

The Voice

OCTOBER 2010

Voice

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COMPANIES OF TENNESSEE

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Nashville MPO and ACEC Combine Efforts for Design Training Program on Pedestrian Accessibility

by Craig Williams, AICP
APBP Course Instructor, LYKAH Consulting

The Nashville Chapter of ACEC of Tennessee partnered with the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to host a training course, "Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility," presented at the Tennessee Engineering Center in September. The course curriculum was developed by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP). The program, attended by a capacity enrollment of 36 people, addressed many of the challenging planning and design issues related to pedestrian accessibility.



Craig Williams

The session was an example of how govern-



mental entities and professional organizations can work cooperatively in ways that ultimately benefit communities and the public.

"We were very pleased that the Nashville MPO recognized the great value of the course and was willing to co-host the training," said Bob Murphy, PE, president of the Nashville Chapter of ACEC. "It was a great opportunity to offer this very relevant and worthwhile course to our members and other design professionals in our area."

Kit Keller, executive director of APBP applauded the partnership between MPO and ACEC. She noted, "Good things happen when government and professional associations work together to make communities more walkable for everyone."

Course Content

Participants in the one-day course learned how to incorporate the Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and other Federal ADA policies into all design facets of pedestrian transportation. The complex design issues contained in PROWAG, as well as identification of appropriate treatments for designing safe and accessible pedestrian facilities, were outlined.

(continued on page 2)

Training session participants experienced some of the accessibility issues faced by people in wheelchairs when traveling on sidewalks, ramps and crosswalks.

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Thank You, Volunteers; You Make It Happen

*by Steve Bostic, PE
President, ACEC of Tennessee*

The work of volunteers is essential to ACEC of Tennessee. Without volunteer leadership, ideas and “muscle,” our organization would not be strong and successful.

**Steve Bostic**

For example, Brad Thompson, Wilbur Smith Associates, is chair of the annual Tennessee Engineering Foundation (TEF) Golf Tournament. For six years, he has volunteered his time and energy to make this event happen so scholarships can be funded for

engineering students. **Note:** Photos of the 2010 golf tournament appear on the back page of this newsletter. An update on TEF activities also appears in this newsletter.

Volunteers take the lead in presentation of the annual *Engineering Excellence Awards* (EEA) program. Steven Field, PE, Stantec, is this year's chair of the EEA Committee and Greg Brubaker, PE, K.S. Ware & Associates, is co-chair. This important program, now in its 22nd year, brings statewide recognition to

engineering firms for projects that improve communities, support economic development, and enhance the well-being and safety of millions of people. **Note:** November 5 is the deadline to submit your entry for the 2011 EEA competition.

Of course, all the people serving on the Board and on various committees are volunteers. Their combined experience, work and wisdom keep our organization strong, focused and responsive to issues that impact our firms and profession. **Note:** It's not too soon to sign up to serve on a Committee for 2011-2012.

Candy Toler, our executive director, and Judy Logue, our membership services manager, do an outstanding job. However, it is volunteers who lead committees, step up on special projects, carry the ACEC message to key contacts across the state, and perform a dozen other tasks.

Tennessee is known as the Volunteer State. We earned our name again in May during the historic flood when thousands of volunteers stepped forward to help rebuild communities in impacted areas. Whether in an emergency—or in an ACEC of Tennessee committee meeting—volunteers make it happen. Thank you, volunteers.

Pedestrian Accessibility *(continued from page 1)*

Real-life solutions were presented including retrofitting existing sidewalks, designing new curb ramps, installing accessible pedestrian signals and maintaining accessibility. Course participants were provided numerous practical solutions from ensuring sidewalk accessibility during construction to making roundabouts more accessible to all pedestrians.

Throughout the program, the point was stressed that accessibility is a critical element in the built landscape and that ensuring roadways provide proper access to all travelers is extremely important. When designers have a good grasp of the rules, and can see examples of some of the best practices around the country, it is much easier to provide the correct accommodations.

In addition to classroom work, participants traversed sidewalks, ramps and crosswalks in

wheelchairs, and measured slopes of existing ramps.

“I now have increased awareness of the difficulties that disabled pedestrians face on poorly constructed facilities and the need for PROWAG

and ADA compliance on all facilities within the public right-of-way for the safety of all users,” said Kristen Rice, EI, RPM Transportation Consultants.

APBP and the U.S. Access Board developed this updated pedestrian

accessibility training to provide professionals with the most current design information on pedestrian accessibility. The course is taught nationwide to government agencies, MPOs and private sector employees. ACEC of Tennessee joined the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers and ACEC of Michigan as the third ACEC chapter to host the “Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility” course.

... Throughout the program, the point was stressed that accessibility is a critical element in the built landscape and that ensuring roadways provide proper access to all travelers is extremely important.

Tennessee Engineering Foundation: Annual Update

by Greg Reed, PhD, PE
President, Board of Directors
Tennessee Engineering Foundation
UT Associate Vice Chancellor for Research

During the past year, the efforts of the Tennessee Engineering Foundation (TEF) have centered on awarding college scholarships to engineering students and establishing a mechanism to partner with professional society local chapters or other groups raising funds to promote engineering in education.



Greg Reed

This year, Robert Griffin, a senior studying mechanical engineering at Tennessee Tech, received two scholarships administered through TEF. Robert, who is from Ooltewah, received a \$2,000

scholarship awarded directly by TEF. And—in an example of TEF's partnership with other groups—he was awarded the \$4,000 Dorothy and Arthur Crouch Scholarship from the TSPE Ladies Auxiliary. TEF is in discussions with three other organizations which we hope will choose TEF to administer their college scholarship programs.

Partnerships with TEF Encouraged

The TEF is the co-creation of ACEC of Ten-

nessee and TSPE; each group appoints three members to the board of directors. Representing ACEC on the board are George Barnes, PE, Memphis; Bob Bowers, PE, Wilbur Smith Associates, Knoxville; and Raymond White, PE, Nashville.

The board plans during the coming year to increase its efforts to encourage engineering firms, professional organizations, and allied businesses to establish engineering scholarships in partnership with TEF. We are exploring the possibility of grant funds for scholarships or education programs from government and foundation sources. We are also in preliminary conversations with an independent organization whose purpose is to raise funds and volunteers to enhance STEM education in K-12 school curricula.

The downturn in the investment markets has had a negative impact on scholarship endowments, so developing additional sources of funds is important to the increasing achievement of our mission. In order for TEF to fulfill the vision that TSPE and ACEC of Tennessee have for it, the chapters of the two parent organizations should consider TEF as a tax-deductible way to raise funds for its scholarship or local education partnership programs. All chapters are encouraged to consider the TEF as a partner. We will be happy to discuss opportunities at any time.

Four Honored with Citations

ACEC's Immediate Past President Ed Hargraves, PE, presented a *Presidential Citation* to four people during the joint Annual Meeting of ACEC of Tennessee and the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE).

Rick Gafford, PE, Fisher & Arnold, Memphis, was recognized for his outstanding leadership of ACEC of Tennessee's statewide annual *Engineering Excellence Awards* program which broke participation and attendance records in 2010. Bill Johnson, PE, ARCADIS, Chattanooga, was honored for his outreach efforts in the Chattanooga engineering community and his leadership in reorganizing the local organization as the Southeast Tennessee Chapter of ACEC of Tennessee. A *Presidential Citation* was presented to Stan King, PE, PLS, Florence & Hutcheson, Nashville, to honor his outstanding leadership of ACEC's Transportation Partnering Committee and his efforts to strengthen the organization's and profession's relationships and communications with the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Hargraves and TSPE Immediate Past President Tom Needham, PE, presented a joint citation to Judy Logue, manager of membership services for ACEC and TSPE. She was recognized for her outstanding management of membership activities and awards events for both groups, which has resulted in increased participation and successful results.

Congratulations, New PEs

The following people, who are employed at ACEC of Tennessee member firms, have passed the examination to become professional engineers in Tennessee.

- David C. Blackwood, PE
TLM Associates, Inc.
- Samuel H. Bohanon, PE
Ingram Civil Engineering Group
- Amy L. Burch, PE, RPM Transportation
- James J. Davis, PE, Thompson Engineering
- Luke R. Dixon, PE, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
- Adam R. England, PE
Smith Seckman Reid, Inc.
- Stephen Gibbs, PE
Professional Engineers, Inc.
- Brian H. Givens, PE, ARCADIS
- Robert D. Langford, PE
Smith Seckman Reid, Inc.
- Samuel P. Leimer, PE, SSR Ellers
- Jennifer R. McGee, PE
AMEC Earth & Environmental
- Frank P. Smith III, PE
Smith Seckman Reid, Inc.
- Robert C. Watson, PE
Askew, Hargraves, Harcourt & Associates
- Benjamin C. Zoeller, PE
AMEC Earth & Environmental

CALENDAR

OCTOBER
17-20

ACEC Fall Conference
El Conquistador Resort
& Spa
Las Corabas, Puerto Rico

OCTOBER
30

Tennessee Builders' Ball
The Pinnacle at
Symphony Place
Nashville
Information:
www.tnbuildersball.com

NOVEMBER
5

Deadline to Submit
Entries for *Engineering
Excellence Awards*
Information:
jlogue@tnec.org

DECEMBER
1

Professional Liability
Seminar
Knoxville
Information:
ctoler@tnec.org

DECEMBER
2

Professional Liability
Seminar
Nashville
Information:
ctoler@tnec.org

DECEMBER
3

Professional Liability
Seminar
Memphis
Information:
ctoler@tnec.org

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OCTOBER 2010 INSIDE

- Nashville MPO and ACEC Combine Efforts for Training Program – page 1
- Volunteers Make It Happen – page 2
- Tennessee Engineering Foundation: Annual Update – page 3

Step towards Winner's Circle on November 5

November 5 is the deadline to submit the one-page entry form for the 2011 *Engineering Excellence Awards* (EEA) statewide competition.

There are 12 entry categories. The Grand Iris Award will be presented to the overall winner of the competition as determined by an independent

panel of judges. A Grand Award will be presented to a winner in each entry category.

Turn the spotlight on your projects! Submit your entries by November 5. The official entry form is available at www.acectn.org or by contacting Judy Logue at 615-242-2486 or at jlogue@tnec.org.

Golf Tournament Scores for Tennessee Engineering Foundation

Skies were sunny and turnout was good for the 15th Annual Tennessee Engineering Foundation Golf Tournament. Thank you to all sponsors and participants.

A Great Foursome: Left to right are Brad Thompson, Wilbur Smith Associates, Franklin; Bob Polk, Wilbur Smith Associates, Franklin; Mike Fitts, former Tennessee State Architect; and Dennis Henderson, TLM Associates, Jackson



◀ *Ready to Roll to the Greens: Left to right are Ed Hargraves, Askew, Hargraves, Harcourt & Associates, Memphis; Mike Pohlman, Pickering Firm, Inc., Memphis; Ric Gibbs, Thompson Engineering, Chattanooga; and Larry Weber, TTL, Inc., Nashville*