

Appendix 6: Young Members' Presidential Group

Jennifer Nicks

Chair, Young Members' Presidential Group, ISSMGE

ISSMGE COUNCIL UPDATE:

Formerly named the Student and Young Member Presidential Group (SYMPG), the YMPG was established in 2009 as a Board Level Committee (BLC) within ISSMGE by Past-President Jean-Louis Briaud. With the aim of increasing the attractiveness of the ISSMGE for younger generations of geotechnical engineers, the YMPG works to develop and foster initiatives for Board consideration. The first term extended from 2009-2013, with President Roger Frank renewing the YMPG for his term. A report detailing the work of the YMPG during the first term can be downloaded to learn more.

MEMBERSHIP

Consisting of a Chair, appointed for a 4-year term by the ISSMGE President, and 3 members from each region, nominated by the Regional Vice Presidents, the YMPG has 19 members total representing a broad global reach. Membership is restricted to ISSMGE members 35 years of age or younger at the time of appointment, and members serve 2-year terms, renewable for an additional 2 years depending on interest, activity level, and eligibility. The current membership cycle will rotate at the end of 2015.

Amongst the members, elections were held for the Vice-Chair and Secretary to round out the YMPG Executive Leadership Team. As of 2013, the Executive Leadership Team includes:

Chair: Jennifer Nicks (USA)
Vice-Chair: Aleksandra Chepurnova (Russia)
Secretary: Juan Ayala (Chile)

Integral to the success of the YMPG is its membership. For 2013-2015, the YMPG membership includes:

Africa:

Sherif Adel Yahia Akl (Egypt)
Mohamed Elbyhagi Elfadil (Sudan)
Abdou Xaadir Gaye (Senegal)

Asia:

Ilhan Chang (Korea)
Janaka J. Kumara (Japan)
Lucy Wu (Hong Kong)

Australasia:

Martin Barrientos (New Zealand)
Ross Kristinof (Australia)
Darshan Leckraz (Australia)

Europe:

Aleksandra Chepurnova (Russia)
Sabatino Cuomo (Italy)
Felix Jacobs (Germany)

North America:

Julian McGreevy (Canada)

Mehdi Omidvar (USA)
Cassandra Rutherford (USA)

South America:

Juan Ayala (Chile)
Marcelo Heidemann (Brazil)
Marcos Montoro (Argentina)

Besides being interested in advancing student and younger member interests, each member brings their own diverse background and experiences. Bios for each member are on the YMPG website.

Four ISSMGE Board Liaisons also sit on the YMPG membership, and include: President Roger Frank, Fatma Baligh (Vice President for Africa), Paul Mayne (Vice President for North America), and Vlasta Szavits-Nossan (Appointed Board Member). Prior to her departure from the Board, appointed member Nicoleta Radelascu also participated as a liaison on the YMPG. Their involvement is essential to the YMPG to ensure the work will be applicable within the ISSMGE mission and procedures.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERSHIP

While formal YMPG membership is limited to three members from each region, there are an unlimited number of Corresponding Members (CMs). As a CM, they receive e-mails about the work of the YMPG, learn about student and young member (YM) events around the world, and have opportunities to get involved. In addition, YMPG initiatives and task forces are determined based on the feedback from our CMs. Participation is not limited only to YMs; anyone in the geotechnical community interested in the activities of YMs can join. Those interested can sign-up or contact the YMPG Chair for more information.

As of May 14, 2015, the YMPG has 270 CMs. The number of CMs has grown linearly since March 2014 when the CM listserv was developed. The increase in CMs is at a rate of about 16 new members per month.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

In the first two years of operation for the second term, the YMPG completed several administrative activities:

- Voted to change our name from the SYMPG to the YMPG. This action was not meant to eliminate students from the mission; it was meant to focus efforts on younger members as a whole, of which students are generally included.
- Refined our mission statement to clarify our target audience. Initially, the mission focused on "the next generation of geotechnical engineers." It was decided that the aim should encompass more than just the next generation but younger generations in general.
- Created a CM listserv that users can freely join to stay connected. The listserv is housed on Google Groups whereby CMs can visit the site to see past

announcements and receive e-mails with new announcements. Various announcements are sent, including minutes from the YMPG meetings, notices for ISSMGE webinars, calls for abstracts for various conferences, requests for PhD and postdoctoral applications, etc. More information about CMs can be found on the Young Members page of the ISSMGE website.

- Established YMPG liaisons to all other ISSMGE BLCs because of the overlap of younger member interests in all aspects of the ISSMGE operation. The role of YMPG liaisons is to communicate between the committees and ensure younger member interests are considered and pursued. The YMPG liaisons to each BLC are:
Awards Committee: Cassandra Rutherford
Corporate Associates Presidential Group: Julian McGreevy
Innovation and Development Committee: Lucy Wu
Professional Image Committee: Janaka Kumara
Technical Oversight Committee: Jennifer Nicks
- Developed a two year YMPG work plan. This process consisted of identifying initiatives that would accomplish the objectives of the YMPG; four primary themes resulted, with task forces set up to work on those initiatives.

TASK FORCES

Communications & Marketing (Chair: Marcos Montoro): To communicate and promote S/YM and YMPG activities and events of interest

Membership (Chair: Julian McGreevy): To develop methodologies for measuring and increasing the membership of younger members in the ISSMGE

Motivation Mechanisms (Chair: Mehdi Omidvar): To develop motivation mechanisms to encourage more YM involvement within the ISSMGE and establish ISSMGE as the professional society of reference for YMs

Website (Chair: Lucy Wu): To update and maintain the web-presence of the YMPG

Each task force was charged with developing a statement of work (SOW) focusing on their objectives. The SOWs consisted of a membership list, task force objectives, background, task items, deliverables, and schedule for completion. Ranging from creating and maintaining a solid web-presence, to enhancing younger member networking opportunities, to developing motivation mechanisms, to communicating and marketing activities and events of interest to younger members, the YMPG really works not only for the Board, but for all ISSMGE members interested in advancing the profession and retaining bright young minds within the geotechnical discipline.

COMPLETED WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES

Besides the basic administrative actions, the YMPG has accomplished many notable tasks over the past two years. The following products have been delivered:

- Guidelines for author submissions to the YM Arena in the ISSMGE Bulletin were drafted and distributed.

(Communications & Marketing Task Force)

- A membership map which tracks the global distribution of CMs and their technical interests has been successfully developed. It is based on the information provided by ISSMGE YMs and allows members to connect with others in their area or current practice/technical interests. (Membership Task Force)
- A list of technical contacts for younger geotechnical engineers to contact regarding questions and interests has been developed and included in the membership map; a separate list will also be posted to the ISSMGE website. (Membership Task Force)
- A flyer was developed highlighting benefits of membership in the ISSMGE for younger members and the various opportunities available; member societies are encouraged to share this flyer with their members. (Membership Task Force)
- Evaluation criteria for a consolidated Outstanding Young Geotechnical Engineer Award were developed in collaboration with the ISSMGE's Awards Committee. The criteria are based on: (a) geotechnical project development and construction, (b) research contributions in the geotechnical community, (c) involvement in national and international geotechnical societies, and (d) publications and education in the geotechnical discipline. (Motivation Mechanisms Task Force)
- A template for contributions to the YM Arena in the ISSMGE Bulletin was drafted and distributed. The template helps ensure consistency and is modeled after the International Journal of Geoenvironment Case Histories format. (Motivation Mechanisms Task Force)
- Three (3) YM Arena articles were coordinated and submitted for the ISSMGE Bulletin (Motivation Mechanisms Task Force):
 - Geothermal Energy for Heating and Cooling: Full-Scale Testing and Numerical Modelling - YM: Guillermo A. Narsilio, recipient of the ISSMGE Outstanding Young Member Award, Sept. 2009
 - 3 Young Faculty receive NSF CAREER Award - YMs: (1) Shideh Dashti, (2) Tong Qiu, and (3) Cassandra Rutherford
 - The International Geosynthetic Society (IGS) - YM: Irene N. Nyirenda, President of the Young IGS Members
- The YMPG Board Level Committee page on the ISSMGE website was updated to include information about the YMPG, task force initiatives, and member bios. (Website Task Force)
- Content has been included to the ISSMGE Younger Member page on information for becoming a CM, with a link to the Corresponding Membership map. (Website Task Force)
- An ISSMGE Bulletin article was drafted and published that provided ISSMGE members an update of the YMPG. (Website Task Force)

ONGOING WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES

Each task force continues to work on and maintain several tasks under their umbrella.

Communications & Marketing:

This group is focused on communications with YMs and marketing of the YMPG and other YM activities. They are

working closely with the Motivation Mechanisms task force on the YM Arena articles by soliciting select individuals (e.g. the previous YM award winners, iYGEC outstanding presentation winners, etc.), issuing a broad call to CMs, and posting on the ISSMGE website.

Members: Marcos Montoro (Chair), Sherif Akl, Juan Ayala, Martin Barrientos, Abdou Xaadir Gaye, Janaka Kumara, and Mehdi Omidvar.

Membership Task Force:

The membership task force was formed to support the YMPG with developing methodologies for measuring and increasing the membership of younger members in the ISSMGE. Work for the task force is currently ongoing on trying to improve coordination between YM groups in national societies and the ISSMGE, increasing the number and contributions of CMs, and increasing the presence/application of the ISSMGE Foundation for YMs. The group also continues to advocate for the reduction or elimination of fees for students and younger members of the ISSMGE and has collected data to support the development of a strategy for reducing the cost of membership in the ISSMGE for student members. Additionally, the group is looking at solutions to increase and track YM membership in technical committees (to take advantage of the unlimited TC corresponding members).

Members: McGreevy (Chair), Sherif Akl, Aleksandra Chepurnova, Felix Jacobs, and Jennifer Nicks.

Motivation Mechanisms:

The Motivation Mechanisms (MM) task force is responsible for developing motivation mechanisms to encourage students and younger member involvement in the ISSMGE. Members from this group will work with the organizers of the 19th ICSMGE in 2017 in Seoul, Korea to help plan and/or communicate YM activities at the conference. This will help increase participation and serve as a means for younger members to build their professional network.

This task force is also working towards expanding the ISSMGE Bulletin's Young Members' Arena concept to publish more information on the ISSMGE website and serve as an additional resource for YMs. The YM Arena will serve as a peer-reviewed section of the ISSMGE website, with the top papers referred to the Bulletin. Calls for contributions have been sent out and uploaded to GeoWorld. The MM task force will continue to develop the YM Arena as a great avenue for ISSMGE members to learn what YMs are working on and provide an outlet for YMs to publish.

Members: Mehdi Omidvar (Chair), Aleksandra Chepurnova, Mohamed Elbyhagi, Abdou Xaadir Gaye, Ross Kristinof, Janaka Kumara, Julian McGreevy, Cassie Rutherford, Lucy Wu

Website Task Force:

As the name suggests, the Website task force is charged with updating and maintaining the web-presence of the YMPG. There are three locations for S/YM content: (1) ISSMGE Younger Members webpage, (2) YMPG Board Level Committee webpage, and (3) the YMPG page on Geo-World. While the task force has already incorporated some information on these sites (see completed activities), much more is planned. Before making any content live, the task force has created a test website to ensure any changes will be useful and relevant to YMs. They will work closely with the IDC to explore features and capabilities that would be useful to the YMPG and also attract the YM audience.

Members: Lucy Wu (Chair), Juan Ayala, Martin Barrientos, Mohamed Elbyhagi, Janaka Kumara, Julian McGreevy, Marcos Montoro, Cassie Rutherford

FUTURE NEEDS

Membership rotation will occur at the end of 2015. Each Regional Vice President will nominate three members to serve for the next two years. These nominations will be based on activity and interest level from existing YMPG members and CMs, along with recommendations from the national societies. If you know of an active YM wanting to serve on the YMPG, please contact your regional VP. Also, there is always an open call for more CMs.

Regardless of membership, the YM Arena is open to any YM(s) wanting to publish research, case histories, and other YM works. Please forward the call for contributions.

Moving forward, the YMPG is excited to continue its work and looks forward to increased involvement from YMs and other ISSMGE members!