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President’s Message

Becky White (AL)

It is hard for me to believe that summer is already here and my term as SDITE President is halfway complete. I’m enjoying so much the opportunity to interact with the Executive Board and the leaders and members in each Section. In recent months we’ve achieved some significant milestones in SDITE. Together, we:

- Established a balanced budget for 2012 and purchased our first Liability Insurance policy
- Adopted a new Annual Meeting Manual
- Approved our 26th Student Chapter Charter for Tennessee State University
- Raised over $2,000 for Student Services through a Silent Auction and Pledge Drive at the Annual Meeting
- Supported Leadership Training in the Deep South Section and at the ITE Spring Technical Conference, and
- Hosted our 60th annual meeting.

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SDITE in the Land of Basketball, Bourbon, and Bluegrass

Scott Walker (KY)

The 2012 SDITE / GLDITE Joint Annual Meeting took place at the Hilton, April 15-18 in Lexington, KY. Over 465 registrants (including participants, spouses and ABD) enjoyed their time in Lexington which included a variety of technical and social activities. The meeting consisted of attendees from the Southern District (349) and the Great Lakes District (71) as well as folks not directly associated with either (45).

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Annual Meeting

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The meeting unofficially started on Saturday afternoon as nearly 40 participants attended the Bluegrass Stakes at Keeneland Race Track. After a brief rain shower at the beginning of the day, the skies cleared for a small tailgate followed by the racing. As far as we know, no one struck it rich that day.

On the official start date on Sunday, the golf outing experienced the same beautiful weather that was seen on Saturday afternoon. Following the Board Meeting on Sunday afternoon, attendees enjoyed the Welcome Reception and four hospitality suites.

The ABD Event on Monday night was at the Red Mile Harness Race Track only a couple of miles from the hotel. In addition to a bourbon tasting from Buffalo Trace, the Big River Band played a variety of country / southern rock tunes. The band featured a special guest, “Slick” Joe Fick, also known as the “energizer bunny” of slap bass. If that wasn’t enough, we witnessed our own attendees racing out on the Red Mile race track since no horses were available for racing. While there may have been some betting on that as well, again, no one struck it rich that day. However, congrats to Mike Ridgeway (SC) for completing the full lap.

Tuesday was another fully packed day ranging from technical sessions to the Annual Banquet. By the time Wednesday rolled around, the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) made sure everyone had what they needed and subsequently collapsed on the floor from exhaustion. In all seriousness, the LAC would like to thank everyone for their participation in the meeting.
We had a great time in Lexington for the SDITE/GLDITE Annual Meeting! The Kentucky Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) did an outstanding job preparing for the meeting and providing so many special touches to welcome our members and guests. Frequent servings of bourbon balls at the registration table were a huge hit as were all the social events and technical sessions. Scott Walker and the entire LAC team are to be commended for their hard work and attention to detail.

It was a pleasure for me to get acquainted with some new ITE friends from the Great Lakes District while in Lexington. The GLDITE Chairman and International Director is Colleen Hill-Stramsak, a committed ITE leader and strong supporter of GLDITE’s student members. Colleen and I shared the duties to preside over the meeting, and through all the coordination we became ITE sisters. I suspect many others in attendance made new friends as well. The feedback from the joint meeting has been very positive. It seems that folks from both Districts enjoyed the opportunity to exchange ideas and see different approaches to ITE traditions.

It’s tempting to think that nothing much happens with SDITE after the annual meeting is over. That certainly is not the case! Our strategic planning task groups will be working hard to make progress on their 2012 goals. These groups met in Lexington, and each task group chair has a good plan with specific task assignments. I want to thank Cindy Pionke, Strategic Plan Chair, and all the task group leaders (Richard Atkins, Rod Turochy, Radha Swayampakala, Jeff Ingham, and Hollis Loveday) for your effort and positive leadership on behalf of the District membership.

Summer is a busy time for Section meetings. In May and early June, I attended Section meetings in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Alabama (a joint meeting with Deep South). The SDITE Executive Board is committed to sending a Board representative to a meeting in every Section this year. In addition to supporting our Sections, we are providing assistance to the Georgia Section as they host the annual International ITE meeting in Atlanta this August. The SDITE will help host a Spouse/Guest room and several SDITE members will facilitate sessions from the Leadership Development Program as part of the conference technical program. I hope we will see a strong attendance from SDITE members in Atlanta. The dates for the International meeting are August 12-15. Put it on your calendar and meet me in Atlanta!

ITE International Back in the Southern District
Atlanta to Host Top Transportation Meeting

For the first time since 2000, ITE International will hold its Annual Meeting & Exhibit in the Southern District. You already know how great a city Atlanta is, so here’s some information on the meeting itself.

What threatens the way you do business? What are the greatest challenges in performing your job? What future challenges do you anticipate? The ITE 2012 Annual Meeting and Exhibit will address these critical questions and more. Join your peers August 12–15 in Atlanta, GA as ITE delves into the most burning issues and knowledge needs facing our profession.

The program will engage the audience in sharing knowledge, expertise, and ideas on emergent issues, provide multifaceted approaches to addressing transportation challenges, and explore emerging trends in the industry.

The meeting content will include sessions in a mix of presentation formats including hands on practical application training workshops. These sessions will focus on state-of-the practice, advancement of the profession, and emerging issues designed to benefit transportation professionals in the public and private sector and students. Additionally, networking events provide opportunities to connect with one another outside of the classroom.
Bill Seymour, Senior Transportation Engineer with HDR, was elected as SDITE’s incoming Secretary/Treasurer in Lexington. Some information on Mr. Seymour:

Bill received his B.S.C.E. and M.S.C.E. from the University of Kentucky. He is currently a Senior Transportation Engineer with HDR Engineering, Inc. Previously, he was a Senior Associate with Gresham Smith and Partners. He had a career of 30 years with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet where he served as Assistant to the Secretary, Chief District Engineer in District 5, Louisville, as Transportation Engineering Branch Manager for Traffic and Permits and as Assistant District Engineer for Planning.

Prior service to ITE International, SDITE, ITE section, and to other organizations and other qualifications:

- Secretary/Treasurer, VP and President of KYSITE; served on two LAC’s
- Kentucky District Representative to the Southern District
- Chairman of the Workforce Development Team on the Strategic Planning Committee of the Southern District
- Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee for three years
- Presently a member of the Leadership Oversight Team in SDITE

What challenges and opportunities will the profession face in the coming three years?

- The economy – less work and tighter budgets
- Workforce development - recruiting and retaining transportation engineers and planners - is both a challenge and an opportunity
- Professional and technical development – Considering mandatory continuing education, providing or promoting meaningful and cost effective professional and technical development is also a challenge and an opportunity

What challenges and opportunities does ITE face?

- Finances will be a challenge but also an opportunity to re-invent the way we do things
- The economy and travel restrictions are affecting member involvement
- Lack of public sector and young member participation is both a challenge and an opportunity

What are your goals and priorities as a member of the executive board?

- Continue work on SDITE Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives
- Improve financial status of SDITE
- Increase public sector involvement
- Enhance reasons for young engineers and planners to become involved

How do we do this?

- Work with ITE International on Leadership Development
- Operate within a balanced budget; use Annual Meeting return to increase Reserve Fund
- Engage DOT’s and local government through meetings, presentations and career development

An early congratulations!

...to Hibbett Neel (DS), a long-time friend and supporter of the Southern District. Neel is running unopposed for ITE International Vice President.
**2011 SDITE Individual Awards Presented in Lexington**

*Karen Mohammadi (KY)*

Award recipients were recognized at the SDITE Annual Meeting Banquet in Lexington. The winners were:

**Joseph M. Thomas Outstanding Young Member Award – Radha Krishna Swayampakala**

Radha currently serves as the President of the North Carolina Section. He has helped develop and implement web enhancements to allow on-line registration for meetings, online membership renewals for Affiliates, and online award nominations. He also has initiated FOCUS 2012, a forward-thinking action agenda for his section to maximize member involvement in ITE activities and to increase overall membership.

At the District Level, Radha currently serves as Chair of the Information, Communications & Outreach Committee. He was the developer and lead editor of SDITE’s new e-newsletter “The Connector” and is very active with the Local Arrangements Committee in planning next year’s SDITE 2013 Annual Meeting in Charlotte. At the International level, Radha serves as Southern District’s Liaison to the Traffic Engineering Council. In 2009, Radha was awarded the Young Professional of the Year Award by the North Carolina Section. He was also identified as one of the “Top 20 Under 40” in the southeast by the Engineering News-Record in 2011.

**Excellence in Transportation Engineering Education Award – Dr. Peter S. Parsonson**

Dr. Parsonson has been a very active leader in education particularly in the graduate and doctoral programs at Georgia Tech, authoring research and publishing numerous reports and technical papers. He developed an innovative traffic signal laboratory to teach students. He travelled to South America for multi-week teaching assignments in countries that wanted professional education for their employees and contractors. He taught fluently in Spanish and Portuguese.

Dr. Parsonson developed a national expert witness practice in transportation engineering during the past 35 years. He has testified as an expert in hundreds of cases and received the confidence of attorneys. One colleague said, “He is one of the best expert witnesses for traffic engineering in the world. His knowledge and ability to explain complex situations to a jury is amazing.”

He has been an inspiration and a friend to his students. Many professional traffic engineers in the Southern District owe their positive graduate experiences to him.

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**2011 SDITE Student Awards Winners Recognized**

Winners of the 2011 Southern District Awards for students and student chapters were announced at the Annual Meeting in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Student Chapter Award**

This year, 19 student chapters submitted reports for the competition. Winning chapters are listed below:

- **Best Student Chapter Award – Georgia Tech**
- **Best Student Chapter Runner-Up Award – Clemson University**

**Student Paper Awards**

- **Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award – Md Shah Imran from the University of Alabama – Birmingham for a paper titled “Application of Transit-Oriented Development in a Small Community”**
- **Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Runner-Up – Qiang Yang from the University of Tennessee for his paper titled “Driver Behaviors on Rural Highway with and without Curbs – A Driving Simulator Based Study”**
- **Outstanding Undergraduate Student Paper Award – Kelsey Ford from the University of Memphis for a paper titled “Traffic Calming at Campus School”**
- **Outstanding Undergraduate Student Paper Runner-Up – Evan Schalton from UNC-Charlotte for his paper titled “Dynamic Traffic Signal Optimization Using Dedicated Short Range Communication”**
John F. Exnicios Government Employee Outstanding Service Award – Howard R. Chapman

Howard Chapman received his B.S. degree from VMI and a M.S. degree from the University of South Carolina. He is a Registered Professional Engineer and a Lieutenant in the US Air Force Reserves/Retired. He was the Director of the Department of Traffic and Transportation for Charleston, South Carolina and then became the Director of the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA), overseeing the changeover of the system from operation by the electric utility to operation by the newly formed CARTA.

For one year after Hurricane Hugo, Howard served as Deputy to the Mayor of Charleston and assisted with distribution of food, clothing, and building supplies throughout the Lowcountry. He has served as Director of Emergency Operations for Charleston and has worked with the South Carolina Downtown Development Association on a number of Main Street programs throughout the state. He has been called on by the Governor of South Carolina, the Lieutenant Governor of Florida, and the US Secretary of Transportation to share his expertise in hurricane evacuation and assistance to hurricane victims.

Howard has served in all offices of the South Carolina Division and is a Past President of the Southern Section. He is a recipient of the Southern District’s Hensley and Hoose Awards and the South Carolina Section Outstanding Traffic Engineer of the Year Award.

Marble J. Hensley Outstanding Individual Activity Award – Cynthia M. Pionke

Cindy Pionke received her B.S. degree from the University of Tennessee and a M.S. degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. She is a registered professional engineer and has a nearly 30 year engineering career spanning three states with employment in both the public and private sector. She worked for the Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission from 1991 to 1998. Since then she has been employed by Knox County as the Director of Planning and Development. Cindy received the Tennessee ASCE Government Engineer Award in 2004. She also helps support science and engineering careers through the Society of Women Engineers and the Science Olympiad.

Cindy is a Past President of the Tennessee Section and received the Section’s Volunteer Distinguished Service Award in 2007 for outstanding service and commitment. She served as the Local Arrangements Committee Co-Chair for the 2007 Southern District Meeting in Knoxville. She headed the difficult tasks of updating the District’s Annual Meeting Manual and currently serves as Chair of the District’s Strategic Planning Committee.

Herman J. Hoose Distinguished Service Award – Dr. Daniel S. Turner

Dan Turner taught civil engineering for more than 36 years before retiring and is currently recognized as a Professor Emeritus at the University of Alabama. He has undergraduate and masters degrees in civil engineering from the University of Alabama and a PhD from Texas A&M. He has over 300 publications and 500 presentations at professional meetings. Dan is both a Registered Professional Engineer and Registered Land Surveyor and was also a former Chartered Civil Engineer in the United Kingdom. He is a National Honor Member of Chi Epsilon and previously served as the National President of ASCE.

Dan currently serves as a board member and Secretary for the Alabama Board of Licensure for Engineers and Land Surveyors. He is also instrumental in conducting a yearly program known as the Advanced Transportation Institute which is a three-day course for minority students to recruit professionals for the transportation industry. He is an emeritus member of the TRB Committee AHB65, Operational Effects of Geometrics.

Dan served an instrumental role in the Southern District Leadership Oversight Team. Along with other distinguished Southern District members, he has spent the last three years developing and presenting the materials being used by the Southern District to train leaders in transportation.

Dan is a Past President of the Alabama Division and the Southern District. He is a past recipient of the District’s Hensley Award and the Excellence in Transportation Engineering Education Award.
News of the South — Newsletter of the Southern District (5)

“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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