

*"It's in the nature of the human being to face challenges. ...
We're required to do these things just as salmon swim upstream."*

– Neil Armstrong

From the Executive Director

Thomas W. Smith III
ENV SP, CAE, F.ASCE



Dear Members,

The concept of “smart cities” and what it will take to make them happen is clearly gaining traction as the number of activities I’ve taken part in on the subject has grown. From an ASCE and civil engineering perspective, smart cities include elements of all of our current priorities: infrastructure investment, sustainability, our Grand Challenge pursuit of innovation, enhanced educational requirements and more.

ASCE saw the trend and got ahead of it last year by forming an alliance with Smart City Works, a civil engineering-focused business accelerator, to collaborate on ways to bring innovative technologies

and civil engineering projects to market. Now the collaboration is beginning to bear fruit.

I spoke at a ribbon-cutting at the nonprofit Center for Innovative Technology in Herndon, VA, to open **Smart City Works’ first Infrastructure Actuator**, where startups with cutting-edge ideas will get help to achieve their potential. The inaugural cohort of six companies are engaged in a 90-day boot camp. There’s so much promise behind the actuator and the urban innovations it could spawn that the opening attracted Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, who also addressed the attendees regarding the importance of smart cities and innovative infrastructure.

For a recent edition of [ASCE Interchange](#), Smart City Works co-founder, Gregory Sauter, P.E., M.ASCE, shared how a business accelerator can take an innovative idea and make it a success.

Inside this edition

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- Industry leaders explore how to drive the ASCE Grand Challenge mission
- *2017 Infrastructure Report Card* continues to generate buzz

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Dates to know

May

All month ASCE officers election

June

1 Submissions due for Outstanding Section and Branch Web Awards

Smart cities of the future won't be very smart if they don't take cybersecurity seriously. I joined Northern Virginia business leaders and Gov. McAuliffe at Virginia Tech's Hume Center for National Security and Technology for a **roundtable discussion on cybersecurity** and how smart cities can take on the threats to digital systems. Both smart cities events afforded me the opportunity to discuss ASCE's *2017 Infrastructure Report Card*, including specific solutions to our nation's infrastructure challenges.

An impressive 1,360 attendees made their way to Denver for the **2017 Structures Congress**, featuring a rich program of sessions and events. I enjoyed sharing career perspectives with students and younger engineers at a Meet the Leaders breakfast, joined by ASCE 2017 President Norma Jean Mattei and many other leaders of the structural engineering profession.

Structures 2017 was the setting for a formal discussion among civil engineering leaders and experts on how the **ASCE Grand Challenge** can drive a shift in the industry to performance based standards where appropriate. The high-powered roundtable of 13 was moderated by Industry Leaders Council Chair Terry Neimeyer and included Distinguished Members Dan Frangopol, Ph.D., P.E., Dist.M.ASCE, and Pat Natale, P.E., Dist.M.ASCE. A second roundtable, set for May at Mott MacDonald in New Jersey, will delve into how the [Grand Challenge](#) can help enhance life-cycle cost analysis approaches and processes, and encourage their adoption.

Structures 2017 also will be remembered for an evening reception that a member made possible, to benefit the SEI Futures Fund and SEI's Vision for the Future of Structural Engineering. Sponsor Ashraf Habibullah, P.E., M.ASCE, president and CEO of Computers & Structures, Inc. of California, made his appearance wearing a literally flashy suit covered in LEDs. Habibullah's enthusiasm couldn't be missed among the 500 who enjoyed the good time for a good cause.

This year's **NAE-AAES Convocation** in Washington, DC, at the National Academy of Engineering explored themes also relevant to smart cities – the expanding applications of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems in engineering, along with the resultant opportunities, challenges, and unseen consequences. One fascinating panel session explored the potential ethical quandaries of AI in autonomous vehicles. For example, which way should a self-driving car swerve in a no-win scenario?

Norma Jean Mattei and I enjoyed mingling at the AAES Awards Banquet with our fellow American Association of Engineering Societies leaders. Norma Jean had the honor of presenting ASCE Distinguished Member Vilas Mujumdar, P.E., Dist.M.ASCE, with the Kenneth Andrew Roe Award, for leadership encouraging the holistic systems approach to natural hazard reduction and for representing U.S. engineers on the World Federation of Engineering Organizations.

The convocation's Engineering Public Policy Symposium was dominated by consideration of the early signs coming from the Trump Administration on science and engineering research, and cuts proposed in his fiscal 2018 budget.

Held alongside the convocation, the AAES General Assembly meeting picked up strategic planning discussions that began at last fall's assembly meetings. What are the common issues among the 17 member societies and which among them deserve AAES' focus? The answers remain works in progress. I will keep you apprised.

In just a year's time, the **50K Coalition** has made great progress toward its goal of graduating 50,000 engineers from underrepresented groups annually by 2025. The coalition held its second collective impact workshop at the National Press Club, building on the success of the first meeting a year ago at ASCE headquarters. The workshop brought together 83 leaders from the engineering community, deans of engineering, minority engineering and women in engineering administrators from 11 leading colleges of engineering, and corporate partners representing six global industries. As a trustee on the board of the United Engineering Foundation, I accepted an award on behalf of UEF for its support of the coalition.

Engineering News-Record's Award of Excellence Winner for 2017 is ASCE member Marc Edwards, the Virginia Tech civil and environmental engineering professor who gained national acclaim for sounding an alarm exposing the lead-tainted drinking water crisis in Flint, MI. Norma Jean Mattei and I were on hand at the annual ENR Newsmakers luncheon in New York to join in the ovation for Edwards as he received his well-deserved award.

Our new *2017 Infrastructure Report Card* continues to generate buzz. The **American Society of Landscape Architects** invited me to their mid-year meeting to take part in a panel discussion on the state of infrastructure investment. The **Americans for Transportation Mobility**, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce-led coalition that ASCE is a part of, [interviewed me](#) to discuss the Report Card findings and what they may mean for infrastructure investment. And major power outages in San Francisco and New York were reported in the context of the Report Card's D+ grade for the nation's power grid, as in [NBC Nightly News coverage](#) that included an interview with ASCE Senior Managing Director Casey Dinges. I'll talk more about Infrastructure Week and related activities in my next newsletter, but as a preview, watch presentations at the kickoff event [by President Mattei](#), and [by me](#).

Last year, we forged the **ASCE staff values** of teamwork, trust, excellence, honesty, respect, communications, integrity, and accountability, with a goal of working together better to enhance the services we provide members. This year, we're reinforcing the values. At our latest all-hands meeting, we enjoyed a staff-produced video of fictional scenarios that ran afoul of the values as a fun teaching and reminder tool for staff.

Our staff values were reflected in our annual adopt-a-highway cleanup, where we turned out to pick up debris along a stretch of South Lakes Drive near our Reston, VA, headquarters.

Congratulations to ...

... **LeAnne Napolillo, president of the Construction Institute**, for being featured on the cover of the April 14 *Houston Business Journal*. The magazine profiled Napolillo, P.E., F.ASCE, an associate vice president at HNTB, for her work as project manager of the massive U.S. Route 290 corridor expansion that will better serve Houston and its northwestern suburbs when completed next year.

If you've read this far, I know you care about ASCE and its future. If you have yet to vote in the election for 2018 president-elect, Region officers and Technical Region Director, please [get to know the nominees](#) then [cast your ballot](#). All you need is your online ASCE member login. Thanks .

Until next time,



Section Informant

Make the most of your ASCE group's social media presence

When it comes to social media, experiences differ. You might be excited by social media's potential to attract interest in your Section, Branch, Younger Member Group, or Student Chapter, or you may have waded into the social media waters and come away frustrated and disappointed. How can you make more strategic, effective social media choices? In a recent webinar with local leaders, ASCE social media manager Elizabeth Kekeris shared insights. [See and hear the archived webinar](#) and gain from Kekeris' advice.

Encourage your members to vote in ASCE's national election

Reach out to your members and urge them to cast their online ballots in the ASCE election for 2018 officers. The 2018 President-elect, who advances to 2019 President, will be decided between Kancheepuram (Guna) N. Gunalan, Ph.D., P.E., D.GE., F.ASCE, and Robin A. Kemper, P.E., LEED AP, F.SEI, F.ASCE. Region Governors are also to be decided, and in some Regions, Directors who will serve on the ASCE Board. [Here's who is running](#).

An ASCE constitutional amendment is also on the ballot, asking members to increase technical representation on ASCE's Board of Direction. The draft amendment would give the third Technical Region Director a voting seat at the table, increasing the size of the Board to 18 members.

Let members know that it's easier than ever to vote. Only a standard online login is needed to access members' ballots at asce.org/VoteNow.

The convenient new ASCE 7 online is coming this summer

Fully updated, the new ASCE 7, Minimum Design Loads and Associated Criteria for Buildings and Other Structures, will feature two new ways to get the most out of the essential standard. ASCE 7-16 will be released [in print in June](#), then later this summer as an easy-access digital reference, [ASCE 7 Online](#), joined by a new [ASCE 7 Hazard Tool](#) that easily calculates design parameters. [Preview the changes in ASCE 7-16](#).

ASCE Library offering limited-time free collections of papers and journals

Gain some free background knowledge in a variety of specialties courtesy of the newly updated [ASCE Library](#). Among the offerings in the [full collection](#):

- **60th Anniversary of Flagship Journals**, free through Dec. 31
- **Concrete Canoe**, free through June 17
- **Geotechnical Frontiers**, free through June 30
- **Structures Congress**, free through July 31
- **Tsunami Loads and Effects**, free through Aug. 31

Which networking events should you attend? Ask Anthony for advice

Engineering career adviser and professional engineer Anthony Fasano offers tips on how to choose the right networking events to make the best use of your time and not sacrifice the

event benefits to a busy schedule. Check out his [Ask Anthony post](#) at *ASCE News*.

ASCE Foundation releases 2016 annual report

The ASCE Foundation thanks the donors in the U.S. and across the globe who helped make change possible last year. The Foundation's 2016 Annual Report highlights the programs and events that gifts to the Foundation aided. [Read the report](#).

Ask Counselor Tara

How can I be sure our emails are compliant with the CAN-SPAM Act?

Each month ASCE's General Counsel Tara Hoke responds to legal questions posed by Sections and Branches. [Send Tara an email](#) with your question.

Question: When you send marketing, promotional, or other commercial emails to members of your Section, Branch, or other entity, the emails must comply with the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003. How can I be sure our email complies with the CAN-SPAM Act? [Read Tara's response](#).

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À.....**Board Updates for All Leaders.**