

Editorial | Realizing a Vision for the Future of Structural Engineering

By John L. Carrato, P.E., S.E., F.SEI, F.ASCE



Fernando Martinez receiving his SEI Young Professional Scholarship certificate from SEI President David Odeh and SEI Director Laura Champion.

As the SEI Futures Fund starts its fourth year, we are very excited about our progress to realize the *Vision for the Future of Structural Engineering* initiatives. Through leadership and innovation, the Futures Fund can revolutionize the future of structural engineering. It has been instrumental in helping start many of these initiatives, efforts that are possible only through your generous gifts of support.

While we have had a great start, our Vision is ambitious and our goal is to develop a culture of giving throughout SEI and the profession to enable these efforts. The SEI Board of Governors recommends annual minimum leadership giving levels of \$500 for Board members, \$250 for Executive Committee members, \$100 for Committee chairs, and \$50 for Committee members. Your work and dedication as a volunteer member significantly increases SEI's ability to advance the art, science, and practice of structural engineering. An additional way to support our Vision and the profession is to make a contribution. If everyone gives, we can take even greater strides to realize our Vision for the Future.

The four strategic areas the Futures Fund supports are:

- Invest in the future of the profession
- Promote student interest in structural engineering
- Support younger member involvement in SEI activities
- Enhance opportunities for professional development

Following a successful year of contributions, the Futures Fund Board of Directors has provided \$64,000 for the 2017 fiscal year to support the following strategic initiatives – all of which are strongly in line with the Vision for the Future:

- SEI Global Activities initiatives to grow SEI's global presence through resource workshops, an international practice guide, and increasing international sessions at the Structures Congress
- Funding for a new SEI Student Structural Engineering Competition and support for five student teams to compete at the Structures Congress

- Stakeholder workshop to ensure high-quality structural engineering continuing education
- Scholarships for 10 Young Professionals to participate at the Structures Congress

Engaging young members in our profession and SEI will go a long way toward realizing our Vision for the Future. Read about SEI Young Professional Scholarship recipient Fernando Martinez' experience at the 2016 Congress:

"The benefits of participating at the Congress are many: comprehensive exposure to structural engineering design topics that are relevant to current practice and technology, exposure to research areas that will advance structural engineering design and construction/material technology, exposure to topics related to professional licensure and project management, and an incredible networking opportunity with leading professionals from around the world. The Meet the Leaders event provided a casual setting for students and young professionals to interact with top senior engineers about the skills needed for a successful career. My overall experience at the 2016 Congress was outstanding, and I plan to participate in future SEI Structures Congresses."

Through his experience and connection at Congress, Fernando is now actively engaged in efforts with the new SEI Global Activities Division.

Celebrating the Future of Structural Engineering

The support we are receiving from our colleague, Ashraf Habibullah and CSI, by hosting *Celebrating the Future of SE* events at the Congress is tremendous. Those of you who were at the celebration in Phoenix last February had an incredible time in support of the Vision and the Futures Fund. You are invited to another special dinner reception, hosted by Ashraf, April 7, 2017, at the Structures Congress in Denver. Join us for a fun evening of inspiration and entertainment in celebration of structural engineering; register at www.structurescongress.org.

We also have a unique gift match opportunity – give now through December 31 and your gift to the Futures Fund will be doubled by Ashraf, up to \$25,000. Your gift in its entirety benefits the SEI Futures Fund, free of any administrative burden. The Futures Fund partners with the ASCE Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law, and an acknowledgment and receipt will be provided.

Learn more about the Futures Fund and give at www.asce.org/SEIFuturesFund. Your support is greatly appreciated!*



John Carrato is President and CEO of Alfred Benesch & Company in Chicago, Chair of the SEI Futures Fund Board, and serves on the SEI Board of Governors. For more information, contact Jen Ilchishin at jilchishin@asce.org.