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CHATTIN WITH CHAS WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings fellow engineers,

This is Chas Webb, President of the Eastern Branch. I am a stormwater engineer for the City of Raleigh. I'm thrilled to present our first recent newsletter for the Eastern Branch. I'm excited that during these uncertain times, that the Board has created a way to reach out to our membership. When 2020 began, nobody could have anticipated the pandemic that would change our lives forever. When we entered 2020, the Eastern Branch was conducting meetings as it always had for its membership. This allowed you to earn Professional Development Hours and network with other engineers. Then in March everything changed. I want to commend the 2020 Board for acting fast and appropriately in response to the pandemic. As a result of quick and safe decision making, we became one of the first branches in the region to offer virtual meetings, thus allowing our members to obtain Professional Development Hours. I know that we will continue that pattern of excellence in 2021 because this Board is very much the same as the 2020 Board.

We are comprised of dedicated volunteers that are working to make sure you are maximizing your benefits with ASCE.

Even during a pandemic, the Eastern Branch has been doing great things. The first thing that I want to call attention to was the Annual Golf Tournament hosted a couple of months ago. Because of everyone involved, we were able to raise over \$4,000 for the NC Section Scholarship Fund. That money will go a long way to helping a young civil engineer fulfill their potential. I commend Keith Rines for leading that tournament, especially during a pandemic. I also would like to thank everyone who participated and volunteered. We could not have made this donation without you.

The next item I want to bring to your attention is the Eastern Branch Mentor Program. This was a program that began in August and ended in November. You can find out more information about the Mentor Program on the next page of this newsletter.

I want to conclude my introduction by telling the membership that you can always reach out

Are you suffering from Zoom fatigue?

Civil engineers are lucky in that our industry hasn't taken a hit, when compared other industries as a result of the pandemic.

Thanks to technology we can still send out plans, communicate with clients and hold meetings.

As you know, the meetings must be virtual as way to keep people safe. For the last ten months people have been conducting meetings online with platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. It's lead to a term called, 'Zoom fatigue.'

So how do you combat Zoom fatigue?

The first is to consider sending a lengthy e-mail instead of scheduling a meeting. While most people may not like a lengthy e-mail, consider the fact that many people are a little fatigued by virtual meetings.

The second thing you can do is use applications that allow for instant messaging. This gives you the opportunity to communicate quickly.

Next you can choose to not attend a meeting. When responding consider if it's crucial for you attend.

Finally, you can do what our parents and grandparents used to do. Pick up the phone and make a call.



Participants from the program gather on Glenwood South.

The 2020 Eastern Branch Mentor Program concluded in November. It featured 16 mentors and 21 mentees. The mentees were students or recent graduates from NCSU or Duke University in civil or environmental engineering.

For three months, engineers and other working professionals gave their wisdom, reviewed resumes and conducted mock interviews for their mentees.

The program started in July when a kickoff meeting was held with many engineers and students. From there the mentors and mentees were paired with each other. The mentors and mentees began communicating with each other in August.

Overall the program was a success with mentors and mentees both saying how they enjoyed the program.

Wayne Miles with the City of Raleigh was the mentor for Elena Waechter from Duke University. Wayne said, "I've very much enjoyed our conversations and found Elena to be a bright, energetic and thoughtful engineer. I have no doubts that her leadership skills will take her far.

"The resiliency of the mentors and mentees showed during this program."

The mentees also had a positive experience with the program. Milo Petropoulos with NCSU said, "[This program] was definitely beneficial, especially given the state of things during the pandemic."

Like many things in 2020 Covid-19 presented challenges for the program.

TAKING A LOOK

THE 2020 EASTERN BRANCH MENTOR PROGRAM

But we all know that civil engineers are resilient. The resiliency of the mentors and mentees showed during this program.

"I was very impressed with how well the mentors and mentees did in this program. I'm particularly impressed with how well the mentees adjusted. Covid-19 has been incredibly tough on everyone. But students have faced major adjustments because of the virus. What I saw was the mentees in this program took everything in stride. I'm extremely proud of them."
-Chas Webb, Eastern Branch President

There are plans to continue to the program. The program will likely be held in the Fall of 2021. If you are interested in participating in the program, then be sure to watch for announcements starting in the late Spring of 2021.



NORTH CAROLINA SECTION
EASTERN BRANCH

Looking Back on 2020 A Year to be Remembered

2020 will be a year that nobody will forget. For the Eastern Branch that is true as well. Like every other person and organization, we had to adapt, and we had to adapt quickly. As the virus turned how we lived upside down, civil engineers did what they do best - adjust to change and have a backup plan.

February was the last in-person meeting we had. There James Neihoff gave a presentation about geotechnical lessons learned. Nobody in that meeting predicted that at least a year would go by without another in-person meeting.

As the virus continued to spread and more organizations were cancelling in-person events, the Eastern Branch followed suit by cancelling the March meeting. It was the first time in recent history that there was no March meeting. It was also the first time that a meeting had to be cancelled because of a pandemic.

April was the first time a virtual meeting was held for the Eastern Branch. Joe Milazzo gave an update on triangle mobility. Following Joe, a number of diverse speakers followed.

Speakers such as Dean Arp from the N.C. Legislature and Taruna Tayal from the Women Transportation Seminar, gave presentations over Zoom. In total 8 virtual presentation were hosted in 2020. This allowed our membership to earn 8 professional development hours amidst a pandemic.

As we look forward to 2021, we are hopeful some type of normalcy will happen. That said, we shall remain thankful for the opportunities to at least hold virtual meetings in 2020. Thank you to our members and 2020 speakers.

Speaker Spotlight – Hugh Scott IV

Our November Speaker was Hugh Scott IV. Hugh Talks About Growth.

Hugh Scott gave us some very valuable wisdom on how to grow as an employee and person during our November meeting. Hugh says in a LinkedIn post, "Your emotions are directly tied to your mindset. A positive emotion = An aligned mindset and a negative emotion such as doubt, is a symptom of mindset misalignment. The type of mindset you have is a decision. If you are excited to make mistakes, to try new

things, to receive criticism, to support the achievements of others with no expectation of receiving support in return, and to be in uncomfortable situations, then you are in "Growth" mode. You do not care what others think of you, you are your biggest cheerleader and each day you challenge yourself for more growth. Your personal growth or Any growth for that matter will not happen by chance. It will only by change." – Hugh Scott IV



EYE ON IT

What's going on with National?

ASCE recently released a report called *Failure to Act: Closing the Infrastructure Investment Gap for America's Economic Future*.

"This quantifies how the persistent failure to invest in our aging infrastructure impacts the economy, including GDP, jobs, personal disposable income and business sales."

For more information please visit asce.org/failuretoact



Did you know that ASCE recently approved a new Code of Ethics? It was the first time since 1974 that the code of ethics was revised. The revisions take into account the changing world that we are currently living in. For more information on the revision to the Code of Ethics, please visit ASCE.org and search 'Code of Ethics' in the search bar.



DO YOU
HAVE AN
IDEA OR
WANT TO
GET
INVOLVED?

WE LOVE HEARING FROM
OUR MEMBERS. PLEASE
VISIT ASCENC.ORG OR
CONTACT ANY OF OUR
OFFICERS.

Upcoming Events

- **January Meeting**

The first meeting of the year will take place virtually. Please visit our website for more details.

- **2021 Legislative Fly-In**

The National Fly-In is schedule for March 3rd to the 4th. ASCE is monitoring the event and will follow CDC guidelines. For more information visit ASCE.ORG

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We're now on LinkedIn! Find us by searching ASCE Eastern Branch. There you will get weekly updates with what is on with the Eastern Branch.

Eastern E-News was designed and created by Chas Webb. Chas is currently a stormwater engineer for the City of Raleigh.