

YPG Quarterly Newsletter - Fall 2015

This newsletter is the first of four that will be circulated by the 2015/2016 Association of Consulting Engineering Companies British Columbia (ACEC-BC) Young Professionals Group (YPG) steering committee. Established in 2006, our committee is tasked with promoting young professionals within the industry, advancing their knowledge of business practice, and helping YPs integrate and succeed in the consulting engineering business in British Columbia.

You may have attended one of our breakfast seminars or social events in the past or perhaps this is your first exposure to our group. In this newsletter we will let you know a little bit more about our committee and what we have planned for the year. We will also share details of recent activities and provide an update from other ACEC-BC committees.



The YPG Steering Committee

The ACEC-BC YPG Steering Committee has increased in size and complexity since its inception nearly a decade ago. The group now spans the province with regional committees in the Lower Mainland, Okanagan, and Vancouver Island. Combined, there are a total of 26 steering committee positions and 8 Young Professional Representative positions on the ACEC-BC professional committees.

2015/2016 Provincial Committee	
Chair	Siobhan Robinson
Past Chair	Tijana Smiljanic
Vice Chair	Graeme McAllister
Communications	Joey Chiu
Professional Development and Education	Imran Gehlen
Lower Mainland Chair	Zahra Pirani
Vancouver Island Chair	Caroline Silins
Okanagan Chair	Natasha Orlitzky
Thompson-Nicola Chair	Vacant
ACEC Canada YPN representative	Tijana Smiljanic

2015/2016 Regional Committees			
	Lower Mainland	Vancouver Island	Okanagan
Chair	Zahra Pirani	Caroline Silins	Natasha Orlitzky
Past Chair	Siobhan Robinson	Mark Byram	N/A
Vice Chair	David Marchand	Craig Appelman	Stephen Horsman
Communications	Gabriene Kaechele	David Palmer	Jade Jordan
Professional Development	Dani Delaloye	N/A	N/A
Networking	David Ellis	David Palmer	Cory Sivell
Volunteer Management	Katherine Dennert	N/A	Nathan Rosin
Student Outreach	David Walker	Max Scruton	Jonathan Lowe
Community Involvement	Bridget Lane	N/A	N/A

2015/2016 YP Committee Representatives	
ACEC Canada YPN	Tijana Smiljanic
Municipal Engineering	David Ellis
Business Practice	Graeme McAllister
Transportation	Joey Chiu
Building Engineering	Graham Lovely
Resource and Energy	Zahra Pirani
Membership Affairs	Suki Gill
Professional Development	Mark Byram

Summary of Planned Events and Initiatives

Last year we delivered a successful breakfast seminar program, organized a host of fantastic social events, increased our visibility by having strong representation at student outreach events, engaged our community by supporting GeeringUp and Scientists and Innovators in the Schools (SIS), and increased our communication with member firms by engaging company champions.

This year we will continue to focus on increasing young professional participation at member firms through our Company Champions program. We will also be rolling out a new volunteer position, ACEC-BC Ambassador, which will provide a way for YPs to learn about and become more involved with the association, while requiring a smaller time commitment than other volunteer positions.

We will deliver fifteen breakfast seminars across the province: six in the Lower Mainland, five in Victoria, one in Nanaimo, and three in the Okanagan. With the intention of serving you better, and based on feedback from our members, we will look into providing these seminars at different times and locations.

We've got lots of fun ideas for social events this year including the ever-popular curling, ping-pong, archery tag, and indoor golf. Stay tuned for more details.

We are excited to again partner with Geering Up and Scientists and Innovators in the Schools to engage children at the community level. We will be running the amazing Consultant's Contraption, an event that challenges member firms to build modules of a Rube Goldberg machine (think mousetrap). Click this link to see a video of the last Consultant's Contraption: <https://youtu.be/UH54uGHYego>. To make this event successful we will need lots of volunteers, so let us know if you're interested.

Last year we made great headway connecting with academic institutions across the province like BCIT, UBC, Camosun College, UVic, and UBCO. We will build on this success and leverage our volunteers to network with students and promote consulting engineering as an excellent career choice.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter and the many events and initiatives planned for this year. If you have any questions or ideas please feel free to contact us at info@acec-bc.ca.

Siobhan Robinson, Chair, ACEC-BC Provincial YPG Steering Committee

ACEC-BC YPG Regional Group Updates

Lower Mainland Group

The 2015-2016 Lower Mainland Committee features many new faces this year. The team is comprised of seven active and outgoing YPs who understand the importance of developing a strong network. This year the committee aims to increase YP participation across all ACEC-BC member firms at breakfast seminars, social events and networking activities. This year's Lower Mainland Group steering committee members are:

- Chair
Zahra Pirani (Advisian)
- Vice Chair
David Marchand (R.F. Binnie)
- Professional Development and Education
Dani Delaloye (Hatch Mott MacDonald)
- Volunteer Management
Katherine Dennert (Hatch Mott MacDonald)
- Networking
David Ellis (Associated Engineering)
- Student Outreach
David Walker (Aplin & Martin Consultants)
- Community Involvement
Bridget Lane (SNC-Lavalin)
- Communications
Gabriene Kaechele (Parsons)

The Lower Mainland YPG has some exciting plans developing. We hope to focus on delivering engaging professional development seminars and networking events, while also reaching out to the student population and our general community.

Professional Development Seminars

The Lower Mainland YPG is planning on hosting six seminars this year, one of which occurred on September 18, 2015. Over breakfast, Ken Wiecke - Operations Manager at Amec Foster Wheeler, and Chairman of ACEC-BC - spoke in Vancouver with a group of Young Professionals about what he had learned in his career so far. He shared some amazing stories highlighting his diverse career and world travels, including a windsurfing tour across the United States! By walking the group through the inflection points in his career, Ken imparted the importance of working hard, building and maintaining relationships, and taking responsibility. He left the group with some great takeaways, our favorites being "Put Your Hand Up (and ask for that position)" and "Take on a Role **Before** You Have It". The next Vancouver YP Seminar will be held in November. Stay tuned for more details!



Ken Wiecke presenting to a group of YPs in Vancouver

Networking Events

Our target for this year is to host nine networking events. Some of these events will include pub socials, curling, and indoor golf. Other suggestions are most definitely welcome. We also plan to invite other professional organizations to some of the events in an effort to broaden our professional network.

Student Outreach and Community Involvement

This year, we plan to spend some time visiting BCIT, UBC, and SFU, mingling with our future consulting engineers. And while we're at it, we intend to continue our relationship with GeeringUp and Scientists and Innovators in the Schools (SIS), programs that focus on developing budding scientists and engineering students.

One of our big challenges for the year is the Consultant's Contraption, a Rube Goldberg competition, which we are very excited about. We also hope to engage the community through smaller, but equally important, events throughout the year. Some of our ideas include participating in CANstruction and a Shoreline Clean-up.

Volunteering

If you live in the Lower Mainland and you're interested in volunteering, we have many opportunities available including assisting with the Consultant's Contraption, serving as a Company Champion and/or Ambassador for your company, or spending a couple hours every so often volunteering for our events. Please feel free to email info@acec-bc.ca if you'd like to share your time with us - we'd love to have you on board!

Zahra Pirani, ACEC-BC YPG Lower Mainland Chair

Vancouver Island Group

The ACEC-BC YPG on Vancouver Island is an engaged group of individuals that are looking forward to working with you this year.

The Vancouver Island Young Professionals Group held its first breakfast seminar at the end of September, featuring Dr. Lara Lauzon, an Assistant Professor at the University of Victoria. She stressed the importance of working well and provided a multi-frame thinking and decision making that can help professionals discover how they view their organization and take steps toward a strategic planning process for sifting options and solving problems when an organization is ready for change. With the current market and business trends, there are significant opportunities for companies, organizations and professionals who embrace change. Four more seminars are planned; three in Victoria and one in Nanaimo.

We had a successful Pub Night at The Guild Pub in downtown Victoria at the beginning of October and we hope to host three more this year.

Student Outreach

One of our objectives for the year is to build on the success of past years participation in the University of Victoria's Industry Night and the Camosun College industry events. This year we are keen to get more Young Professional members involved with our outreach initiatives. In doing so, we hope to share more diverse experiences and knowledge of BC's consulting industry with even more prospective engineers.

Another goal this year is to organize a visit to a local public school to stimulate interest and inspire curiosity in the area of engineering.

Member Engagement

Every year we strive to increase engagement amongst our member firms and local consulting engineering companies. In past years the breakfast seminars have had strong turnouts, but this year we are keen to increase our participation by 20% at both the social events and the breakfast seminars.

In order to achieve our goal, we are hoping to increase the number of YP company champions to help foster a stronger community and encourage dialogue amongst YPs within companies. This will allow us to better advertise events while also soliciting more meaningful feedback.

Also, we will continue to highlight the benefits of engaging in the ACEC-BC YP community which includes but is not limited to: professional and personal development, opportunities to expand one's professional network, leadership and communication skills development and understanding the consulting engineering industry both locally and federally. An engaged member is one which is well informed and understands value in an organization's services. In the future, we expect our efforts to help refine communication and run more beneficial events.

Upcoming Events

November 5th, 2015 - Victoria breakfast seminar on 'The Building Act' which was introduced in spring 2015.

This year we will be organizing the Annual Curling Social and the Annual Ping Pong Tournament. Keep an eye out for details!

If you are interested in becoming a company champion or have any feedback or comments please contact Caroline Silins - csilins@thurber.ca.

Caroline Silins, ACEC-BC YPG Victoria Chair

ACEC Canada Summit and National Convention

Members of ACEC-BC are also members of the national organization, the Associating of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada (ACEC) that represents members' interests at the federal level. One of the key strategies of ACEC is to engage and empower members through communication and opportunities for participation as well as to deliver and demonstrate value to members.

One way that ACEC achieves these goals is by organizing the Annual Summit and National Convention where members across Canada can participate in an industry conference that offers business and social programs as well as many networking opportunities. This year's summit was held in Niagara Falls, Ontario. The theme of the conference was "Leadership Summit: Transforming our Business + Sector + World", focusing on transforming our business to ensure optimal performance, with emphasis on the fact that the industry is changing, that consulting engineering firms can and need to adapt in order to stay competitive.

The program kicked off with a technical tour of the Canadian Niagara Powerhouse and award-winning Forbay Bridge. Participants learned about the innovative approach to reconstruct the bridge while preserving the original stonework of the roadway arch bridge. After the tour the conference provided an opportunity for Young Professionals (YPs) from provincial and territorial groups to present on the activities and goals of their respective groups at a working lunch session.

An interesting approach to adapting to a changing industry, which was discussed during the conference, was to look at innovating our model of practice. One could do so by becoming a "living firm". Arie DeGeus explains that a *"living company exists to fulfill its own potential and become as great as it can be, to maximize the potential of both the community and each individual in it."* In addition, as an industry, we need to shift from a time seller business model and towards a new model of practice. The value proposition of the new model would be that we create value and are fairly rewarded for the value we create for client and for society. This would shift the industry away from the current value proposition where we provide technical solutions to client problems in the form of professional services that are paid for by the hour.

Young Professionals were also featured during the summit. Two YPs participated in the panel discussion session "Who will Lead the Transformation?" where they offered YP perspective on how firms can create a business culture that will foster the necessary leadership skills to ensure long-term success. YPs pointed out that consulting is a business of people and that it is important for companies to learn who they are. It was also noted that transfer of knowledge between generations is a key for long-term success. One of the insights included a quote from Colin Powell that *"Leadership is the art of accomplishing more than the science of management says is possible."*

In addition to the business program, the conference offered networking opportunities by means of social events. A local flavour night allowed the delegates to enjoy the view of Niagara Falls while experiencing local flavours of the region. The conference concluded with Chair's gala which feature entertainment by Greg Frewin: a Las Vegas-style magic show, proving that one is never too young for magic!



2015 ACEC Summit and National Convention

Tijana Smiljanic, ACEC-BC YPG Past Chair and ACEC Canada YPN representative

ACEC-BC Board Retreat

The ACEC-Board met Sept 10th to 12th for its annual retreat in Whistler, BC. This year we shifted focus away from overall strategic planning to instead tackle two long-standing challenges facing ACEC-BC members: price-based selection and onerous clauses in client-consultant agreements.

ACEC-BC has been grappling with these issues since its inception in 1975. This year the board met with past ACEC-BC directors to tap into their years of experience. Also, the board invited Deon Wilner, the President of Consulting Engineers Alberta, who brought an external perspective to the discussion. The group utilized a tactical approach to delve into the root causes of the problems, brainstorm ideas to address these root causes, and develop concrete actions.

After all the tough discussions, the group enjoyed a guided tasting tour of Whistler, sampling the local delicacies and taking in the sights of the Village.

Siobhan Robinson, Chair, ACEC-BC Provincial YPG Steering Committee

Participating in Our Local Community

As Young Professionals, we are not only encouraged to develop our technical skills, but also to develop our personal skills and make a positive impact in our local community. Through partnership with ACEC-BC, a great opportunity came up for us as young professionals in the Vancouver office to become involved in our community; Science World's Sci-Tech kids summer camp. During the camp, we hosted a 60 minute workshop for kids aged 10-12 years old, introducing them to engineering (what exactly engineering is, what engineers do, how to become an engineer,..) all while the kids worked in teams to complete their first engineering task - to build a floating and self-propelling paddle boat. Several of the YPs in the Vancouver office volunteered for this amazing camp, but Daniel and I jumped in as the Guinea pigs, volunteering for the first week of camp. We can both say without hesitation - it was amazing!



Both of us recently transferred from European offices where we did not have many opportunities to volunteer on behalf of our company. It's simply not that common on the other side of the pond. We did both have some experience with teaching children, Daniel used to teach sailing for kids as a summer job and I was a supervisor at summer camps, so we hoped we'd be able to put our skills to the test at Sci-Tech.

To make sure our engineering skills were up to snuff and we were actually qualified to build a paddle boat, a practice event was organized by ACEC-BC YPG before the actual camp began. During the practice event we discussed how we should instruct and motivate kids and, most importantly, built a test boat ourselves. Although building a paddleboat at 8am on a normal work day is fun, we came to one truly interesting conclusion: it is surprisingly time consuming to build a paddle boat. It took us, with all our excellent engineering skills, over half an hour to build an operating floating paddle boat.

A few weeks later it was finally show time, and we went to Science World to face our challenge. The kids were brilliant! They seemed really interested about our work, and had thousands of questions. There is nothing more encouraging than watching kids who are truly interested in what you are doing. One of the kids even told us that he was planning to become a civil engineer which we thought was really great!

We explained the task: build a floating paddle boat that uses a rubber band as its power source, and then drive the boat across a container of water. During our explanation we spoke about storing and releasing energy, the difference between potential and kinetic energy, and asked them for examples of kinetic and potential energy.

Before they could begin building, we helped the kids brainstorm where they find materials to build their boat, how they could get their boat to move. As we continued discussing their ideas we also encouraged them to sketch their design. The students could choose from a variety of materials to build their boat. Each material had its “token price” and each team received the same amount of tokens. The goal was for them to think not only about the technical side of the boat design, but also to about the cost. Our main task was to guide, motivate and encourage them without telling them exactly how the boat should look or how it should be built. Everyone from our group of kids was great; they figured out how to build a floating paddle boat (even if it didn’t move much) and really enjoyed it!

Getting involved in the Sci-Tech camp was a fantastic experience that brightened up our Wednesday, but moreover, it was a chance to contribute to the community and maybe inspire a few kids to become engineers. We would like to encourage everyone to take part in similar events in your area. Have a lot of fun and enjoy the experience like us!

Katerina Folvoska and Daniel Borbely, Hatch Mott MacDonald



Featured YP of the Quarter

Simon Lee, P.Eng, PMP

Simon Lee is a Professional Engineer and Senior Project Manager with Binnie’s Project Services Division. He graduated from UBC in 2008, and has been with Binnie for 5 years. Simon works with government organizations in providing project delivery services. This includes services ranging from assistance with procurement, quality management, risk control, as well as overall project management. Simon helps clients manage small to large projects - from specific individual project assignments to comprehensive programs that can last several years.

“We conduct a lot of meetings and correspond frequently via phone and emails. I personally enjoy the face to face meetings, interaction with clients and other consultants. This really helps you to build connections and get a greater understanding of everyone and their different needs.”

Simon’s career path at Binnie has been fast and challenging. The nature of his role requires that he step up to difficult or just complicated projects, inserting himself into an already established team with their own way of doing things. It takes courage. He recalls how he felt when he was selected to work with a new client.

“I was young and I knew going into that team they had been used to managing projects internally – who’s this kid at our doorstep? It was a good experience for me to convince them we could help manage the project.”

As a Project Manager working with busy clients who don’t have time to hold hands, Simon must be proactive, assertive, and get involved at the outset. He either dives in, or he risks losing the project. All that, and he must keep calm under pressure.



“No matter what you do, try to make yourself an integral part of the project, invaluable team member, providing value to the project. When I’m up against a challenge I break it down into options, what’s the best way to go about it?”

Simon’s current focus is providing project management services on solid waste infrastructure projects. He has been involved in several projects starting out as the Assistant Project Manager for construction and gas upgrades at the Vancouver Landfill, and working closely with the Binnie Senior Project Manager. Having proved himself on that project, Simon was given the responsibility of lead Project Manager for the Phase 3 West Construction Closure and Gas Upgrades Project and then the 2014 LFG and Leachate System Upgrades Project. On these projects, Simon has assisted in creating spreadsheets and documentation templates which track the schedule, budget and provide overall team coordination.

Simon is currently managing a project in northern BC which involves the design and construction of a new landfill and a new transfer station. Simon is responsible for managing the overall design and construction and working with the client to prepare procurement documents for design and construction contracts. He is also responsible for overseeing the project scope, budget, and schedule, and actively manages risks, quality, and communications with stakeholders.

For the last two years, Simon has attended the Solid Waste Association of North America’s Conference in BC to develop a deeper understanding of municipal solid waste management. Simon’s experience working in solid waste gives him a clear perspective of the challenges involved in working on landfills. Weather windows, settlement issues as well as ongoing filling and operations are all factors that Simon must take into account on these projects.

Do you know a Young Professional who deserves recognition? Nominate them for YP of the quarter by emailing info@acec-bc.ca

Social Media

To get information regarding upcoming YPG seminars and events please find us at your favourite social media outlet.



Like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/acecbc>,



Follow us on Twitter: @acecbc,



Join our group on LinkedIn: ACEC British Columbia Young Professionals Group, or



Check out our webpage: <http://www.acec-bc.ca/young-professionals>.

Young Professional Company Champions

Want to keep your company and yourself informed about ACEC-BC YPG events and updates? Become a Young Professional (YP) Company Champion! The YP Company Champion is the go-to person for whenever the ACEC-BC YPG steering committee needs to establish communication with a member firm’s YPs.

We are looking for one representative from each member firm to act as a liaison between their company and the ACEC-BC Young Professionals’ Group. Please email us at ypg@acec-bc.ca to become your firm’s ACEC-BC YPG Company Champion.