



## e-Newsletter, Issue 18, October 2012

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### 1.1 Presidents & Governors Forum Sept. 23-24, 2012, ASCE Headquarters, Reston VA, USA

On September 23 and 24, Dr Anil K Kar, President, ASCE-India Section, had the opportunity to attend the Presidents' and Governors' Forum (PGF) at the Headquarters of ASCE at Reston, Virginia, USA. It was an opportunity for Presidents or President-Elects from different Sections of ASCE to meet and learn from each other's experiences in their endeavour to carry forward programs/activities in keeping with the objectives of ASCE. The Presidents of ASCE-India Section and ASCE-Australia Section were the only foreign delegates.

Besides meeting the Section Presidents, the Forum provided opportunities to meet the ASCE President, Immediate Past President, and the President-Elect (now President) as well as Mr Patrick Natale, the Executive Director, ASCE. The Presidents of ASCE-IS and ASCE-AS also met Mrs Meggan Maughan-Brown, Director International Relations and Strategic Planning. Representatives of a few Sections of ASCE which had done exceptionally good work in keeping with the objectives of ASCE, were selected to make presentations on their recent work.

The idea behind it all was to help other Sections learn of (a) many different activities which could improve the effectiveness of endeavour towards the betterment of Civil engineering profession, society and ASCE, and (b) ways to overcome difficulties. There was much discussion on the Section websites: (a) how to make the websites more informative, (b) how to keep the website up-to-date and (c) identifying consultants who prepare good websites at low fees, etc. Considerable effort went towards making high school students interested in studying Civil Engineering. Much importance was attached also to provide scholarships to engineering students. Senior Professionals within Sections volunteered to mentor final year students, helping them to prepare biodata well and to score well in job interviews.

Understandably, we are way behind in doing what Members at other Sections are doing. It could



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John Frauenthoffer, P.E., M.ASCE  
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Region 3 Governor



be that not many members of ASCE-IS have volunteered their time to develop programs and implement those for our Section. There appears to be a sense of aloofness. But why this sense of aloofness among members of ASCE-IS? The present President of ASCE-IS has had the opportunity to observe ASCE Members in India since 1988 when he spearheaded the formation of the Section in India. Members in India have only a one-time exposure to ASCE (and the monthly e-newsletter) in any given year. And that happens when they pay their membership dues. In comparison, ASCE Members in the USA think of (and thank) ASCE much more often, e.g., when they pay their life insurance premium at discounted rates, when after reaching airports in other cities they rent cars at discounted rates and pay hotel bills at discounted rates, etc.

Members in the USA have reasons to thank ASCE twelve more times each year when they receive hard copies of Civil Engineering magazine. In fact, ASCE considers the availability of hard copies of the Civil Engineering magazine as one of the most important reasons to join ASCE. In short, the Forum was set to bring to the attention of Section Presidents ways to (a) Keep ASCE in the limelight, (b) Help the society through specialized knowledge and experience which civil engineers possess, (c) Keep Members interested in ASCE Since, compared to the activities by Sections in the USA, we lag far behind, there is a lot which we can possibly do and achieve. You can help by giving us your ideas and volunteering your time.