Veterans Memorial Bridge, one of the veterans memorials along the highway, was dedicated in 1993 and stands as a monument to the engineers who not only completed a difficult task, but helped to pave the way for armed forces integration

General Hugh G. Robinson (1932 – 2010)

US Army Corps of Engineers' first African American general officer Earned his bachelor's degree from West Point, graduating in 1954 Promoted brigadier general in 1978, becoming the first African-American general officer in the history of the Corps of Engineers Earned his Master's degree in civil engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology In 1965 he became the first African-American to serve as military aide to a president when he was appointed as military aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson Member of ASCE and the National Society of Professional Engineers Military honors include an Air Medal, Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit and Army Commendation Medal

Hattie T. Scott Peterson, 1913-1993

Hattie Peterson was the first Black female engineer to gain a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering and made waves when she became the first African American woman to join the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 1954.

In addition to being a trailblazer in the industry, she also ensured her legacy lived on. Following her death in 1993, Peterson left an endowment for scholarships at Howard University, helping future generations of Black civil engineers to reach their full potential.

In celebration of Peterson's life, the Sacramento district of the USACE inaugurated the Hattie Peterson Inspiration Award, which is rewarded every year to employees who exemplify Peterson's dedication to integrity and professional qualities in the face of social challenges.

<https://www.asceor.org/news/notable-black-engineers-in-history>

Branch News



ACADIANA BRANCH

By Rhett Hebert, EI, CFM, Branch President

The year concluded on a festive note with our Annual Christmas Social, a collaborative effort with LES Lafayette, held at Rock'n'Bowl. Attendees enjoyed a delightful evening featuring superb cuisine, well-crafted beverages, and spirited bowling. I extend my sincere gratitude to all participants for

contributing to the success of this celebration, marking the end of an exceptional year and heralding the beginning of a promising new one.

In our ongoing commitment to professional development, our November Luncheon featured a presentation by Brett Bayard from Mader Engineering. Mr. Bayard provided valuable insights into ADA Compliance, offering a comprehensive overview of the historical context of ADA Guidelines. Additionally, he highlighted key design considerations and forthcoming changes that engineers should be

mindful of in their practices.

Unfortunately, our January luncheon faced a temporary setback due to sub-zero temperatures experienced in mid-January, leading to its postponement. Rest assured, details for the rescheduled event will be promptly communicated. On behalf of the Branch, I apologize for any inconveniences this may have caused and look forward to hearing from our distinguished guest speaker and event sponsor, Dr. Mark Rached with Master Builder Solutions, in the future.

As we move forward into the new year, I encourage all members to stay engaged and actively participate in the upcoming events that promise to enhance our professional knowledge and foster meaningful connections within our community.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the success of the Acadiana Branch, and I look forward to the collective achievements that lie ahead.



SHREVEPORT BRANCH

*By Victor Bivens, PE,
President of Shreveport Branch*

The Shreveport branch kicked off 2024 with our first monthly luncheon on January 25th where we hosted the Louisiana Engineering Society and learned about control valve systems. Branch members volunteered to assist Matt Redmon at the Shreveport

MATHCOUNTS competition where we graded the competition tests and served lunch. We look forward to presenting selected students of the Louisiana Tech Student Chapter with scholarships at their upcoming Winter Banquet on February 16th and hosting our second luncheon of the year on February 22nd.

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Thursday, March 21st, 2024

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BATON ROUGE BRANCH

By Robb Jewell, PE, Branch President

ASCE Baton Rouge branch organized the Christmas Party on December 16, 2023 at the Bocage Racquet Club. With more than 100+ members and guests registered, the Christmas Party was very well attended. Thank you to all our sponsors that made the event possible. The after party social continued at the Hayride Scandal. We had a successful

food drive and continue to take donations that will eventually be donated to the Baton Rouge food bank. The ASCE branch plans to have a volunteer day at the Food Bank and present the donation in person.

In January, Ryan Brunet, PE and Sarah Berman, PE attended the Multi Region Leadership Conference held in Miami, Florida. The purpose of the conference was to provide a venue for upcoming leaders to gain knowledge of the Society and their Region, interact with students, younger members, section, branch, and institute

leaders, while gaining personal leadership skills and learning the importance of networking.

ASCE January Luncheon was hosted at the Drusilla Seafood restaurant. Ari Deitch, PE, PTOE, PTP, RSP provided an update on the I-49 South (Ricochoc to Berwick) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and the Challenges of Converting an Existing Roadway to a Control of Access Facility. The presentation covered an overview of the background of the ongoing project, traffic study tasks and forecasting, and an alternative development design.

Our upcoming events include presenting the ASCE annual scholarship awards at the LES annual E-Week Gala. ASCE will also be giving out the Melissa Young Doucet, PE Memorial Scholarship to four students at the ASCE luncheon. The ASCE Baton Rouge Branch is hosting the annual spring conference in Baton Rouge at the Embassy Suites on March 20 and 21, 2024.



January 2024 ASCE Luncheon



January 2024 ASCE Luncheon



ASCE Baton Rouge Chapter Board at annual ASCE Christmas party



NEW ORLEANS BRANCH

By Ayan Mehrotra, PE, Branch President

We are excited to share the latest updates from the New Orleans Branch as we close out 2023 on a strong note. Over the past few months, we have organized a series of events aimed at developing and supporting civil engineers in our region.

Our monthly luncheons held in October, November, and December were a great success. We were honored to have distinguished speakers who presented on relevant infrastructure topics, providing our members with a broad understanding of these important issues. Here are the speakers we had the pleasure of hosting:

- October 2023 Luncheon – Chris Gilmore, PhD, Director of Engineering, Port of New Orleans
- November 2023 Luncheon – Chris Dunn, Chief, Engineering Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- December 2023 Luncheon - Jeffrey W. Roesel, Executive Director, Regional Planning Commission

Another highlight of the season was the lunch we hosted for the University of New Orleans (UNO) ASCE Student Chapter. During their finals week, we provided lunch to engineering students, strengthening our relationships with them and showing our support. Additionally, we had a fantastic turnout at our Annual Holiday Party, which we co-hosted with several other professional organizations. It was a joyful event filled with networking opportunities and festive cheer.

As we look ahead to 2024, our branch is gearing up for an exciting start. We have a lineup of upcoming luncheons and our annual Younger Members Forum on February 22nd, 2024 at 6:00 PM at The Blue Crab Restaurant. We also have our highly anticipated Spring Social on the horizon.

To stay updated with the New Orleans Branch, we encourage you to follow ASCE New Orleans on Facebook or LinkedIn (@asceneworleans) and visit our website at www.asceneworleans.org. You can always reach out to us at ASCEneworleans@gmail.com with any inquiries or suggestions.

We hope to see you at our upcoming events and wish you all a wonderful start to the new year!



December Luncheon Speaker, Jeffrey W. Roesel from the RPC



ASCE New Orleans Joint Professional Societies Holiday Party



ASCE New Orleans November Luncheon with speaker Chris Dunn, PhD from USACE-MVN



ASCE New Orleans Student Chapter Outreach – Branch members providing lunch for UNO Engineering Student during Finals week

ASCE-SEI New Orleans Chapter News

By Daniel Bobeck, PE



Daniel Bobeck, PE



Greetings from the SEI New Orleans Chapter! The Chapter is coming into the new year with a renewed emphasis on hosting educational seminars for structural engineers. In the fall we elected new officers to the SEI Executive Committee, they are as follows:

Chair – Daniel Bobeck, PE, Basin Engineering & Surveying

Vice Chair – J. Austin Fellows, PE, Versabar Inc.

Treasurer – Leslie Campbell, PE, SE, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

On November 9, 2023, we hosted Mark Cheek, President of MAC Engineering for a seminar on Nondestructive Testing (NDT) and Semi-Destructive Testing Methods used to Determine Material Properties and the Evaluation of Structures. Cheek discussed nondestructive and semi-destructive testing methods related to testing soils,

steel, wood, and concrete. Practical use and limitations of test methods were discussed as well as establishing testing methodology for assessing the condition of existing structures.

We are working on hosting 3 to 4 seminars this year as well as hosting a networking event. Please stay tuned for our upcoming seminars. If you have an interesting topic to propose or if you would like to get on our mailing list to receive advance notifications of our upcoming seminars, please email us at asceseinola@gmail.com. In closing, the Chapter is currently looking for new members to join the Executive Committee, please reach out to us if you are interested in joining the committee. We are always in need for volunteers for outreach, topic & speaker recruitment for seminars, in addition to other roles.

Student News

MCNEESE

By Kallie Broussard, Student Chapter President

McNeese ASCE has been working diligently to prepare for the Gulf Coast Student Symposium being held in New Orleans this March. We have been reaching out to sponsors, recruiting new members, and talking with McNeese alumni to help guide us for symposium.

We plan to be active at symposium by participating in the concrete canoe, surveying, and the mini concrete beam competition. With the success of last year's canoe, we are planning on tweaking the design to produce an even better product!

McNeese ASCE is thrilled to continue to partner with the other McNeese engineering organizations and faculty to do STEM outreach around the Lake Charles area. We will try and plan at least one school visit to show off McNeese ASCE and STEM. We have also begun to meet once a week with the other student organizations and the department to plan for our 2024 E-Week. This event is put on by McNeese and allows schools in the area to send their students to engage with McNeese's engineering facilities, watch demonstrations, and compete in competitions. ASCE will host a popsicle stick bridge competition where the students build the

bridges off-site and bring them to McNeese during E-week. The students will compete with other schools to see whose bridge is the strongest.

We are eager for another great and active semester!



Two ASCE members at our booth for preview day

LOUISIANA TECH

By Mallory Mankins, Student Chapter President

The Louisiana Tech Student Chapter has been hard at work preparing for the ASCE-hosted student design competitions since the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year back in September. Over the past few years, Tech's chapter has consistently participated in Concrete Canoe, Steel Bridge, Surveying, Sustainable Solutions, and more. The Bulldog's fighting spirit has manifested in students participating in competitions across the board, even bringing home big wins in the past few years such as 1st place in Concrete Canoe at the Gulf Coast Symposium hosted by the University of South Alabama in 2023, a 7th place overall finish for the canoe team and 2nd place placement at the ASCE Civil Engineering Student Championships last summer. With a history of success and eye on the future, students are spending the last few weeks leading up to the regional competition working diligently around the clock to complete all deliverables and practice their bridge building, paddling, and surveying skills. This year's Concrete Canoe Team is led by Connor Sigler, a Senior studying Construction Engineering Technology, and Jesse Bertucci, a Sophomore in Civil Engineering. This year's theme is Peaches and Magnolias and the team is excited to show off their boat cutting through Bayou St. John. Another team that is well on its way to completion, Steel Bridge, is led by Kade Klink, a Junior Industrial Engineering student. In addition to canoe and bridge, the Surveying Team, led by Junior in Civil Engineering, Liliane Lavigne, has been practicing skills as well as preparing their topographic map, which they feel confident to bring to competition.

Student Steel Bridge Competition

The Student Steel Bridge Competition (SSBC) has been taking place since 1987 when Lawrence Tech, Michigan Tech, and Wayne State competed in a parking lot to determine who had the best bridge. This first competition sparked an interest in competing across the country, thus starting the regional competitions and national finals. The event has grown every year since, and more than 200 schools are expected to compete this year, with the top 40-45 teams across North America advancing to the 2024 SSBC National Finals. This year the SSBC National Finals will be hosted by Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LA!

The Student Steel Bridge Competition is an annual competition that challenges student teams to develop a scale-model steel bridge. The team must determine how to fabricate their bridge and then plan for an efficient assembly under timed construction at the competition. Bridges are then load tested and weighed. The bridge must span approximately 20 feet, carry 2,500 pounds, and must meet all other specifications of the competition rules. Bridge aesthetics are also judged and considered in the final results of the competition. The mission of the Student Steel Bridge Competition is to challenge students to extend their classroom knowledge to a practical and hands-on steel-design project that grows their interpersonal and professional skills, encourages innovation, and fosters impactful relationships between students and industry professionals.

ASCE's student design competitions are an excellent opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience practicing civil engineering skills and have come to define the yearly goals of the Louisiana Tech Student Chapter. As the Gulf Coast Regional Symposium quickly approaches, students have their eyes on the prize and are ready to bring home another Bulldog win!



The concrete canoe team begins to apply another layer to this year's canoe "Peaches and Magnolias"



Steel Bridge team member, Kash Landry, welds a joint on a stringer for this year's bridge



Sponsor Benefits

All funds go directly to LA Tech to support the competition.

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS	DIAMOND \$10,000	GOLD \$5,000	SILVER \$2,500	BRONZE \$1,000	BLUE \$500
SPEECH AT BANQUET <i>COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE A 2-MINUTE SPEECH AT THE AWARDS BANQUET.</i>	X				
BLURB IN EVENT PROGRAM <i>SPONSORS WILL BE PROVIDED A PAGE TO PROMOTE THEIR COMPANY ON THE EVENT PROGRAM.</i>	X	X			
SSBC NATIONALS LINKEDIN GROUP ACCESS <i>COMPANY REPS WILL BE INVITED TO CONNECT WITH PARTICIPANTS THROUGH THE LINKEDIN PLATFORM.</i>	X	X	X		
SPONSOR TABLE AT AESTHETICS EVENT <i>COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE INVITED TO TABLE AT AESTHETICS COMPETITION.</i>	X	X	X	X	
VERBAL RECOGNITION AT BANQUET <i>SPONSORS WILL BE RECOGNIZED ON STAGE AT SATURDAY'S AWARDS BANQUET.</i>	X	X	X	X	X
COLLECTION OF COMPETITORS' RESUMES <i>COMPANIES WILL BE PROVIDED ACCESS TO PARTICIPANTS' RESUMES.</i>	X	X	X	X	
SPONSOR LOGO ON PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL* <i>COMPANY LOGOS WILL BE DISPLAYED ON COMPETITORS' T-SHIRTS, BANNERS AT THE WHOLE COMPETITION, ETC.</i>	LARGE LOGO	MEDIUM LOGO	SMALL LOGO		
SPONSOR LOGO ON EVENT WEBSITE & PROGRAM* <i>ALL SPONSORS WILL BE RECOGNIZED ON THE COMPETITION WEBSITE.</i>	LARGE LOGO	MEDIUM LOGO	SMALL LOGO	NAME	NAME
COMPLIMENTARY BANQUET TICKETS <i>COMPANIES WILL BE PROVIDED COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS TO ATTEND THE AWARDS BANQUET.</i>	4	2	2		

*PLEASE SEND COMPANY LOGOS TO MATTHEWS@LATECH.EDU

LSU STUDENT CHAPTER

By Brennan Smith, President Student Chapter

ASCE's LSU chapter has gone through many changes this last year. My name is Brennan Smith, current president of the ASCE LSU student chapter. We have given an overhaul to how we recruit, the ASCE competition teams, and the scheduled events that benefit our members academically.

First, our recruiting process, which includes classes we give recruiting presentations to now includes, surveying, dynamics, and statics courses in addition to our normal freshman intro to civil engineering. Due to the high turnout of undergraduates, we have improved our club meeting attendance by at least 40%. Our hope to have 35 people on average in our general meetings for the rest of the semester. We had 56 in attendance for our first meeting and 32 in our February 8, 2024, meeting. The ASCE Student Chapter hopes to further improve this by attending club recruitment fairs for welcome week to recruit next year's freshman at a higher rate. We also attended LSU's involvement fair in order to present our ASCE Student chapter.

For the ASCE competitions teams, we hope to surpass our results compared to past years. The new teams we created are a sustainable solutions team, a prestressed concrete beam team, a geowall competition team, and a hydrology team to compete for the gulf coast student symposium this year. It is our hope that our canoe

bridge and surveying teams can build on the momentum from last year. Our survey team received 1st place on field tasks in regionals and 6th place in field tasks in nationals, and our canoe team received 1st place in its presentation and 2nd place to LA Tech in our proposal; however, since our prototype received last place, we ended with 7th place in regionals overall. We will be participating at a much higher level than last year, so we hope to place in the top four overall in our regional competition.

Concerning ASCE Student Chapter events outside of meetings, we are planning on participating in group activities in for team building skills. This semester's team building will be at the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank on March 2, 2024, which will afford our members and officers time to get know each other more. We are also planning on having an FE study session April 18, 2024. Since we are all new officers, it will be the fall semester before additional career fairs and other volunteer opportunities will be sought. The ASCE LSU Student Chapter will contact civil engineering firms to solicit internships for our members. Our general meetings are being geared toward freshman and sophomores. In addition, we have also promoted other civil engineering clubs such as ITE and TLC for those who are interested in transportation. We appreciate the reciprocal participation of these two engineering clubs.

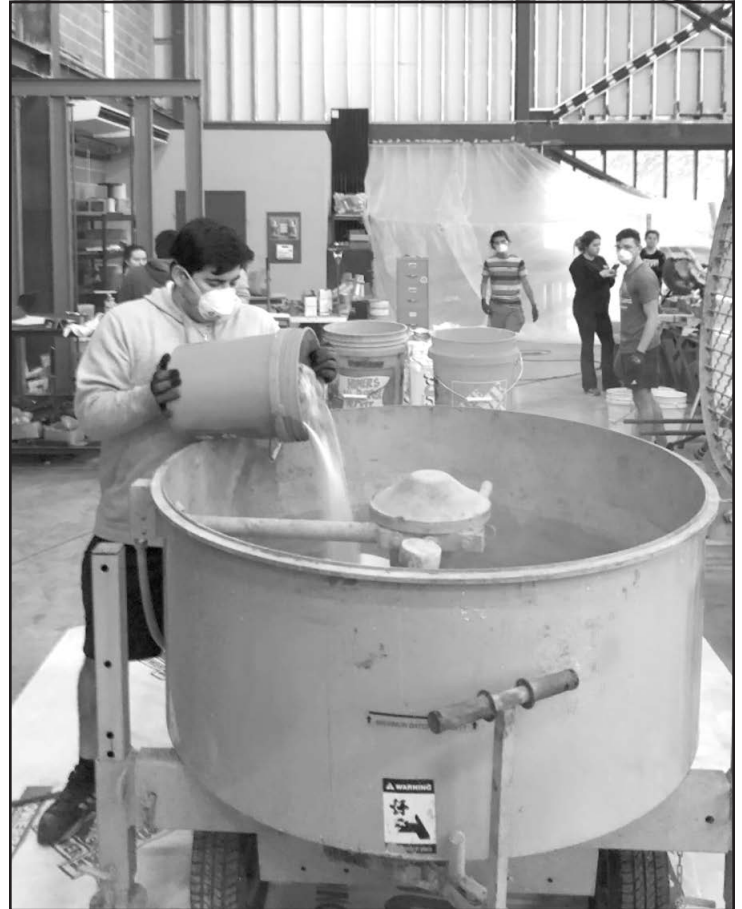
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

By Claire Orgeron, UL Public Relations Chair Student Chapter

With Gulf Coast being a month away, our chapter is continuing preparation as deadlines begin to quickly approach. Recently, we just had Pour Day where all hands were on deck as our members helped the concrete canoe team place the mix onto the mold. The canoe will be ready to be demolded within the next few weeks and hopefully will be ready to race at competition next month! Our steel bridge team and surveying team are also working hard to ensure that they will be ready for competition as well.

This month a group of our students will also be attending Bamboo Weekend at Avery Island. This is a community service event where we will help the American Bamboo Society clear out any debris or unhealthy stalks to allow the groves thrive and flourish as intended. This will also allow our members to gain insight on the versatility of bamboo and its potential use as a structural material.

Amongst many other things this semester, we also have a few fundraisers being organized. One of them will be Mom's Spaghetti which will soon be selling presales. This will help raise money for our expenses to attend Gulf Cost. Next month, our engineering department will be hosting Engineering and Technology week. High school students will be touring our campus and will be exposed to everything engineering has to offer. With this, our members will be actively involved with participating in the mystery design competition, quiz bowl, and showcasing our departmental projects and facilities. Our students are feeling the pressure for the responsibilities of this semester. However, we are excited to see what will unfold for our chapter!



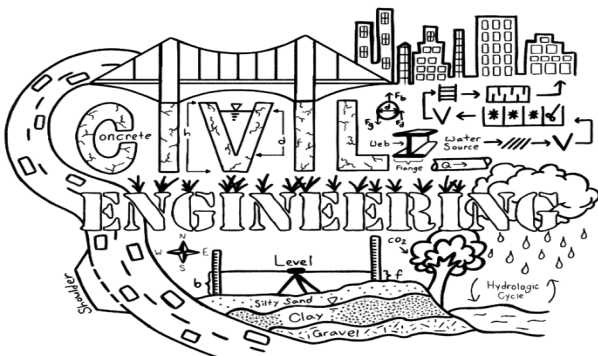
Pouring the aggregates into the equipment to prepare for mixing Z



Placing the concrete onto the mold



Measuring the aggregates for the determined mix design of the concrete canoe



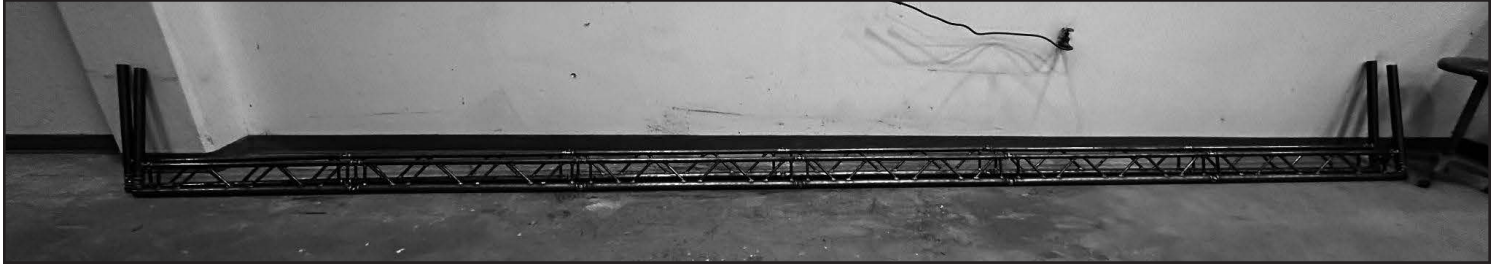
This year's t-shirt design with credits going to our member, Claire Orgeron

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

By Lizbett Sanchez, ASCE Recording Secretary

Goodbye 2023, Hello 2024. 2024 will be a fascinating year for the ASCE community, especially for the UNO community. This year UNO will be hosting the Gulf Coast Student Symposium which is very exciting but also overwhelming because everyone is making sure that everything is set and ready for the Symposium, which is just a month away. This being said, our Concrete Canoe and Steel Bridge teams are finishing up their last preparations. They are working extremely hard to make sure that everything comes out perfectly.

Our first General Body Meeting of the semester was held on Thursday, January 25th. We started by giving a brief update on everything going on through the chapter. Also, if you are taking part in the Symposium PLEASE make sure that you filled out the Individual Registration. You can do so by typing ASCE Student Symposium 2024 UNO and the form should be available under Registration. We hope to see everyone there!!!





Gulf Coast Student Symposium, March 7-9, 2024
University of New Orleans - New Orleans, LA



The 2024 Gulf Coast ASCE Student Symposium will be an extraordinary fusion of traditional heritage and cutting-edge innovation. By supporting this event, you will empower 350 civil engineering students to embark on a journey of professional and personal development. UNO will host this amazing event for 15 universities from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The weekend will be packed with innovative engineering competitions and opportunities to learn more about the engineering industry, all culminating in an awards ceremony and *Fair Do Do @ UNO*

If you are interested in becoming one of our sponsors for the 2024 Student Symposium, please check out the sponsorship packages that our host team has assembled to determine which one is right for your organization. To receive details about our sponsorship packages, email us at gcss@uno.edu.



Or for individual support, visit our crowdfunding page.
<https://fundraise.givesmart.com/vf/UNOBUILDS>



— CALENDAR OF EVENTS —

2024

Let us know about your upcoming ASCE events to be featured here.

Email: nedrahains@gmail.com

Events are constantly being updated online:

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https://www.asce.org/conferences_events/
https://www.asce.org/student_conferences/

For ASCE Acadian events please see online:
<http://branches.asce.org/acadiana/events>

For ASCE Baton Rouge events please see online:
<http://branches.asce.org/baton-rouge/events>

For ASCE NOLA events please see online:
<http://asceneworleans.org/events/>

For ASCE Shreveport events please see online:
<https://www.facebook.com/ASCEShreveport/>

For more events visit the ASCE Events Calendar: <http://www.lasce.org/calendar.html>

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