

The Mid-Allegheny Minutes



January 15, 2025 Dinner Meeting

The third meeting of the ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section 2024-2025 program held at the Indiana Country Club. Opening remarks were presented by ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section President, **Sean Hart, PE**. The presentation by **Doug Zubal, PE** the PennDOT District 10 District Geotechnical Engineer.

The presentation discussed design, construction, and maintenance of the numerous landslides the District has addressed. Common causes include drainage issues, coal seams, including mine subsidence, and clay seams. Construction of fill bench buttresses with rock help to resolve when a coal layer is present. Doug discussed how slope pipe inclinometers are used to determine if the land slide is getting progressively worse. Two repair details mentioned include the pile dowel repair detail and rock slope stabilization detail.

The section appreciates Doug for sharing his knowledge and filling us in on the approaches taken by the District.

February 19, 2025 Joint Dinner Meeting

The fourth meeting of the ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section 2024-2025 program was a joint meeting with the ASHE Altoona section, presented at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ) Living-Learning Center-Heritage Hall in Johnstown, PA. Opening remarks were presented by ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section President, **Sean Hart, PE**.

After dinner, the professional panel discussion was moderated by ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section Director, **Bob Schmidt, PE**. The panel was comprised of a diverse group of industry professionals who fielded questions from students and attendees related to various aspects of our careers in civil engineering. The objective with these panel meetings is to provide opportunity for the students to extract the experiences from these seasoned professionals, as they begin their careers. Questions range from what to expect in an interview, to how one determines what discipline they may be best suited for within the industry. The panel provided unselfish feedback and insights for the students and all discussion appeared well received.

The UPJ students presented on the ASCE Pitt-Johnstown Activities including the Steel Bridge Competition, Concrete Canoe Competition, Professor Houston talked about the UPJ engineering program and the importance of functions like ASHE, ASCE with professional development. He also discussed his efforts for obtaining the Order of the Engineer for students to promote professionalism and ethics. The meeting had a great turnout emphasizing how many people value the future of the engineers that will carry forward the profession.



Photos: Doug Zubal

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Photos: Brian Houston (UPJ Faculty Advisor), Nicki Donahoe, Bruce Schweitzer, Patrick Hoffman, Anthony Pioli, Dave Baum, Andy Rebovich, Amanda Brown, and Luke Turko (Panel Participants) (left to right)



Photos: UPJ Students presenting on their ASCE Activities

March 12, 2025 Dinner Meeting

The ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section held the fifth dinner meeting of the 2024-2025 program at the Indiana Country Club. Opening remarks were presented by ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section President, **Sean Hart, PE**. CEC presented on the Mon-Fayette Expressway and Reconfiguring the Duquesne Classification Yard.

Megan Ponzo, PE and **Justin Burick** presented on Section 53C of the Mon-Fayette Expressway which extends from PA 51 to I-376 the southern section south of the Monongahela River. The bridge realignment that extends over the Union Railroad Company freight car repair shop required extensive environmental remediation

in order to relocate the building and construct the new bridge. CEC managed the environmental waste at the site including tankers, 300 drums and their contents, over 1000 truckloads from waste piles, asbestos in the Briquette Building and Old Signal Building that required abatement. In addition to a railcar tanker that required cleaning and disposal of including the contents of a tarlike flammable resin. The remediation of this one area of the project cost more than \$5 mil.

The section appreciates Megan and Justin for taking the time to present this project to the section and filling us in on one piece of a much larger project.



Photos: Megan Ponzo and Justin Burick (left to right)



Photos: Justin Burick, Sean Hart and Megan Ponzo (left to right)

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Upcoming events include:

- April 17, 2024 Joint Dinner Meeting – RLA Learning & Conference Center at Cranberry Woods, PA presented by Michael Carroll the PennDOT Secretary of Transportation.
- May 14, 2024 Dinner Meeting at the Indiana Country Club and topics will be Awards, Scholarships, and Induction of Officers
- May 30, 2024 Golf Outing – The Links at Spring Church in Apollo, PA.

Additional information on the events above can be found on our website.

We sincerely thank all of our Members and Sponsoring Firms for your continued support of the Section.

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Contact the ASHE Mid-Allegheny Section

Website: www.midallegheny.ashe.pro

Email: ashe.midallegheny@gmail.com

If you have comments or suggestions related to presentations, meetings, or this newsletter, please forward a brief e-mail to the effect. Our board welcomes feedback so we can better serve our membership and industry.