



Continuing Up the Ladder, One Rung at a Time

By Williston "Bill" Warren IV, P.E., S.E., SECB, F.SEAOC, NCSEA President

Success is gratifying. We all strive for it on a daily basis in our professional and personal lives. When we achieve it, we should celebrate because it does not come often enough. One obstacle that accompanies success is that it then raises the bar for the next endeavor; we must reach the next rung on the ladder to meet even higher expectations.

It is with this challenge in mind that I take on my new role as President of the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NCSEA) for 2017-2018.

Having previously been President of NCSEA's largest Member Organization, the Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC), I am familiar with the demands placed on non-profits by their members and volunteers. Our goal at NCSEA for this next year is to meet those demands and exceed expectations as we continue to thrive on the positive momentum that this organization has been building over the last several years.

The focus during my term as President will be concentrated in the following areas:

- Outreach and advocacy to all those influenced and affected by structural engineering;
- Increasing NCSEA's partnerships with the state SEAs, as well as related organizations;
- Taking the annual Structural Engineering Summit to an even higher level; and,
- Demonstrating our love of our profession and its value to the general community.

Examining these areas one by one, plenty of opportunities exist for NCSEA and the SEA membership to continue succeeding together. To achieve this, we all must take part.

Regarding **outreach and advocacy**, many of our state SEAs have experienced success in connecting with the media, architects, building officials, and government officials. NCSEA must build on this success and lend its national voice to the effort to help all those affected by our practice of structural engineering begin to understand the value that our profession brings to society. The general public routinely uses the buildings and other structures that we design without a second thought, and rightly so. Raising awareness of the structural engineer's contributions to society's safety, health, and welfare will allow our profession to receive the recognition that it deserves.

In terms of **partnerships**, NCSEA will continue to grow its relationships with state SEAs and national organizations like the Applied Technology Council (ATC) and the International Code Council (ICC). With the limited resources (especially time) available to

everyone today, the last thing NCSEA wants to do is duplicate the efforts of others or reinvent the wheel when a perfectly good solution already exists. Thanks to its 44 Member Organizations across the country, NCSEA is uniquely positioned to help facilitate the distribution of successful ideas and products from one city, state, or region to another, ensuring that the best of the best is being utilized by the structural engineering profession nationwide. This could include white papers, webinars, publications, education speakers, and ideas on running a more effective state SEA. If I have missed anything, please let NCSEA know.



In the ultimate drive to reach the next rung of the ladder, NCSEA already is looking forward to the **2018 Structural Engineering Summit on October 24 – 27 in Chicago**. Having just completed the enormously successful 2017 event in Washington, D.C. – with a record attendance of more than 500, including 59 exhibitors – the focus is squarely planted on next year. The goal is to increase attendance further, as well as foster a continued celebration of the structural engineering profession. Conferences like the NCSEA Summit provide invaluable face-to-face networking opportunities that spark creativity, collaboration, and concrete accomplishments in a world so focused on and enamored with the virtual.

Ultimately, next year's Summit should be a cherry on the top of a year in which I want all structural engineers to **take a step back and admire the profession to which we have devoted our lives**. Our dedication to the public's safety, health, and welfare is at the core of every calculation that we complete, every drawing that we seal, and all construction that we observe.

When structural engineers serve as first and second responders to hurricanes, earthquakes, and other disasters, we should all be proud. While our profession may be full of introverts, the time is now to proclaim our virtues to ourselves and to our families, friends, and anyone else who will listen. It is critical to love what you do every day, so why not tell everyone about your love?

I look forward to serving our profession and, most importantly, our citizenry throughout my tenure as NCSEA President. Taking the next step will require all of us participating in the effort, so find your role, and please carry it out. Thank you for the opportunity. ■



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