

2026 ASCE NATIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT HEADS CONFERENCE

MICHELSON HALL, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES, CA

JUNE 1–3, 2026

FINAL AGENDA AND PROGRAM INFORMATION*

Day 1 – Monday June 1, 2026		
<i>Unless otherwise specified, all events are in Michelson Hall (MCB) Room 101, 1002 Childs Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089-3502. MCB is approximately a 12-minute walk from the USC Hotel. A USC Map is available at maps.usc.edu.</i>		
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Conference Check-In Available	
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Light Breakfast - Sponsored by Auburn University	
Pre-Conference Sessions		
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Session A - Supporting Women and Women-Identifying Chairs Shannon Bartelt-Hunt, University of Nebraska-Lincoln <i>All are invited to join us for coffee and networking to help build relationships within the community!</i>	
9:45 AM – 11:00 AM	Session B - Success for “New” Chairs Workshop Elise Miller-Hooks, George Mason University and Xiong (Bill) Yu, Case Western Reserve University <i>Panel discussion and table-top activities with experienced chairs to address challenges and opportunities in department and program leadership—great for new and continuing chairs alike!</i>	
11:15 AM – 12:30 PM	Networking Lunch – Sponsored by University of Memphis	
Conference Begins		
12:30 PM – 12:45 PM	Session 1 - Welcome and Introduction from Conference Host Burçin Becerik-Gerber, Conference Host, University of Southern California	
12:45 PM – 1:00 PM	Session 2 – Welcome and Department Heads Advisory and Coordinating Council (DHACC) Update Peter Dusicka, DHACC Chair, Portland State University	

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1:00 PM – 2:45 PM		Session 3 - Keynote Speaker Leading from the Middle: Building Your Capacity to Lead Change Susan Elrod, Former Chancellor / Professor Emerit, Indiana University South Bend <i>Higher education is in the midst of profound change, and department chairs are uniquely positioned, and pressured, to respond. As middle-level leaders, chairs both shape and implement change, often navigating competing demands from above and below. This interactive session introduces a practical framework for leading systemic change more strategically, drawn from the Change Leadership Toolkit. Participants will also explore seven capacities that effective change leaders need to exhibit, and through small group discussion, identify concrete ways to strengthen their own change leadership practice. Participants will leave with renewed energy and a personal plan for becoming more effective change leaders in their departments and institutions.</i>
	Sponsored by Clemson University, George Mason University and Oregon Institute of Technology	  
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	Networking Break – Light Refreshments	
3:00 PM – 4:45 PM	Session 4 - Updates from ASCE Leadership and Discussion - Town Hall Format • Peter Dusicka, DHACC Chair, Portland State University – introduction and moderator • Marsha D. Anderson Bomar, Ph.D., H.ITE, AICP, ENV SP, NAE, F.ASCE, ASCE President • Rossana D’Antonio, P.E., GE, F.ASCE, ASCE President-Elect Official Nominee	
4:45 PM – 5:00 PM	Group Photo – Ginsburg Hall	

5:00 PM – 5:30 PM	Break / Travel to Reception and Dinner
5:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Networking Reception / Dinner – Featuring: • Student Entrepreneurship Activities • Innovate x LA: Das Family Student Competition • Antevy Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fund – Solution of Grand Challenges in Civil and Environmental Engineering Disciplines <i>Location: Heritage Hall, 3501 Watt Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089 - walking distance from conference venue (approximately 4 minutes) and hotel (approximately 9 minutes).</i>

Day 2 – Tuesday June 2, 2026		
7:45 AM – 8:30 AM	Light Breakfast – Sponsored by The University of Alabama	
Sessions 5–7 are designed to build on the success of the 2025 ASCE Education Summit held at Case Western Reserve University. The conference centered on three overarching objectives (ASCE 5-5-5 Priorities): ● Identify Top 5 Essential Professional Skills needed for the future workforce ● Define Top 5 Critical Technical Skills leveraging emerging technologies for innovation & problem-solving ● Develop Top 5 Engaging Outreach Strategies to attract and scale the next generation of civil engineers The Summit also included a distinctive series of Change Management Workshops, providing tools for developing shared change goals, building industry-academia partnerships, and creating actionable implementation plans. Participants made 39 formal commitments to change, including curricular redesigns, expanded industry collaborations, target outreach programs and integration of emerging technologies into coursework.		
8:30 AM – 9:15 AM	Session 5 – Converting Top 5 Outreach Strategies to Action Plans David Sanders, Iowa State University and Jennifer Ogle, Clemson University <i>In this session we will build on the outreach strategies from the Education Summit to develop action plans for implementing sustainable and scalable outreach activities at the K-12 level.</i>	
9:15 AM – 9:45 AM	Session 6 – Five x Five: Inspiration From Civil Engineering Department Change Makers In The Field Jennifer Ogle, Clemson University <i>We will invite five Civil Engineering Department Change Makers to share their experiences in making real changes to courses, curricula, programs, facilities, faculty development, K12 outreach, assessment and student experience. Grab these five snapshots and try making change in your department!</i>	
9:45 AM – 10:30 AM	Session 7 - Developing Change Statements to Improve Communication in Civil Engineering Curricula Juan Caicedo, University of South Carolina and Jennifer Ogle, Clemson University <i>Building on the Top 5 Professional Skills identified at the Education Summit, this interactive activity will identify common challenges regarding communication in our curricula; develop actionable change statements; converge on 5–10 prioritized statements with broad support, and capture both prioritized outputs and a full dataset for post-conference sharing.</i>	
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Networking Break – Light Refreshments	

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Session 8 - Civil Engineering Artificial Intelligence Curriculum and Student Preparedness - Burçin Becerik-Gerber, University of Southern California, Moderator - Robert Otani, Chief Technology Officer and Managing Principal, Thornton Tomasetti - Steven Dell’Orto, Founder and CEO, ConCntric - David Gerber, University of Southern California <i>AI is rapidly reshaping civil engineering practice, raising urgent questions for academic preparation. Four industry leaders will share insights on workforce needs, evolving engineering roles, and how curricula can better prepare graduates for AI-enabled practice.</i>	
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Networking Lunch – Sponsored by The University of Alabama	
	ASCE Walter LeFevre Award and Thomas A. Lenox Excellence in Civil Engineering Education Award Dion Coward, American Society of Civil Engineers and Peter Dusicka, Portland State University Brief Chi Epsilon Update Robert Bertini, The University of Alabama	
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Session 9 – The Future of Infrastructure: Industry Engagement in a Rapidly Changing Environment Ronald N. Tutor, Executive Chairman, Board of Directors, Tutor Perini <i>Heavy civil construction is undergoing rapid change—reshaping risk, leadership, workforce needs, and project delivery across the U.S. This session offers department heads industry-grounded insights on engaging partners, strengthening talent pipelines, and aligning civil engineering education with the future of infrastructure.</i>	
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	Networking Break – Light Refreshments	
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	Session 10 - Sustaining Our People: Faculty and Student Wellness in Civil Engineering Lorena Duran, LCSW, Ed.D., Director of Student Wellness, USC Viterbi Admissions & Student Engagement <i>Faculty and student wellness has become a critical leadership responsibility amid growing academic, professional, and societal pressures. This session explores evidence-based strategies and leadership practices to foster healthier, more resilient civil engineering departments.</i>	
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	Networking Break – Light Refreshments	
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Session 11 - Engineering LA28: Megaproject Planning, Innovation, and Preparing the Next Generation Sam Morrissey, Vice President, Transportation, LA28	

	<i>Preparing for the LA28 Olympic Games presents unprecedented challenges in infrastructure, transportation, governance, and innovation at metropolitan scale. This session offers department heads real-world insights from practice—and lessons they can translate into curricula, research priorities, and workforce preparation for large, high-impact civil engineering projects.</i>
5:00 PM – 5:30 PM	Break / Travel to Reception and Dinner
5:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Networking Reception / Dinner Featuring Tour of Sonny Astani Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Facilities <i>Location: Amy King Dundon-Berchtold University Club of USC - walking distance from conference venue (approximately 10 minutes) and hotel (approximately 7 minutes).</i>

Day 3 – Wednesday June 3, 2026		
7:45 AM – 8:30 AM	Light Breakfast – Sponsored by University of Miami	
Success as a Chair: serving as a department chair requires navigating complex, high-stakes responsibilities that extend well beyond academic programs. Sessions 12–14 focus on core dimensions of chair success—effective annual reviews, advancement and fundraising strategies, and practical approaches to ABET accreditation and assessment. Together, these conversations provide actionable guidance, shared wisdom, and tools chairs can apply immediately in their leadership roles.		
8:30 AM – 9:15 AM	Session 12 - Making Reviews Matter: Best Practices for Faculty and Staff Annual Evaluations • Timothy M. Pinkston, Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs, USC Viterbi School of Engineering • Jennifer Ogle, Clemson University • David Sanders, Iowa State University <i>Annual reviews play a critical role in faculty development, accountability, and departmental culture—but only when done well. This session highlights practical, effective approaches to faculty and staff annual evaluations that promote clarity, growth, fairness, and alignment with departmental goals.</i>	
9:15 AM – 10:00 AM	Session 13 – Advancement and Fundraising Insights, Tips, and Tricks • Burçin Becerik-Gerber, University of Southern California, Moderator • Christine Napolitano, Assistant Dean, Advancement, USC Viterbi School of Engineering • Don Webster, Georgia Institute of Technology • Jacqueline MacDonald Gibson, NC State University <i>Successful advancement and fundraising are increasingly central to a department chair’s leadership portfolio. Drawing on diverse institutional perspectives, this session shares practical insights, strategies, and lessons learned to help chairs build strong partnerships, engage donors effectively, and support long-term departmental success.</i>	
10:00 AM – 10:15 AM	Networking Break – Light Refreshments	
10:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Session 14 – Navigating ABET: Updates, Insights and Practical Guidance • Robert Bertini, University of Alabama • Shannon Bartelt-Hunt, University of Nebraska-Lincoln • Jennifer Ogle, Clemson University <i>ABET visits offer valuable lessons about what works well—and where programs often struggle. Drawing on real accreditation experiences, this session shares practical insights, common pitfalls, and proven approaches to help chairs navigate ABET with greater confidence and effectiveness.</i>	

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Session 15 - Conference Wrap-Up • Peter Dusicka, DHACC Chair, Portland State University • 2027 NCEDHC Announcement (June 7-9, 2027) • Conference Feedback Survey (QR Code) <i>Join us for a summary of this year's conference as well as an announcement and "save the date" for next year's 2027 NCEDHC! We hope to see you there!</i>
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*Subject to change

Post-Conference DHACC Meeting	
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM	DHACC Meeting (Invitation Only) Location: Ginsburg Hall Boardroom