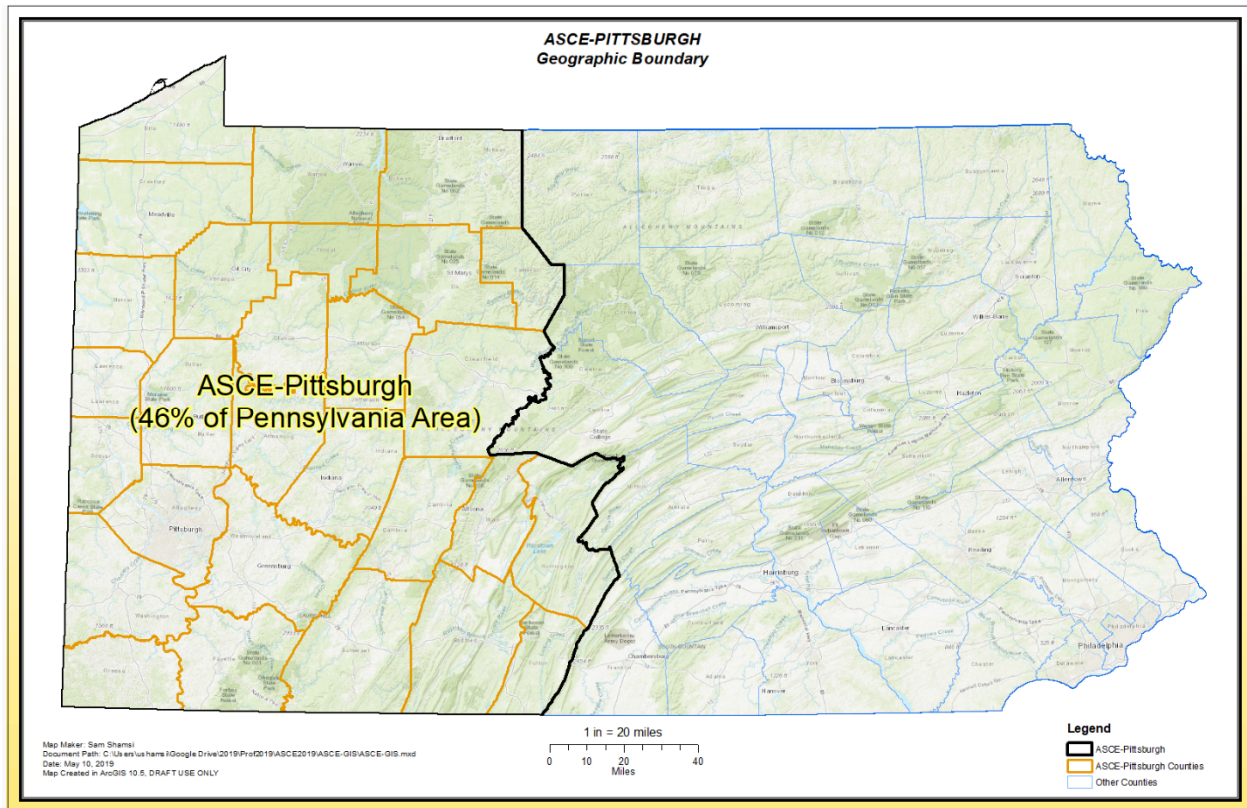


May 2, 2019 was a special day in my life. I was very happy and excited to be inducted as the 2019-2020 President of the ASCE Pittsburgh Section (see photo). Though I have been an ASCE member since my University of Pittsburgh Student Chapter days, I became more active in Section activities and leadership about 6 years ago which led to this presidency. Election to a position of leadership in a volunteer organization is an honor and unique responsibility. I am thankful to Past-Presidents Ralph Gilbert and Bob Dangler for their mentorship to prepare me for this responsibility. I think I am ready!

Our Executive Team includes President-Elect Jonathan Shimko, Treasurer Mike Krepsik, and Secretary Karen Mueser. [Click here](#) to learn more about these fine leaders and other Section officers. We are looking forward to serving your professional needs and interests.

The induction ceremony requires a pledge. It starts with, "Do you pledge to uphold the governing documents of the American Society of Civil Engineers and those of this Section, and do you, in the presence of your fellow members, pledge yourself faithfully to discharge the duties of the office to which you have been elected, to the best of your ability? If so, please answer I will."

Did you know our section's name is misleading because we are more than just Pittsburgh? With a population of about 4-million in 28 counties and 1,150 cities, ASCE-Pittsburgh is a "Large Section." With about 3,000 members and non-members, we cover almost half the state all the way to Lake Erie in the north (see map below). We have and will continue to physically reach out to our members in other cities. In 2018 we had a successful dinner/seminar in Johnstown. We are also excited to welcome a new student chapter in the Fall at Slippery Rock University which could improve our activities in north. Please contact us if you would like to host an event in your city.



As President, I will need your help to support the priorities of our Students and Young Members because they are our future. In January 2019, I spent two days with students from Point Park University at ASCE's Leadership Conference in Orlando. They shared their ideas on what's most important to them but more importantly, they made me feel young again by inviting me to join them at Universal Studios after long days at the conference. In February 2019, we launched a mentorship program for students using a mentor-mentee match approach. Some focus areas of this program are "soft skills" that are not formally taught in university Civil Engineering programs, as well as exposure to challenges and lessons learned from the real world.

I came to Pittsburgh as an international graduate student and was very fortunate to have a mentor who helped me become a successful Civil Engineer. I understand the academic, social, cultural, financial, and often legal challenges related to international students. I see a big potential in reaching out to international students and would like to hear from those interested in forming and leading a brand-new International Student Affairs Committee.

Our next focus will be on sustaining section membership. As a Government engineer myself, alongside new board members who are government engineers (Bill Trimboth, PE, Mayor of Pleasant Hills and Tim Prevost, PE, ALCO SAN), we will focus on increasing the participation of Government Engineers. To show our commitment, in January 2019, our Board unanimously approved a discounted Government rate for Section events.

The new officer pledge ends with, "And now, will all members of the American Society of Civil Engineers please stand. You have heard the pledge of your officers-elect. Unless they have your whole-hearted support, they will not be able to fulfill their pledge so faithfully given. Do you therefore, promise to support your officers as they guide the Pittsburgh Section through the coming year? Will you assist them whenever you are called upon for help in undertaking the various activities they plan? Will you encourage and advise them, and refrain from unjust criticism of their plans and actions? If so, please answer I will."

I want to see more young members and government engineers in our committees and institutes. How about a student board member? I need your support to succeed in this endeavor. Please contact me at [sam.shamsi@gmail.com](mailto:sam.shamsi@gmail.com) with any suggestions, or to become active in ASCE-Pittsburgh. If I can do it, you can do it too!

Uzair (Sam) Shamsi, PhD, PE, F.ASCE, D.WRE  
President 2019-2020  
ASCE-Pittsburgh