

## **ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Committee Name: Young Professionals

Submitted by: Aimee Corn

Report Date: March 31, 2022

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### **Committee Mission/Purpose**

The primary role of the USSD Committee on Young Professionals is to increase membership and participation of young professionals, defined as members 35 years of age and under, within USSD. It is the committee's vision that increasing organization involvement of this demographic provides longterm sustainability of USSD by providing connections, experiences, and opportunities which invest participants in the future of the organization. The YP Committee is one of the Standing Operating Committees established to promote and carry out USSD's objectives as well as to foster participation in other aspects of the organization, particularly through technical committees, conference presentations, and workshops.

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### **2021 Goals/Accomplishments**

The young professionals committee focused efforts on re-engaging members after the virtual annual conference in 2021. The committee continues to hold virtual committee meetings quarterly. These meetings have been well attended and offer ways for committee members to learn of upcoming engagement opportunities and provide feedback to the Leadership Team. We continue to welcome new members and encourage discussions about the hurdles young professionals face in the industry. Additionally, to engage members unable to attend the quarterly calls, the Leadership Team emails the distribution list with committee updates on an as needed basis, advertising vacant positions (e.g. YP Vice Chairs for other committees), requesting support on active initiatives, and summarizing committee activities. The committee leadership has continued to support the technical committees by emphasizing the importance of being involved as well as helping to fill vacant YP co-vice chair positions.

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### **2022 Goals**

#### **Advocate**

1. Encourage current YP members to attend and actively participate in USSD events.
2. Endeavor to create a diverse, inclusive, and open community where all USSD members are valued, respected, and welcomed as part of the community. The committee's efforts are focused toward junior-level professionals but restrictions due to age are limited to the greatest extent practicable.

#### **Educate**

1. Encourage technical paper writing and presentations from YP through advertisement of the young professional paper award.
2. Promote involvement of YPs through the use of USSD publications.
3. Provide an opportunity for knowledge transfer and prepare USSD for the next generation, ensuring the long-term future of USSD and the industry at large. This includes facilitation of mentorship but may not include a formal mentoring program.

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4. Support workshops within the YP Committee or in collaboration with other committees to improve and develop both technical and soft skills.

### Collaborate

1. Encourage chairpersons of other committees to attend YP functions to introduce their committees to the YPs and offer inclusion in committee activities.
2. Maintain representation on all technical committees, at least one Young Professional per committee.
3. Provide an opportunity for the young professionals to connect with each other to enable sharing of experiences.

### Cultivate

1. Solicit comments and suggestions from YP members to improve their experience.
2. Work with annual meeting organizing committee to ensure that there are events for Young Professionals to meet and network with each other.
3. Recruit new young members from various backgrounds such as owners, construction, academic (including students at all levels), regulatory, suppliers, practitioners, etc.

### What do you need to accomplish your 2022 goals?

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The young professionals committee will be transitioning leadership in 2022. The committee thanks Emily Schwartz for her amazing leadership over her tenure and attributes much of the committee's success to her tireless efforts. Aimee Corn will be transitioning to the chair of the committee at the Annual Conference, Yulia Zakrevskaya will continue her role as co-vice chair, and the committee will hold an election over the summer to fill the vacant co-vice chair. The committee appreciates the support of the organization to encourage young professionals to join and become involved – and potentially running for the vacant position.

As the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted our whole industry, the needs of the young professionals have likely changed over the last few years. The committee appreciates the support of the board and the members as we begin to evaluate what this means for our committee. We plan to publish a survey for the students and young professionals to complete to help guide our efforts, and potentially adjust our goals for the upcoming years. The more data and feedback we collect, the better we can align our committee with the needs of the students and young professionals of the organization.

We thank everyone who jumps at opportunities to support the young professionals and students – the folks that don't hesitate to participate in the young/seasoned professionals' events, those who attend our happy hours, and everyone who supports the young professionals and students in submitting abstracts and presenting at conferences.