

THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HIGHWAY ENGINEERS, DELAWARE VALLEY SECTION

2023-24 EDITION #2



Meeting Schedule

Dinner Meetings

November 8
(second Wednesday)

January 17

February 21

March 20

April 17

Please see the article on Dinner Meetings on page 2 for more information on our planned program.

Technical Sessions

Technical Sessions will be scheduled throughout the season and will be conducted virtually. See page 2 for more information on this.

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President's Message

Heading into the fall season with the Thanksgiving holiday approaching, it is worthwhile to reflect on the year that is coming to an end and look forward to the goals of next year. As an industry such as ours, the Thanksgiving holiday is one that allows so many people in this country to utilize our country's infrastructure to see family, to move food and goods to local supermarkets for a large meal, and to move goods and services to help those in need. The work we do as a profession is essential and important to our country and around the world, and never more on display than during the times of year when so many are traveling.



With many parts of the world in conflict and too many cities in a state of ruins, there is a realization that rebuilding will be what comes out of these at some point for these communities to move forward. The civil engineering profession through designers, contractors, and agencies, builds the world around us. We are tasked with the responsibility to continue to build and improve civilization. Our expertise, knowledge, and innovation are an essential part of what is required to rebuild and improve infrastructure.

As we reflect on this past year, be mindful of those who may need extra help to rebuild and lend assistance within your means if you are able. For the work we are tasked with in our communities, be mindful of those who will be using and living with it daily as they strive to grow and improve their communities as well. As a Section, I encourage our members, and the great companies and agencies that make up our membership, to continue to improve the world around us in which we work and to help lift those who may need it by way of supporting our communities in addition to producing great projects.

Cheers,

Isaac Kessler, PE
President, ASHE Delaware Valley Section

Photos of the presentation teams for our September (US 1 Bucks County Sections, below) and October (Chestnut Street Bridges, right) meetings



2023-24 Delaware Valley Section Officers and Board of Directors

Our Section Officers and Directors are listed here. Please thank these individuals for their volunteer service in the administration and operation of our Section.

President

Isaac Kessler
Remington & Vernick
Engineers

First Vice President

Amber Midgley
AECOM

Second Vice President

Steve DiSciullo
BentleySystems

Treasurer

Matt Ward
TranSystems

Secretary

Kevin Rice
HNTB

Immediate Past President

Nate Parrish*
HNTB

Board of Directors

Term expires 2024
Elaine Elbich*
Pennsylvania Department of
Transportation

Alexa Egan Harper*
Gannett Fleming

Sarah McInnes
Pennsylvania Department of
Transportation

Kimberly Waters
JMT

Term expires 2025

Peter Berthold*
Pennsylvania Department of
Transportation

Bruce Masi*
Gannett Fleming

Sean Pence
Traffic Planning & Design

Juli Wolfe
RETTEW

Term expires 2026

Don Gusic
CDM Smith

Mariah Kerr
Traffic Planning & Design

Drew Sirianni*
Pennoni

Steve Windle
McMahon

Regional Director

John Caperilla*
CDR Maguire

Section Executive

Bob Wright*
McMahon

* Past Section President

Dinner Meetings – Continuing on Course, and Still Moving Around... !

Technical Sessions, Still Virtual...

Our first two meetings of the current season have been successful, informative, and well-attended. As we started the latter portion of last season, our 2023-24 season Dinner Meetings will be scheduled at one of two venues, the Crowne Plaza Philadelphia-Valley Forge Hotel and Maggiano's Little Italy, each in King of Prussia, with our November meeting slated for Maggiano's. As previously reported, ironically, a number of years ago, the Crowne Plaza, in its former branding as a Holiday Inn, was our "home base" for many years, thus in several ways this is a "coming home" for us.

The new venues have brought with them a better quality of meals and accommodations, along with the inevitable and unfortunate price increase effected in the latter part of last season, a combination of recent inflation and cost increases from providers that managed to creep up on us. We think you will agree that the noted factors on the quality of food and the ambience, amenities and atmosphere of the locations somewhat justify the higher cost, and we will continue to do what we can to get the maximum benefit for our meeting attendees at the optimal cost.

Technical Sessions will continue to be virtual events for this season. Six such Sessions were offered last season, and we are looking to schedule at least that many in 2023-24 with varying and interesting topics. They will continue to be scheduled, with different starting times (12 Noon or 4 PM), a format that has been popular and has worked successfully over the past three seasons. As always, they will continue to offer the important and valuable PDH benefit. Last season there were five Sessions scheduled, along with a sixth, joint with ASCE in July, and these events were able to offer a combined amount of over 700 PDH's to attendees.

More information will be provided on coming Technical Sessions in upcoming editions of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES as well as in separate Session flyers and e-mails. We hope you have been able to take advantage of these informative sessions. The first Technical Session of the current season was conducted on October 30 and covered Bridge Aesthetics for Workhorse Bridges and Historic Structures. One PDH will be available for those attending the session and successfully completing the PDH form.

Section Committees/ Chairs

If you have an interest in being part of any Committee this season, please contact Section President Isaac Kessler (information is provided on page 6).

ASHE/PennDOT

Breakfast Meeting
Alexa Egan Harper, Chair
Alex Eadline, Co-Chair

Auditing
Rob Prophet

Dinner Meetings
Steve Windle

Educational
Juli Wolfe

Environmental
Susan Giannantonio

Golf
Don Gusic

Hotel
Bob Wright

Membership
Mariah Kerr

Newsletter
Bob Wright

Nominating
Amber Midgley

Outreach
Steve DiSciullo

**Professional Society
Relations**
Elaine Elbich

Program
Kim Waters

Project of the Year
Alex Eadline

Scholarship
Bruce Masi

**Student and Young
Members**
Sean Pence

DVSP Program Sponsorship - Season 19 Starting Off

Our Section started the Delaware Valley Section Patron (DVSP) Program in the 2005-06 season to allow supporting firms to be recognized. As you may be aware, the proceeds of the DVSP are entirely dedicated to our Section's Scholarship Fund. For a single fee for the season, sponsoring firms are cited for their support with their logos displayed on our website and in each edition of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES. This also provides a "hot link" to access the firm's website directly from ours.

**DVSP benefits
(\$300 for the season)**

**Logo and Hotlink on
Section Website
(delvalley.ashe.pro)**

**Logo in THE
TRANSPORTATION TIMES**

As we kick off our 19th season of this program, there are 25 firms that have committed thus far. They are represented by their logos, shown on page 5 as well as on our website. **Many thanks to those of you who have participated in this program and helped support our Section! We very much appreciate your "service" as a DVSP participant.**

If you are not already a DVSP and would like to join or find out more about the program, please contact Bob Wright (information provided on page 6).

We are pleased to note that five DVSP participants - **AECOM, McCormick Taylor, McMahon, TPD and Urban Engineers** - have been sponsors for all 19 years of the Program. Thank you for your long-time support!

Section Awards - Nominations Coming Up...

The Delaware Valley Section is pleased to open nominations and being acceptance of applications for our **2024 Member of the Year and Young Member of the Year Awards**. These awards will recognize members for their contributions to the Highway Engineering profession within our Delaware Valley region. This will be the second season that these will be offered.

If you wish to nominate someone, please review the rules and criteria and complete the nomination form. This package has been previously e-mailed to all members separately and is available on our website.

ALL AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED AT OUR APRIL DINNER MEETING. It is encouraged and preferred that candidates are able to be present at our April meeting. Nominations must be received as a PDF electronically by 5:00 PM on **Friday, January 26, 2024**. Nominations should be e-mailed to the our Section's Nominating Committee Chair, Amber Midgley (Amber.Midgley@aecom.com).

Also, please be aware that nominations for our **2023 Project of the Year** competition will be available shortly.

Young Members Committee Happenings

This year's fall version of the Adopt-A-Highway cleanup, in conjunction with ASCE's Younger Member Forum, will take place on **Sunday, November 5**, on the groups' "co-adopted" segment of Bethlehem Pike in Fort Washington/Ambler. A separate flyer/e-mail has been distributed for this, which includes the registration and event details.



A joint holiday-season happy hour is in the works, being planned to include ASCE's YMF and MASITE. Please watch for information coming on this.

As always, please watch for more information on planned and upcoming activities in event flyers which will be available in e-mail blasts and communications as well as on the tables at our upcoming Dinner Meetings.

Reminder - Membership Applications Are Now Electronic !

If you know someone who is considering becoming an ASHE member, our Membership Application can be downloaded and completed, then submitted via e-mail, with payment available via PayPal. Please visit our website (delvalley.ashe.pro) and click on the **Membership** tab for more information and details on this.

Please feel free to share this information with anyone who may be interested in joining our Section.

We are proud to report that we currently have **340** Section members, making our Section one of the largest in the national ASHE organization. Thanks to those of you who continue to support our Section.



Environmentally Speaking...

You Can't Spell "HallowEAn" without "EA"! ...well, you can, if you want to "spell" it right...

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has published new guidance regarding the preparation of the Alternatives Analysis required for certain types of Chapter 105 Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permits. While scary, the new guidelines are more "Treat" than "Trick". This month's article is provided to us by **Courtney Papinchak of NTM Engineering**. (Thank you, Courtney!).

On August 5, 2023, DEP released "Guidance for Developing a Chapter 105 Alternatives Analysis" which can be found here: Chapter 105 Alt Analysis Guidance (state.pa.us). The purpose of the document is to provide guidelines regarding the level of information needed for a Chapter 105 alternatives analysis and for determining if an alternative should be considered practicable, as well as establishing what information is needed by DEP to adequately review Chapter 105 alternative analyses. The policies and procedures outlined in this new guidance document are meant to supplement existing requirements and will not affect regulatory requirements.

An alternatives analysis must be submitted for projects that require a permit under 25 Pa. Code 105.11(a), or as part of a DEP-approved Environmental Assessment where an alternatives analysis is required in the application materials. The alternatives analysis should be consistent with existing policy and guidance including this new guidance document, DEP's EA Form (DEP EA Form (state.pa.us)), and DEP's Comprehensive Environmental Assessment of Proposed Project Impacts for Chapter 105 Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit Applications (Comprehensive EA (state.pa.us)).

The document provides detailed guidance on common elements that should be incorporated in a Chapter 105 alternatives analysis, including aquatic resource impacts, existing utilities, infrastructure, and easements or ROWs, site constraints, existing technology, stormwater and floodplain management, and environmental and policy considerations. The Department recommends that costs only be included in an alternatives analysis when they are a significant factor in the consideration of alternative locations, routings, or designs, or will aid in the Department's understanding of the alternatives and their practicability.

A section regarding considerations by general project type, which include land development projects, linear utility projects, transportation projects, pollution abatement projects, and restoration and enhancement projects, can also be found in the document. A description of the alternatives analysis process, a template checklist of items to submit to DEP, examples of location and design avoidance and minimization alternatives analysis summary tables, and a list of data resources that may be utilized to investigate project alternatives are also included in the document.

An appendix regarding the differences between NEPA and Chapter 105 alternative analyses is included in the document. The scope of a Chapter 105 alternatives analysis is narrower, focusing only on impacts to aquatic resources. The Chapter 105 alternatives analysis has specific requirements and considerations that may not fully align with the NEPA process. This should be considered by applicants in the alternatives analysis process. That is, an alternatives analysis developed for a NEPA project may be adequate for the Chapter 105 Permit but should be evaluated against PADEP Guidance to ensure adherence to this new guidance.

Overall, the document provides more detail on what is required by DEP for Chapter 105 Alternatives Analysis, exploring considerations and requirements in more depth and providing templates and examples of what to include in a Chapter 105 alternatives analysis.

In the spirit of the Halloween season and keeping in mind that baseball season continues in our area, we offer the appropriate and gratuitous bat photo below for all of you fans of bats (you may recall these being used in the Phillies' game at the Little League Championship in August). In any event, watch this space for future spine-tingling articles in **Environmentally Speaking!**

We need your help!

Do you have a local environmental event you love to support? Such as a park cleanup, a tree planting, or similar event in the Delaware Valley you want to gather volunteers for? The Environmental Committee is looking for our Del Val Section membership ideas on local events to join for environmental volunteer days. We will be selecting an event to support so please email your suggestions to Susan Giannantonio at sgiannantonio@ntmeng.com

If you have ideas for articles concerning environmental issues of interest to our industry, please reach out to either **Bob O'Neill** (roneill@ntmeng.com) or **Bob Wright** (rwright@bowman.com) and share your thoughts with us.




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& Design **GANNETT
FLEMING****HR****JBC** **35**
YEARS**JMT** **KCI**
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Consulting**Delaware Valley Section Patrons (DVSP) 2023-24**

Thanks for your support!

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ENGINEERS** **WSP**

Your logo could be here!
(See page 3 for how to become a
Delaware Valley Section Patron.)

Contact Us

THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES, the newsletter of the Delaware Valley Section, is published and distributed to our members several times each season to advise and update all on current events and happenings in our Section.

If you have news items for future editions of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES, please feel free to contact us.

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REMINDER

Deadline for copy/
information for the next
edition of THE
TRANSPORTATION TIMES

December 8

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Please visit
delvalley.ashe.pro
for all the Section's current
information you'll need to
keep up-to-date on things.

Donna Prentice Memorial Scholarship Competition - Now Open for Submissions

Our Section's Scholarship Program has been benefitting local college students since 1972. We have had one of the largest such efforts among ASHE Sections nationally over the years. Many recipients have gone on to positions in the industry, both locally and out of the area, and a number have gone on in their professional careers to become members of ASHE.

Last season, applications turned out to be on the lighter side, and the Scholarship Committee was able to recognize 2 students with a total amount of \$6000 being made available for this. In our 2021-22 season there was a total of \$12,000 in awards to 7 students, and we are hopeful that we can get back to that level of participation and applications. We are proud to be able to support our local future engineers and help them in their educational pursuits. The Scholarship Program has assisted numerous students over the years, and was renamed in honor of the late **Donna Prentice**, wife of long-time Section member Rich Prentice, in 2003.

This season's competition is now open, and applications are due by **November 17**. Please check our website for more information on this, as well as the application form (delvalley.ashe.pro). We strongly encourage students to apply (and ask parents to let their college-age children know about this opportunity!).

At our 27th Annual Golf Outing on June 12, the net proceeds, which totaled over \$10,000, will be directed to the Scholarship Fund as in years past.

Successful Scholarship candidates will be notified in January and invited to attend our February Section Meeting to be honored in person. We look forward to the usual strong response from local students for this program.

Mark Your Calendar - Engineers Week 2024

The Engineers' Club of Philadelphia, through its Delaware Valley Engineers Week Committee, will celebrate **Engineers Week 2024** on February 15-24. This will be the 72nd year that Engineers Week in the Delaware Valley has been conducted.

Engineers Week in the Delaware Valley will officially begin with the **Engineers Week Opening Dinner on Thursday, February 15**. All Engineers Week award and scholarship recipients will be cited at the Dinner.

Please visit the Engineers' Club website, www.engrclub.org, for more information on events, awards and updates.

**ASHE 2024
National Conference**

Proudly hosted by the
Carolina Triangle Section of the
American Society of Highway Engineers

**June 5 – 9,
2024**

American Society of Highway Engineers — Mission Statement

*Provide a forum for members and partners of the highway
industry to promote a safe, efficient and sustainable transportation
system through education, innovation and fellowship*