

"The road to success is always under construction."

– Lily Tomlin

## From the Executive Director

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



Dear Colleagues,

Yes, the Dream is real.

After more than 10 years from visionary glimmer to reality, ASCE's giant-screen film ***Dream Big: Engineering Our World*** had its world premiere on Feb. 15 at the Smithsonian's National Air & Space Museum in Washington, DC, then opened to wider release at museum theaters across North America on Feb. 17.

How can you put into words what you need to see – and feel – to believe? Take the visual spectacle of some of the world's greatest infrastructure works, combine that with stories of engineers who work to make the world a better place for everyone, and display it all on a giant screen in digital 3D IMAX resolution – you must see it to know why you will feel such pride – and goosebumps!

The world premiere gala was [unlike any evening](#) in ASCE's 165 years. *Dream Big* is presented by Bechtel Corporation through their generous support and produced by Academy Award-winning IMAX documentarians MacGillivray Freeman Films, in partnership with ASCE. Thus, at an Air & Space Museum we had to ourselves, we were joined by friends from Bechtel and the film's producers, among them director Greg MacGillivray and the CEO of Bechtel Group Inc. Brendan Bechtel, along with his parents. His grandfather, Stephen D. Bechtel Jr., backed *Dream Big* from its outset. Also with us were two ASCE members who were featured "stars" of *Dream Big*, Avery Bang and Menzer Pehlivan. See their reactions to the movie on premiere night, and the enthusiasm of 2017 President Norma Jean Mattei and

### Inside this edition

- *Dream Big* engineering movie premieres to wide acclaim
- Busy Engineers Week of activities ties into movie as theme
- Executive Committee approves ASCE resolutions on current issues
- Ruling upholds copyright on standards incorporated into law
- Watch for release of 2017 *Infrastructure Report Card* on Thursday

### Section Informant

- Plan a group outreach event around *Dream Big*
- Contribute to ASCE's update of the *Civil Engineering Body of Knowledge*
- Ask Counselor Tara: Avoiding legal dangers in letters of intent

### Dates to know

#### March

- 9 2017 *Report Card for America's Infrastructure* released
- 14-15 Legislative Fly-In, Washington, DC
- 16 OPAL Gala

#### April

- 22 Earth Day

President-Elect Kristina Swallow, in [video interviews](#) by our communications and social media staff that were streamed live to Facebook.



*Photo: Jason Dixon Photography for ASCE*

Joining us to toast the premiere was Past President Mark Woodson, fourth from right.

Once you see the movie ([here's where it's playing](#)), you'll also see why it should become one of the cornerstones of your youth outreach efforts for years to come. See this month's Section Informant below for more on resources available to you and your local ASCE group.

*Dream Big* would not have happened without the extraordinary efforts and guiding vision for it supplied over many years by Director of Communications Jane Howell Lombardi and ASCE Foundation Executive Vice President Christine Williams. Each deserves our gratitude. I would also like to thank Pat Natale, who passionately promoted the film as ASCE's former Executive Director, and the many ASCE members who volunteered their time to develop and promote the film and supporting educational materials.

The premiere was timed to dovetail with **Engineers Week 2017**, with ASCE and Bechtel as co-chairs for DiscoverE this year. Appropriately, "Engineers Dream Big" was the week's official theme, carried through to materials provided for outreach activities. Among them:

- The week began unofficially on the lead-in Saturday with the annual **Family Day** at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. Behind the Dream Big theme, [we had a great time interacting with kids](#) and their parents. Engineers from the film, Tyler Welsh and Menzer Pehlivan; President-Elect Kristina Swallow; leaders and members of the National Capital Section; ASCE staff; and other volunteers from Bechtel made the day exciting and inspiring.
- The **Future City** competition attracted some of the nation's brightest middle-school students to Washington, DC, for its finals, where Norma Jean and I were among the judges [impressed by what we saw](#). Many ASCE members serve as team mentors or regional coordinators. The winning city from West Ridge Middle School in Austin, TX, "Sociocity," featured an array of public spaces.
- The **National Academy of Engineering** held its annual awards gala in the nation's capital, where Norma Jean, Jane Howell Lombardi, and I represented ASCE, joined at our table by friends from Bechtel. We applauded the recipients of the Russ Prize, a team of medical engineers who invented a 3D imaging technology for the human eye that prevents blindness by catching diseases earlier.

- ASCE headquarters shared in the enthusiasm, starting with an all-hands celebration of the 22 engineers among our colleagues (photo above), and including a special screening of *Dream Big* for all staff at the National Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy annex at Dulles Airport.

A packed month began with the last of our 2017 **Multi-Region Leadership Conferences** in Minneapolis. I had a good time with our local group leaders from across the nation's midsection in Regions 3, 6, and 7. Members went through intensive training, gaining valuable leadership skills to take back home to their Sections, Branches, Younger Member Groups, and Student Chapters. As at the other MRLCs, members met and asked questions of 2018 President-Elect nominees Kancheepuram N. "Guna" Gunalan and Robin A. Kemper at a town hall forum, and enjoyed a sneak peek of a [preview cut of \*Dream Big\*](#) at a hip, classic movie theater near the University of Minnesota campus.



Kudos to the Leadership Training Committee, to members of the Industry Leaders Council and other Society leaders who led sessions, and to everyone on our staff who contributed to making the three 2017 MRLCs a success. Nearly 1,000 current and rising leaders [took part](#).

While many of us were in Minneapolis, we convened a special session of the Executive Committee to adopt a pair of **Society resolutions** that address recent concerns about the direction and effect of potential federal government actions on science and engineering research, and the ability of talented individuals with visas to travel to the United States. These resolutions reflect civil engineers' responsibility as global leaders to speak publicly on issues of importance to the profession. Resolution 550 urges the continued free, "unfettered" flow of federally funded research. Resolution 551 urges sensible solutions to ensuring our national security while permitting visa-holders to enter the country.

At its scheduled February meeting, the Executive Committee approved a memorandum of understanding with the British-based **Chartered Association of Building Engineers**, granting members of ASCE and CABE certain reciprocal rights and privileges. [CABE](#), which represents professionals specializing in building design, construction, evaluation, and maintenance, received an official Royal Charter in 2013, and was known prior as the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors, founded in 1925.

The **ASCE Foundation** has finalized its 10-member Council of Trustees. These Society members have volunteered to serve as ambassadors of the Foundation, working within their Regions to promote a culture of philanthropy at the Section and Branch level to support the Foundation. After attending the Foundation Board's meeting, the trustees will hold their first

meeting to start planning what will be involved in their grassroots outreach and stewardship.

During its meeting the Foundation Board also discussed potential new strategies for fundraising. Look no further than the Foundation Board, Trustees and staff, and the ASCE Board for inspiration – we can say with pride that every member has donated to the Foundation.

Planning has begun on a video intended to explain the ASCE Grand Challenge. The guiding force of our strategic initiative, our **Industry Leaders Council**, met recently in New York where I took part in a discussion on content and production.

Since its launch in September 2015, our **Utility Engineering and Surveying Institute** has enjoyed early success serving members who specialize in utility and pipelines engineering and surveying. I sat in on a [UESI](#) Board of Governors meeting focused on exploring ways to grow further.

A recent ruling by a federal court has **upheld the copyright status of technical standards** as developed by ASCE and other groups, even after they have been incorporated into public law. One of ASCE's most important activities is development and dissemination of voluntary technical standards. Many federal and state agencies seek to ease the burden of rulemaking in such specialized areas as engineering by issuing regulations that legally mandate compliance with standards, including ASCE's – a process called "incorporation by reference." In its ruling the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia decided that determining access to standards incorporated into laws was the purview of Congress. The court noted that, while federal law expressly requires that incorporated standards must be "reasonably available," this law does not specify that such access must eviscerate copyrights.

As we continue our efforts at expanding our reach internationally, we're but one of many professional associations also pursuing global strategies. I sit on the **American Society of Association Executives'** Key Global Associations Committee, a group of more than two dozen CEOs of U.S.-based associations with significant global operations. We meet periodically to discuss the varying degrees of progress each of our societies are making, the key issues and challenges we face, and to share inspiring successful practices. We found that many of us are experiencing the same good news-bad news scenario – seeing and enjoying expanded activity abroad, but finding it challenging to develop a long term financial model that balances the different value equation and often times lower salaries and standards of living of many nations.

ASCE is among the groups belonging to the **Americans for Transportation Mobility**, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce-led coalition encouraging transportation infrastructure investment. Its Coalition Management Committee, which I serve on, met recently to discuss strategies for advancing our interests in Congress and with the new administration.

The **International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association** invited me to assist in a leadership development program for senior leaders in the tolling industry. As a panel speaker, I shared insights on the future of transportation.

Norma Jean and I represented ASCE at the annual awards dinner of **The Moles**, the New York-based society of professionals focused on heavy construction projects, where we joined in the celebration for an ASCE Distinguished Member who received The Moles' highest honor. Francis J. Lombardi, P.E., Dist.M.ASCE, former chief engineer of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, received the Outstanding Achievement in Construction award. A past member of our Industry Leaders Council, Lombardi was presented the award by Peter

Zipf, his successor as chief engineer as well as on the ILC. New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan was the main speaker, and with his typical good humor accepted a special "Holy Moley" award from the society.

An online magazine, **We Build Value**, published by Salini Impregilo S.p.A., an Italian global engineering firm, interviewed me recently for some perspective on the state of U.S. infrastructure and President Trump's pledge to invest \$1 trillion. You can [read what I had to say](#).

You've heard me praise our **staff mentoring program**. Well, it's now begun a fourth year of colleagues sharing and learning, seeking to grow and improve, for themselves and for ASCE. We just kicked off this round with a luncheon.

Our **Bechtel Conference Center** recently underwent a major technology overhaul, overseen by our IT department, and can now provide cutting-edge communications for events. This tremendous upgrade opens the door to hosting more meetings and activities at the center. You're encouraged to hold your events here!

We have welcomed a new tenant to our building. **PVBS**, a provider of Microsoft accounting software to government contractors, has moved from another location in Reston into some of the space formerly occupied by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

We're living through one of the most extraordinary periods in ASCE history. As if Dream Big weren't big enough, we're about to debut the **new edition** of what the public knows us best for – the **Infrastructure Report Card**. The new *Report Card* will be issued Thursday, March 9 at a Washington, DC, release event and at [infrastructurereportcard.org](http://infrastructurereportcard.org). We'll release the grades and investment needs in all 16 categories, plus hear from special guests who'll also urge greater infrastructure investment. The event will be [streamed live](#) beginning at 9.30 a.m. ET via the *Report Card* website. I hope you'll join us for an event that I know will create news.

### Congratulations to ...

... **Patricia Galloway, Ph.D., P.E., Pres.04.ASCE**, who was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of Granite Construction, Inc. I would also like to recognize a few other former ASCE Presidents who are currently leading allied not-for-profit organizations, including **Greg DiLoreto, P.E., Pres.13.ASCE**, who is serving as Chair of the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure, Inc.; **Kathy Caldwell, P.E., Pres.11.ASCE**, who is serving as President of Engineers Without Borders USA; **Robert Stevens, Ph.D., P.E., Pres.15.ASCE**, who is serving as President of the United Engineering Foundation, Inc.; and **Dan Turner, Ph.D., P.E., Pres.99.ASCE**, who is serving as President of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying.

Until next time,



**Section Informant**

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## Inspire the next generation to be civil engineers – take them to see *Dream Big*

The film that transforms how the world sees engineering, *Dream Big: Engineering Our World*, is now screening at museum theaters around the country and in select theaters in Mexico and Canada. Now's the time to start planning how you'll excite kids from your local schools by inviting them to a screening.

See a [theater list](#) for an IMAX venue closest to you. Get answers to your questions, access to free volunteer resources and more at ASCE's [Dream Big page](#). Explore the educational potential of the movie further at [dreambigfilm.com/education](http://dreambigfilm.com/education).

## Contribute to updating the *Civil Engineering Body of Knowledge*

ASCE issued the original *Civil Engineering Body of Knowledge for the 21st Century* in 2004, outlining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for entering the practice of civil engineering at the professional level. The [second edition](#), known as BOK2, followed in 2008. Now, a task [committee has begun working](#) on an updated third edition to reflect today's needs.

All members are welcome to offer their expertise and perspectives to the committee. Encourage those in your local group to take part via an [online survey](#), or by serving as a corresponding member of the committee. Emails expressing an interest should be sent to ASCE's Leslie Nolen at [lnolen@asce.org](mailto:lnolen@asce.org).

## Latest ASCE Interchange video explores protecting our nation's power grid

U.S. electric power infrastructure is at greater risk than ever, largely due to aging and underfunded equipment and systems. Otto Lynch, F.SEI, F.ASCE, vice president of Springfield, Missouri-based Power Lines Systems Inc., offers his insights on the challenges facing the power grid in a new edition of the Society's video series ASCE Interchange. Lynch also explains why underground power systems are difficult and some of the barriers preventing a total conversion to sustainable sources. [See the interview](#) and forward it to fellow members and peers.

## Your members can earn rewards through ASCE's member referral program

For 2017, ASCE is making it easier for existing members in your local group to earn rewards for each new member they recruit. Encourage them to invite their peers to become part of the largest professional civil engineering network in the world. Rewards for successful referrals vary depending on residence. Discover how just by following three easy steps online, your members can start [claiming their rewards now](#).

## Have you and your members seen the new print ASCE News?

*ASCE News* has returned in print! It arrives in your mail with *Civil Engineering* magazine. Catch up on major Society activities, what members are doing at the local level, and where to find details online, all in a lively, quick read. If you don't receive the magazine or want a preview, view it online. [See February's ASCE News](#).

*ASCE News'* Local News section highlights activities in Sections, Branches, Younger Member Groups and Student Chapters. Want to see your group's news in it? [Use this simple form](#). Successful events and activities of any scope are welcome, from school outreach, fundraisers and infrastructure project site tours to a Toys for Tots drive. Copy content from your posts to social media, created for a newsletter or shared on your website. For questions, contact *ASCE News* editor [John Marston](#).

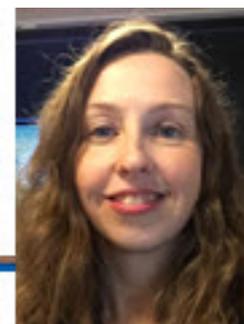
## Ask Counselor Tara: How can we avoid running afoul of the 'private benefit' limit on

## charitable activities?

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:** One of the most important restrictions on the activities of a public charity is that the charity's activities must not be "organized or operated for the benefit of private interests." What does an ASCE group need to do to avoid running afoul of this restriction? [Read Tara's response.](#)

Ask  
Counselor  
Tara



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