Spring 2009

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President’s Message
Karen Mohammadi, 2009 Southern District ITE President

Spring is in the air! For all of us SDITE folks, that means that it is time for our Annual Meeting. The Alabama section could not have selected a better site for the event than the Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort and Spa. Our members will enjoy natural beauty and luxury, not to mention award-winning golf courses! Please join us for the 57th Annual Southern District ITE Meeting in Birmingham from April 19 through 22, 2009.

This year is off to an interesting start for transportation professionals as we wait to see how the stimulus bill will impact our companies, businesses, universities and communities. This uncertainty may have some people rethinking their involvement in organizations like SDITE. You should. This is the perfect time to step up and take a more active role. As a District we have made great strides in being member focused but we need your help to keep the momentum rolling and get projects completed.

Continued on Page 2.

The ARRA Effect
Recovery.gov, ITE information (edited)

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Totaling $787 billion in spending, ARRA is, according to recovery.gov, “an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The Recovery and Reinvestment Act is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression.”

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ALSITE Presses Forward with SALTEENS Project

Chris Sellers (AL)

ALSITE continues to work hard on its service project to promote safe driving among teens. SALTEENS, which stands for Saving Alabama Teens: An ALSITE Safe Driving Initiative, is nearing its final stages. The goal of this project is to create presentation materials for our members to present to teens in Alabama schools, youth groups, and civic organizations.

We are currently working on Phase III of the project. The presentation script has been finalized, and the film class at Vestavia Hills high school is currently filming the necessary video clips. A young lady who survived a horrible accident during her teenage years has agreed to share her testimony, and a local celebrity is lending his voice to narrate portions of the presentation. We are also in the process of preparing additional distribution materials, which include a list of resources and tips for teens, parents, and other adults who work with teens. We plan to share the completed presentation as part of a technical session at the SDITE meeting in April.

The SDITE Annual Meeting is always a great opportunity for transportation professionals to network, exchange ideas, and learn about new trends in the profession. We hope you will make a commitment to join us in Birmingham for a few days of professional development and renewal.

-Becky White and Scott Rumble, LAC Co-Chairs

How are we becoming more member-focused?

- We have renewed our commitment to provide financial incentives to section and student section presidents to attend the Annual Meeting. We also expanded this program to cover faculty advisors this year.

- In an effort to help all current and future District Officers and Committee members to better understand their roles, Past President Craig Hanchey has taken on the rewrite of both the Section Bylaws and District Operations Manual. The Bylaw changes will allow the District to provide our members with the ease of electronic voting (if members approve). We have added a new award program in an effort to honor and recognize outstanding educators. Award Chairperson Steve Strength and his committee have a tough job ahead selecting one person among the many great candidates with which our District is blessed.

- Bill Seymour continues to do an outstanding job leading the Strategic Planning Committee. The committee needs members from each section to represent their sections on all sub-committees. I encourage SDITE members to ask their section officers and section representatives how they can serve. Cindy Pionke has offered to chair the Annual Meeting Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee. Her leadership will bring much-needed support to our future LACs. Her committee is currently working on rewriting the Annual Meeting Manual, as well.

- We have a new student section. South Carolina State’s charter was presented to them at their March 24th meeting. Thank you South Carolina section and all members involved in making this happen.

- We also have a new website in the works. Stay tuned for more information but the new site will include some updated features and will reduce the workload of our section members in maintaining our website. Much appreciation goes to Mike Reese and Craig Hanchey in maintaining our site over the past years.

I look forward to working with and for each of you this year. See you in Birmingham!
2009 SDITE Annual Meeting Incentive Program Announced!

Jim Westmoreland (NC) and Tim White (VA)

The SDITE Board of Directors approved the 2009 SDITE Annual Meeting Incentive Program on December 8, 2008. The idea was developed last year by the Workforce Development Team as part of the SDITE Strategic Plan implementation. The incentive offers a cash stipend to all qualifying Section Presidents (or other Section leader), Student Chapter Presidents (or other Student Chapter leader), and added this year, Faculty Advisors.

The purpose of the stipend is to help reduce or eliminate the cost of the SDITE Annual Meeting registration fee to encourage greater participation by Section and Student Chapter leaders in the upcoming 2009 SDITE Annual Meeting in Birmingham, AL on April 19-22, 2009.

Eligibility:

- Current Section President (or other Section leader, see below)
- Current Student Chapter President (or other Student Chapter leader, see below)
- Current Student Chapter Faculty Advisors
- Other Leader Eligibility. If the Section or Student Chapter President cannot attend the meeting or is already covered via some other incentive or stipend, this SDITE Annual Meeting incentive is transferable to the next highest level elected leader in the Section or Student Chapter (i.e., Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer)

Stipend:

$120.00 each – Current Section Presidents (Alabama, Deep South, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina, Virginia, and North Carolina), Current Student Chapter Presidents (all currently active SDITE Student Chapters), and Student Chapter Faculty Advisors.

For additional information or details contact:

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Candidates for ITE International Vice President

W. Hibbett Neel, P.E., ITE Fellow

President/CEO, Neel-Schaffer Inc., Jackson, MS, USA

I am honored to have been nominated as a candidate for Vice President. ITE has been an important part of my professional career and I am looking forward to applying my experience to help make ITE an even stronger organization.

ITE is the worldwide advocate for effective transportation solutions. ITE provides for the professional development needs of its members. I am committed to strengthening this mandate in every way possible.

In addition to supporting our technical professional development initiatives and the many specialty councils, I will focus on the following goals:

- Expand marketing of ITE and the transportation profession to ensure funding of transportation improvements.
- Support professional development of our members to provide the training we need to be recognized as transportation leaders.
- Support student chapters and the professional development of our young professionals.

For more details, please visit: www.ite.org/candidateshibbetrneel

Robert C. Wunderlich, P.E., ITE Fellow

Senior Managing Director—Transportation and Engineering, City of Garland, TX, USA

“Every day our members work to make the world’s transportation systems better. Our members care whether people can walk, ride, drive or be driven safely and efficiently. It’s important work—work that makes a difference in peoples’ lives. We do it with passion, caring, and a sense of responsibility that goes beyond ourselves.”

Vision for ITE

- Give all professionals working on transportation issues a home in ITE.
- Build upon our clear leadership in the staples of the profession so that we have the information we need to do our jobs.
- Explore and understand the larger issues of society so that we are positioned to address them.
- Provide professionals with electronic, virtual workspaces so that we can easily collaborate on boards, councils and committees.
- Make sure our members can access the vast amount of knowledge we have developed—quickly and easily, from wherever we work in the world.
- Tell the world about our capabilities. We need to make sure that public leaders understand that our expertise is vital to solving transportation problems.

Why Robert?

Robert leads. He has consistently accepted and succeeded in leadership positions in ITE, his career and community.

Robert knows that the strength of ITE lies within its members and their efforts to make themselves and their profession better.

Robert innovates. He brought a teen driving safety program to Garland that has been introduced into all the high schools.

Robert listens and acts. He started student presentation poster sessions at District Meetings after consulting with student members about their needs.

Robert understands the big picture and the day-to-day needs of ITE members. Although he is on his city’s executive management team, he still practices transportation engineering with his staff.

For more details, please visit: www.robert-1.ite.org
DOE Funding Available
*State and local governments can apply now for new grants*


Over $2.6 billion in formula grants are now available to states, U.S. territories, local governments and Indian tribes under the Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) Program. Federal grants may be used to reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions and for improvements in energy efficiency.

Section 7 of the funding announcement states that these grants provide opportunities for the development and implementation of transportation programs to conserve energy used in transportation, including but not limited to:

- development and promotion of zoning guidelines or requirements that promote energy efficient development;
- development of infrastructure such as bike lanes and pathways and pedestrian walkways;
- synchronization of traffic signals;
- state/locals/regional integrated planning activities (i.e. transportation, housing, environmental, energy, land use) with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled;
- incentive programs to reduce commutes by single-occupancy vehicles;
- improvements in operational and system efficiency of the transportation system, such as implementation of intelligent transportation system (ITS) strategies;
- idle-reduction technologies and/or facilities to conserve energy and reduce harmful air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from freight movement; and
- installation of solar panels on interstate rights of way to conserve energy in highway operations and maintenance activities.

Section 12 of the announcement pertains to traffic signals and street lighting, stating, "Entities may use grant funds to replace traffic signals and street lighting with energy efficient lighting technologies, including light emitting diodes; and any other technology of equal or greater energy efficiency."

*ITS, signal upgrades, and bike/ped facilities are all qualifiers for EE CBG funding.*

State-level allocations of formula grants (does not include amounts for eligible local cities and counties).

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To open ITE’s Spring Conference in Phoenix last month, keynote speakers Anthony (Tony) R. Kane, Ph.D., director of engineering and technical services for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and Randell Iwasaki, chief deputy director for the California Department of Transportation, addressed the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities that ARRA funding presents to the transportation engineering community.

In his presentation, Kane urged transportation professionals to prove their ability to deliver strong projects that will build the case for management and operations funding in the upcoming transportation reauthorization legislation.

While much discussion about the stimulus package has focused on “shovel-ready” projects, which are more focused on construction than maintenance, it is important to emphasize that management and operations projects serve a critical role in the congestion mitigation and incident management requirements surrounding these projects. Management and operations projects also meet the ARRA legislation’s goal of creating real jobs in a short amount of time.

Iwasaki stressed the need to put forward projects that have gone past the planning stage, are ready for implementation and can clearly show how people will be put to work and for how long. The speakers noted that possible funding for transportation-related projects can also be identified in other allocated funding categories, such as training, education and energy.

While the challenges in obligating funding and executing projects in a short amount of time with a high level of transparency can be great, so can be the rewards.
“News of the South” is the official publication of the Southern District (5) of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Any comments or suggestions are welcome and should be submitted to Jeff Hammond, Editor (615) 370-8410, jeff-hammond@rpmtraffic.net

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