

November 2020

Dear Members,

The days have become shorter and the nights have become longer here in Pittsburgh. Morning frosts will soon be the new normal. I truly love this time of year. It brings fond memories of growing up in the midst of the Allegheny National Forest. This is the time of year, when the last leaves fall, that I would spend every possible minute in the forest. Sometimes the time was spent alone, sometimes with my father, brother or grandfather; but every moment provided an opportunity to calm the soul, recharge the spirit, and strengthen my connection with family and nature.

This is also a time when families gather, and perhaps is the only time of year that an entire family is able to congregate and fellowship as one. This year, gathering with family and friends will be a unique, experience that will be challenging for all of us as we bridge the obstacles of distance and wellness. I encourage everyone to vigilantly refuse to allow complacency to overcome us, even as we grow fatigued with the seemingly perpetual pandemic. I'm providing links to recommendations from the CDC for navigating the [Holiday Season](#) and specifically [Thanksgiving](#). Regardless of how you decide to spend the holiday, I hope that you are able to find togetherness with your loved ones.

This year we will be celebrating our Life Members Recognition virtually, and I ask you to join in the unique experience and congratulate our 2020 Life Members. As a potential future Life Member yourself, I also encourage you to support our Life Member recognition efforts through sponsorships. If your firm is interested, please visit the [website](#) or contact Alma Rettinger at arettinger@mckimcreed.com. Stay tuned! We will be releasing our virtual program for asynchronous viewing soon!

While on the topic of our Life Members, I'd like to express my appreciation to the ASCE Board for their decision to keep the requirements for becoming a Life Member the same as they have been in recent years (no changes). The Pittsburgh Section prepared a formal response to proposed changes that we believed would have a negative impact to both the strength of our section as well as the benefits that are provided to our members. I'm happy to share an excerpt from Executive Director, Tom Smith's letter to Life Members:

"Board members were profoundly moved, as were we, by how meaningful your membership in ASCE has been to you throughout your long careers.

The board was sincerely appreciative of your contributions to the Society and profession and welcomes your continued input and engagement. The board also encouraged all of our Life Members to continue to give back to our profession and Society by engaging as a Mentor in ASCE's [Mentoring Program](#), participating in and supporting Student and Younger Member programs."

The Pittsburgh Section is also seeking nominations for outstanding projects, people, and employers in 2020. Awardees will be honored during the 2021 Engineers' Week Awards Event being planned for February 2021. Those that were recognized last year can be viewed [here](#). A description and criteria for each award is also provided through this [link](#). Nominations are due to Bob Dengler (rdengler@gfnet.com) by Friday, December 18, 2020.

The Student Award Foundation is also seeking applications for its annual American Bridge Leadership Award of \$5,000 minimum, and the Ody Makin Achievement Award of \$1,250 minimum, to a student ASCE member studying civil engineering. Full qualifications and application requirements can be found on the [Awards Page](#).

In closing, I wish you all a happy Thanksgiving, and thank you all for supporting ASCE as an engaged member. Please be kind to one another and generous to those in need. Contact me anytime at jshimko@mckimcreed.com.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Shimko

President

ASCE – Pittsburgh Section

