Spring 2018
Construction Engineering Management Update

Connecting industry with students and students with industry is the focus of the Construction Engineering Management (CEM) emphasis at the University of Arizona. Spring highlights include:

- Construction graduates,
- Competing in the ASC-Reno construction competition,
- Strong partnerships with industry and alumni,
- Scholarship endowment gift from the Beavers, and
- Community outreach.

Construction graduates
This year, 30% of the 45 UA civil engineering graduating seniors are heading into the construction industry, with the majority of those starting their careers for firms in Arizona. CEM prepares students for careers in heavy civil and building construction. Half of the construction students are joining firms where they started out as interns. Internships deepen a student’s background in construction while giving the firm a sense of the student’s capabilities and their fit with company culture. A high percentage of students receive full-time job offers where they intern.

ASC-Reno construction competition
For the first time ever, we sent a U of A student team to the 31st Annual Associated Schools of Construction Student Competition. Intense! Exhausting! and Incredible! are some of the words used to describe this event. There are 13 competitions at this event, each one with an industry sponsor who takes a real-world construction project and reconfigures it into a competition problem. Our team competed in Design-Build, to leverage our past experiences in the National DBIA Student Competitions. Our students prepared by meeting with people in industry to grow their knowledge in scheduling, estimating, site logistics, quality control, presenting, and more. At 7:00 AM on the day of the event, our team received the project requirements and by 9:00 PM they turned in their proposal. By 8:30 the next morning they were presenting before an industry panel. The event also included plenty of opportunities for networking with industry and a large career fair. One of our students said,

“Companies were very encouraging for you to come up to talk to them. They know what you went through in order to present your team’s idea so they know that you work hard. I had an extremely amazing time at the ASC conference.”
Students definitely are excited to compete again next year. In addition to a design-build team, they want to send a second team in the heavy civil category. We received guidance, encouragement, and travel funds from many companies. Industry support and involvement with UA was phenomenal!

Special thanks to those who helped the team:
Ashton, Barker, Brasfield & Gorrie, Core, DBIA Western Pacific Region, DPR, HDR, Hensel Phelps, Kiewit, Kitchell, McCarthy, Mortenson, Sturgeon Electric, Swaim, and Sundt

CEM partners

Industry and individuals are finding many ways to support CEM. We had six outstanding industry mentors for the Engineering Leadership Seminar (ENGR495), including: Mike Nelson, Barry Abbott, Phil Hall, Tom McGovern, Priscilla Cornelio, and John Bernal. They met with students throughout the semester and provided insight into careers and life. One student commented,

“I initially took this course to fill up my schedule, but soon realized that this was one of the most important classes I could ever take. I now know that leadership is something that can be developed, and I will remember this course for the rest of my career as I strive to be an influential leader in my field.”

We are also grateful for the companies and individuals who have provided financial support for the operating expenses of CEM this year. If you are inspired by what you read here, please consider a financial gift to CEM. Gifts can be made on line by designating CEEM Construction.

Ashton ● Borderland ● Brasfield & Gorrie ● Granite KE&G ● Structural Grace ● Sundt Henry George Macintosh foundation Alumni & Friends

Beavers $50,000 gift for scholarship endowment
This spring Mike Hoover, president of the Beavers, and president and CEO of Sundt Construction, presented CEM with a check for $50,000 from the Beavers to add to the Beavers Heavy Civil Construction Scholarship Endowment at the University of Arizona. Proceeds from this endowment will be awarded each year to UA students preparing for careers in heavy civil construction. This is a great encouragement to our students and program. Also, this spring our students attended a construction site visit of Loop 202 sponsored by the Beavers.
CEM and community outreach
This fall UA construction students volunteered again at the annual Southern Arizona Construction Career Days. This industry organized event draws high school students from across southern Arizona to the Tucson Rodeo Grounds each year to learn about the variety of opportunities in construction. UA students helped facilitate students building bridges either with K’nex or craft sticks. At lunch, Luis Flores (BS 2018) spoke to students about his summer internship experience with Hensel Phelps.

This spring our UA students organized a survey merit badge workshop for Boy Scout Troop 299 with scheduling help from UA alum Kevin Hall of Cypress Civil Development. We hosted the event on campus. The 18 scouts in attendance were led by 12 UA students. This was a great opportunity to introduce scouts to the construction industry and engineering education at the UA.

Thank you
On a personal note, I was honored to be recognized as the 2018 Post-Secondary Educator of the Year for Southern Arizona by the ASCE Southern Arizona Branch. This was a meaningful award coming from the industry peers I worked with prior to joining the faculty at U of A. Additionally, I was honored to be selected by our graduating seniors as Faculty of the Year and to speak a word of encouragement to our graduates at the Department pre-commencement ceremony.

Industry partnerships are the heart-beat of Construction Engineering Management at UA. The connections between industry and students are what enable us to offer construction courses, construction extracurricular activities, and coordinate construction internships and full-time job opportunities. Your gifts and support are making an impact on students and the industry. Thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Dean Papajohn

Dean Papajohn, P.E., ENV SP, Associate DBIA
Associate Professor of Practice
Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics

May 17, 2018