



# SEAOAL Dynamic Columns

Quarterly Newsletter: February 2017

## *2017 President's Letter*

When I was in engineering college, questions sometimes arose in my assignments that required experience to answer properly. I was an older student and had some experience myself, so I knew where to go for answers. I would simply find an engineering firm in the yellow pages, and call them. When I introduced myself and told them what I needed, the receptionists never hesitated. I was never told that the engineers are too busy. I was usually transferred directly to the owner, or to one of the senior engineers, who were happy to provide direction. I marveled at their willingness to take a few minutes to help me through a problem, even though they knew they would not be compensated. Many even invited me to visit their offices if I needed more information. Not one of those phone calls was a waste of my time, and none of the engineers ever acted like I was wasting theirs.



Learning and growing are basic human needs. Learning develops the tools necessary for us to contribute in society, and to pursue our happiness. Positive growth happens through connections with good mentors. Engineers understand these truths. We have all spent great resources in time and money in pursuit of our education. We have all been mentored by others, including by other engineers as a prerequisite for becoming engineers ourselves. We understand the need for affirmation from our mentors and peers, and we understand the need to reach down to help others reach the top.

Our society has an ever growing need that engineers are uniquely qualified to

address. Many young people don't see their value and potential. Studies show that there are not enough students pursuing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to fill the future need for these in our society. There is an ever growing need for good engineers and technicians, and an ever increasing pool of young people who need direction. Organizations such as DiscoverE focus on reaching high school and middle school students, but these organizations cannot accomplish their goals without qualified volunteers. There is a tremendous need for people qualified by education and experience to become mentors for students - to recognize their value, lift them up, and help them succeed.

In 2017, SEAoAL will increase its focus on making connections. This includes connections between SEAoAL members, to strengthen our community of professionals, and connections between our membership and local schools and organizations looking for volunteers to mentor local youth. Our members will be encouraged to volunteer in support of career events at local schools. We will emphasize support for SEAoAL and NCSEA advocacy goals. We will ask our members to participate in DiscoverE initiatives. We will sponsor activities involving structural engineering students enrolled in Alabama universities.

As engineers, we are focused problem solvers. Our methodical and conservative nature sometimes causes us to overlook things that are not directly related to the job at hand. But when we know that a problem exists, we are very quick to roll up our sleeves and take on the challenge of solving it. I hope many of you will see this need for connection and resolve to get involved and support this effort. Our direct involvement in STEM can be our testimony to bring these fields to life for students, and our experience can help steer them in the right direction.

Sincerely

Bart Berneche, SEAoAL 2017 President

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Completed in 2010

2,722 feet high

160 stories

24,348 windows

57 elevators

Architect:  
Skidmore, Owens & Merrill  
Chicago Office

**AIA**  
Birmingham

**SEA**  
ALABAMA

**The Philosophy of Engineering for the  
Burj Khalifa, the Worlds Tallest Structure**

1 AIA HSW | 1 AL/FL PDH

**Speaker: Lawrence Novak, Director of Structural  
Engineering, Portland Cement Association**

Wednesday, February 22  
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
The Club

1 Robert S Smith Drive, Birmingham AL 35209  
\$20 AIA and SEAoAL members | \$40 nonmembers  
\$15 students (Must show ID)

RSVP to 205-322-4386 or kathryn@aiabham.org by Feb 20

Hosted by  
Alabama Concrete  
Industries Association

Sponsored by  
Building & Earth  
Geosciences

**acia**

**BUILDING & EARTH**  
Geotechnical, Environmental, and Materials Engineers

## 2017 SPRING SEMINAR Ed Huston Creates Seminar just for SEAoAL

The 2017 SEAoAL Spring Seminar, "Design of Masonry Structures," presented by Ed Huston, is specific to our region. It will focus more on wind than seismic for masonry structures, as well as beam design, wall in-plane loads, and updates to the new codes and standards.

Registration includes all day coffee bar, breakfast, snacks and lunch. Block USA will be exhibiting, and the meeting is sponsored by Alabama Concrete Industries Association.

Register online at [www.seaoal.com](http://www.seaoal.com)

## Younger Members

### Lunch and Learn at Terracon



On January 17, Alain Gallet and Steve Graeber with Terracon hosted a Lunch & Learn for the SEAoAL Younger Members Group. The presentation was titled "Geotechnical Services in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The YMG had a great turnout to learn about Terracon's new collaboration tool called GeoReport. We are excited to see the potential of GeoReport unfold with integrated consulting services, seamless delivery of data, documented collaboration, and improved project scheduling.

Thanks to Alain, Steve, and the Terracon team for a great lunch and learning experience!

## E-Week Engineering Showcase

**WE NEED YOU!**

## Where's Your NAME?



Sixty members of SEAoAL attended the ATC 45 training seminar in March 2016, but for some reason there are only 3 SEAoAL members listed in the NCSEA Disaster Response database.

NCSEA has developed a web-based database to make it easier to contact structural engineers for assessments following a disaster. The database lists those who are interested in assisting with post-disaster condition assessments of structures. To add your name to the list, click the following link.

<http://www.ncsea-seer.com/>

## Advocacy



This year, SEAoAL is sponsoring Auburn University's and University of Alabama's respective Bridge Building teams. The teams compete at the annual Southeast Conference, and the



Mark your calendars for February 22nd! The McWane Science Center is hosting an Engineering Showcase in which middle-school and high-school kids are introduced to the wonderful world of Engineering. The SEAoAL will host a booth again this year and we are looking for volunteers. The event will be held from 9am-3pm at the McWane Science Center. If you would like to volunteer to help with activities for the students, please let Blake know!

\*\*If you would like to learn more about the SEAoAL YMG and receive updates on the upcoming events, contact Blake Greene at [bgreene@tuckerjones.com](mailto:bgreene@tuckerjones.com)

winners compete at the ASCE Student Conference. Preparing and competing give the students experience in important aspects of engineering including design, building and teamwork. SEAoAL is dedicated to supporting and encouraging the next generation of structural engineers.

Andrew Marlin and Jeff Hillman spoke to the students at AU. Members of SEAoAL regularly give presentations to students at Alabama universities.

If you would like to get involved in advocacy and present to students and others in our community, email [rhea@karmamanagementinc.com](mailto:rhea@karmamanagementinc.com).

### QBS Update

Thanks to everyone who attended the public hearing in Montgomery to voice their concerns about the QBS Admin Rule changes. There was representation from ACEC, SEAoAL, ASPE and APWA. Currently the bill has been tabled until further notice. We will keep you aware of when the bill is back on the table.

## SEAoAL Member Benefits

Save money by being an SEAoAL member. **If you attend the February meeting and the Spring seminar, you will save \$60 on two meetings.** Common sense to join SEAoAL! Plus we are advocating for you in Montgomery, awarding scholarships to structural engineering students and encouraging students to pursue structural engineering. Who else would do all of this for you? Join today at [www.seaoal.com](http://www.seaoal.com).

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## Career Center

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER WANTED** – Neel-Schaffer, Inc. has an opening in our Tuscaloosa office for a Structural Engineer with 10 – 15 years of professional experience in design of industrial and architectural projects. Must have the ability to organize and handle multiple project assignments as well as manage a team of 3-5 structural engineers. AutoCAD and REVIT experience desired. Competitive salary & excellent benefits. Send resume to [alicia.rudolph@neel-schaffer.com](mailto:alicia.rudolph@neel-schaffer.com).

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VULCAN

PARK & MUSEUM



# Drink & Drop

April 6, 2017

Science minded teams and individuals, over 21 that is, can try your hand at the classic elementary student competition by keeping an egg protected after dropping it from the top of Vulcan's 124-foot pedestal. The goal: to keep your egg from landing sunny side up! Join Vulcan Park and Museum, the Alabama Center for Architecture, and BLOX Studio for this fun, inaugural event, including a cocktail reception on Vulcan's Plaza. Contact Ashley Thompson, Director of Development, for sponsorship or team registration details.

[athompson@visitvulcan.com](mailto:athompson@visitvulcan.com) | 205.933.1409 x.106

This is a great opportunity for **TEAM BUILDING, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT** and **FUN!**

Click here to

[Sign up your team or sponsor the event!](#)