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April 2021

Greetings fellow structural engineers,

I am honored to serve as the 2021 President of The Board of Directors of the Structural Engineers Association of Alabama. I served previously as the second SEAoAL president, 21 years ago. Many of you have been a part of this great organization that entire time. It is amazing to see the growth this organization has experienced in those 21 years.



I would imagine none of us thought our Winter Seminar in December of 2019 would have been the last time we gathered together as a group to fellowship and learn. I do not know about you, but I am ready to get back together in person. Fortunately, things appear to be headed in the right direction (fingers crossed) regarding the Pandemic. Your Board and Executive Director are committed to doing everything possible for us to meet together again soon.

In the midst of a Pandemic, our organization has carried on. We have held quarterly (virtual) board meetings, and SEAoAL has sponsored 4 virtual seminars totaling 8 PDH's. SEAoAL participated along with two other Member Organizations to jointly present an NCSEA Seminar about Member Organization scholarship programs. Speaking of scholarships, SEAoAL presented two scholarships in 2020, totaling \$2,500.00. Since 2014, SEAoAL has awarded 19 scholarships totaling \$21,500.00. Total SEAoAL membership is currently 160 members (121 professional and 39 Associate). Remember to update your 2021 membership if you have not done so already.

Members of the SEAoAL advocacy committee are typically meeting with state universities promoting our industry, but as you can imagine, we have not been able to be on campuses this past year. We hope to be back doing this soon. Our Young Professionals group is also looking forward to getting back to their activities soon as well.

On March 16, 2021, Roster Designation for Structural Engineers was adopted by the Alabama BELS with an 8:1 vote and has been submitted to the Legislative Review Service. Following their review, the rule is expected to become effective late May or early June. Prior to the March 16 meeting, BELS board member Marc Barter led a virtual seminar along with the NCSEA Separate Licensure Committee Chair to answer questions. There was excellent discussion during this seminar regarding the Roster Designation.

I would like to thank past president, Patrick Plourde for his hard work during our unique times which covered most of his tenure. Thank you to our Board of Directors for their leadership and thank you, Rhea Williams, our Executive Director. We appreciate all that you do for our organization with your tireless energy, creativity and dedication to SEAoAL.

**Andrew T. Marlin, P.E., MBA Engineers**



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Hello SEAoAL! I am excited to serve as the new Younger Members director. Thank you, Emily Dunham, for leading the group so well these past few years. For those who do not know me, let's start with a classic icebreaker "two truths and a lie:" I've been skydiving, scuba diving, and synchronized diving. Keep reading to find out!

I have been working at MBA Engineers since summer 2017 and have been passionate about structural engineering since playing with LEGO as a kid to when I took my first physics class in high school. I have also been fortunate enough to receive the SEAoAL scholarship multiple times. Looking forward to giving back to such a great organization.

As places and businesses start opening up, we will ramp up our Younger Member activities. We plan on hosting site visits of interesting projects around Birmingham. Our goal is to invite architect and contractor young professionals to some of these events as well. It has been too long since we have had face to face networking opportunities. We will also have socially distanced lunch and learns to look forward to later in the year. Also, Jordan Nemiroff is taking the lead on setting up SE exam study sessions to work on practice problems together.

If you have any suggestions for future events or site visits, then please feel free to reach out to myself or Rhea. We would love to incorporate your ideas too.

For those who made it to the end, my two truths are: I've been skydiving and scuba diving!

**Jamieson Mathew, P.E., S.E., MBA Engineers**



## NCSEA UPDATE

Thru the pandemic the NCSEA has been as active as ever in helping local member organizations like the SEAoAL. Last year's Structural Engineering Summit was held virtual. This year's event will be a Hybrid of virtual and in person seminars held in New York City October 13-15. I hope we will all feel more comfortable traveling and some of us can make it in person. The NCSEA is holding a Virtual SEA Leadership Retreat in April. Rhea and I attended a similar event in June of last year. The event is held to help Member Organizations like ours join with others to learn how to better serve the structural engineering community in the state. Anyone is welcome to attend.

The NCSEA website site ([ncsea.com](http://ncsea.com)) has a ton of good info. You can find information on the upcoming events and webinars, updates from any of the 12 committees or the state of SE Licensure around the country. If you have not already added your name to the disaster response database, you can find a link on the front page to make sure you are notified when Structural Engineers are needed to respond to natural disasters.

Please let me know if there is any information you would like to receive from NCSEA. They have a wealth of knowledge and are designed specifically to support practicing structural engineers.

**Bill Wilson, P.E., LBVD**





# NCSEA CODE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Emily Dunham, LBYD serves on the NCSEA Code Advisory Committee. The NCSEA Code Advisory Committees have kicked off the 2024 code change cycle. The committees are beginning to meet and review the 2021 IBC, IEBC, and the IRC and draft proposals for edits to these codes and their provisions. Proposals for any changes will be due in January of 2022. If you have any comments or suggestions for changes that should be made to any of the 2021 codes for inclusion in the 2024 set of codes, please share your thoughts and comments with Rhea (rhea@karmamanagementinc.com) and she can pass them on to the appropriate individuals. Anyone interested in taking a more active role in the process is encouraged to become a corresponding member on any of the subcommittees as their interest applies.

Please refer the NCSEA website  
(<http://www.ncsea.com/committees/codeadvisorycommitte/>)  
for a list of the subcommittees and the subcommittee chairs.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

This is our 7th year to award scholarships to structural engineering students. To date SEAoAL has awarded \$29,000 to 17 students. Jamieson Mathews was awarded the scholarship three years in a row and is now our young member director. We love to see scholarship winners working in firms in our state. We had three applicants this year and will review and announce the winners in late Spring.

## CALL FOR RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS & EXPERT WITNESSES

We receive calls on a regular basis from homeowners who need a structural engineer for small and medium projects. Most firms are so busy and not interested in smaller projects. We need to create a list of firms that will review foundations, trailers, storm shelters and projects less than 2000 sq. feet. These projects are not sexy, but still pay the bills.

We also have architects who are looking for residential structural engineers and these are always larger high-end homes. Please email [rhea@karmamanagementinc.com](mailto:rhea@karmamanagementinc.com) to add your name to the residential list of structural engineers.

Another call we receive is for expert witness. Most of these request are paying gigs as well. Anyone want to be added to the expert witness list, please email [rhea@karmamanagementinc.com](mailto:rhea@karmamanagementinc.com).







SEER continues to partner with AIA Disaster Relief. Structural Engineers and architects are working together to help our neighbors get back in their homes and businesses safely.

John Perdue, LBYD is the SEER chair and Tim Aho, Aho Architects is the AIA Disaster Relief chair. John and Tim were called to Fultondale at the request of Vestavia Fire Department. They had equipment that was unsafe to retrieve holding up a house. “One of the most rewarding aspects of participating in disaster response is seeing people at their best when circumstances are at their worst, and how each person does what they can to help,” Tim Aho. A perfect example of this is the collaborative response of the State Disaster Coordinators of both the SEAoAL and AIA to the EF-3 tornado which struck Fultondale on the night of January 25th. While engineers and architects have the same post-disaster safety assessment (Cal OES SAP) training and credentials, architects and engineers each look at a situation somewhat differently. This is a very good thing and makes for a strong assessment team, especially when facing an unusual situation as they did in Fultondale. One of the most publicized stories of the Fultondale tornado was that of Arnoldo Vasquez-Hernandez who became pinned by a large tree which collapsed much of his home as he saved his children, carrying them to the basement.

The Heavy Rescue Units of the Vestavia Hills and Birmingham Fire Departments responded and worked under extremely dangerous circumstances that night to stabilize the structure and rescue the family as the storm raged on. Ultimately a medical team from UAB hospital had to perform field surgery and amputation to extricate Mr. Vasquez-Hernandez from the damage. The following day, with better weather and much less adrenaline, the Fire Service Units returned to retrieve their emergency rescue struts from the structure and realized they needed expert assistance. Rather than providing typical SAP damage assessments, this time John Perdue and Tim Aho were asked to advise the Heavy Rescue units’ staff on recovering their equipment and to provide an after-action assessment of how they sought to stabilize the structure during the rescue. Relationships which were formed with each other and with the Fultondale Fire Chief prior to the disaster led to them to rapidly respond and meet that need. Incidentally, the Fire Service did an amazing job under incredible circumstances. One Battalion Chief called it a “once in a career rescue” and said numerous times that the SEAoAL (SEER) and AIA Disaster Response volunteers were an amazing resource to them.





Great news if your Safety Assessment/Cal-EMA certification is expiring soon, you can renew it on-line. If you wait too long, you will have to start all over again, your information will be deleted from their database.

If Your Safety Assessment Program ID Card expires soon, please take a SAP Evaluator classroom training, or the SAP Refresher Course on-line, in order to remain in the program. You can only take the online course within the next 15 months from now, after which you will have to take a classroom training, as your information will be deleted from the archive database after that. Please note that best results are found using Windows Explorer as your browser.

(Please note: if you have already taken the Online Refresher Course, or an SAP class, and have received or are waiting for your new SAP ID card, please disregard this message!)

Please follow these instructions for the online recertification training. Once you complete the exam, the system will automatically notify Cal OES, who will produce a new SAP ID card and send it to you at the address listed in the Cal OES database. After working through the instructions below, nothing more is needed on your part.

Access the on-line Refresher Course by means of the following steps:

1. Go to <https://csti-ca.csod.com/default.aspx?c=caloes-recovery-sap>
2. Click on the yellow Register box and create a new account. You will need your SAP ID Number.
3. Register with an e-mail where we can send a callout message to you, bearing in mind a callout may not happen while you are at work. We do not recommend a work e-mail in the event you change jobs or retire.
4. Register with a mailing address where we can mail you your card.
5. When submitting the form, you will see a message telling you the registration is pending approval. OES will receive an e-mail that you registered and approve you within 24 hours.
6. Once your account is approved, you need to request the SAP Online Evaluator Refresher Training. (Look for the yellow SAP Training button and then click on the yellow box titled Online Evaluator Training).
7. Click on the Request button. It may take up to 24 hours for the request to be approved.
8. Click on Open Curriculum. The modules are separated into 6 different sections.
  - Each slide and each link in each module must be viewed before the module is considered complete.
  - Each module must be completed before moving on to the next. Knowledge checks inside the modules are not scored and are only used for reference.
9. Once all modules are complete you may then take the final exam. If you fail the exam, you must review the modules and retake the exam. You may retake the exam up to three times before you need to wait a week before retaking the exam.





Dear fellow SEAoAL member,

The challenges of COVID have made networking, in the traditional sense, impossible. For that reason, I'm reaching out and making a virtual connection! My name is Stan Agee, President of Pieresearch. I am member of SEAoAL and a long-standing member of the structural engineering/geotechnical community.

Please visit [www.pieresearch.com](http://www.pieresearch.com) to watch our short 30-second video highlighting our products, which are beneficial to engineers such as yourself. You can also peruse our website to find additional information that could be very valuable to you and your company. If I can help you in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,  
Stan Agee



# Thank you Platinum Sponsors!

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