

Editorial | SEI Young Professional Scholarship to Attend Structures Congress

Dennis R. Mertz, Ph.D., P.E., F.SEI, M.ASCE



Young Professionals Scholarship winners jump-start their careers at the Structures Congress.

For many decades, Structures Congress has been bringing together a national, international and diverse community of structural engineers to advance the practice within buildings, bridges, and non-building structures. Over the years, this annual event attracts more than 1,200 attendees from practice, academia, government, industry, and allied fields and has grown to become the premier event for all structural engineering professionals. Structures Congress 2014 is in Boston on April 3-5.

Would you like to participate in the congress, but cannot get your employer to send you and cannot afford it yourself? Are you a young professional? If so, here is a wonderful opportunity for you.

SEI is committed to the future of structural engineering and offers a Young Professional Scholarship to attend Structures Congress. This scholarship provides motivated young professionals in structural engineering (and related fields) the opportunity to attend Structures Congress 2014 in Boston. Many young professionals have found Structures Congress to be a career-changing and energizing experience, opening up networking opportunities and expanding horizons to new and emerging trends.

Do you want to further develop your career? A past scholarship recipient says, "Without this support, I would probably not have been able to attend and would have missed out on a great career-development opportunity."

How about getting more involved with SEI? Another recipient states, "Participating in the conference has driven me to become more involved in SEI and other professional organizations, has inspired me to take a leadership position in my local SEI chapter, and has given me the confidence to achieve my professional goals."

Do you need networking opportunities? Another scholarship recipient says, "The main benefit I found of attending the Structures Congress was the connections I made with both peers and experienced industry leaders."

How about getting more active in our industry? This recipient says, "Attending the Structural Congress gave me the courage to become more involved and more active in the industry."

Are you eligible? Young professionals (35 years or younger) in both industry and academia who are looking to become more involved with the Structural Engineering Institute (SEI) of ASCE are eligible for this scholarship. Scholarships are limited to one time only per recipient

and shall follow ASCE reimbursement policy.

If you have previously received an SEI Young Professional Scholarship to attend Structures Congress, you are no longer eligible. Full time students are not eligible for this scholarship.

How do you apply? An online application, to be submitted by Friday, December 13, 2013, can be found at www.asce.org/sei. Your application package must include the following:

- your resume or curriculum vitae (1-2 pages),
- two narrative statements (described on the application form), and
- an essay (also described on the application form).

Applicants must select which tier level(s) they want to be considered for, and must be willing to attend Structures Congress no matter which award they receive. Selection of multiple tiers will not affect consideration for the higher tier awards. All expenses incurred beyond those covered by the scholarship are the responsibility of the awardee. Awardees will be recognized at the Young Professional Mixer Thursday, April 3, 2014 at Structures Congress. The awards consist of the following:

- Two Tier 1 Awards: complimentary Structures Congress registration, travel reimbursement (economy domestic travel with 14 day advance purchase) and lodging reimbursement (up to \$135/night for three nights),
- Three Tier 2 Awards: complimentary Structures Congress registration and \$500 travel reimbursement, and
- Five Tier 3 Awards: complimentary Structures Congress registration.

To prepare your application, view the full application in advance and allow sufficient time to prepare all required materials before you fill out and submit the application online. Once you submit the online form, you will receive a confirmation response and a copy of the completed form via email for your records.

If chosen, what is expected of you? Awardees are expected to attend Structures Congress in its entirety, and at least one SEI committee meeting in addition to the SEI Young Professionals Committee meeting. Upon conclusion of the conference, awardees are required to submit a 1-2 page narrative providing feedback on Structures Congress and testimony on the benefits of attending. Scholarship reimbursements are contingent upon submission of this document.

Do you want to see the big picture? A recent recipient says, "My immersion amongst a wide range of voices and perspectives of the structural engineering community at the SEI congress in Pittsburgh helped me better understand my current place in our exciting profession and enabled me to envision my potential fit, future involvement, and importance as an individual within the bigger picture."

Remember: Submit your application online by Friday, December 13, 2013. Awardees will be notified by January 24, 2014. ■



Dennis R Mertz, Ph.D., P.E., F.SEI, M.ASCE, is the Director of the Center for Innovative Bridge Engineering at the University of Delaware. Professor Mertz is currently a member of the SEI Board of Governors and, as such, a member of Executive Committee of the SEI Technical Activities Division. He has also served on both the Structures Congresses committee and the Structures Congress National Technical Program committee.