

THE CITY OF
KENOSHA
PUBLIC WORKS
ENGINEERING

September 24, 2015

Subject: 2015 APWA Phoenix Congress Experience

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

First of all, thank you for selecting me into the Emerging Public Works Leaders Program and your support in sending me to the 2015 APWA Phoenix Congress. I gained new technical knowledge at the educational sessions, and met other professions at social events.

I started off my Congress experience on Sunday morning at the First-Timers Breakfast. I enjoyed this short get together as Cora Jackson-Fossett, Director-at-Large Leadership and Management, was able to grab everyone's attention with her witty personality and group ice-breaker. The newly elected APWA President, Brian Usher, introduced himself and gave some advice for tackling Congress. His suggestion was to learn and take away at least three things – either through education sessions, networking or a life lesson.

When I finished with the breakfast I was left with the decision as to go to The Purple Cow of Recycling or go to a book signing of Marcus Luttrell, Navy Seal and writer of the *Lone Survivor*. Unfortunately these two sessions overlapped so I decided to take the life lesson and meet Mr. Luttrell and have him sign a book for me. While standing in line for 40 minutes I was able to meet a few other professions that I was able to talk to throughout the remainder of Congress. I have always been amazed at Mr. Luttrell's story and it was an honor to meet an American hero. Listening to his background during the Opening General Session was one of my favorite sessions. His message was simple, "never quit" but I felt that if he can make it through his war battle, I can get through my bad days. I left with a deeper appreciation of what the Navy Seals go through.

I was able to attend the exhibit hall and the education session, Achieving New Heights at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. I was surprised to find out the city owns the airport as well as how the architects incorporated local art. This is the only airport in the country that has a Skytram crossing over a taxiway. There are no standards set by the FAA on this so the engineers designed it to be as high as the largest operating aircraft at the airport, on its nose – measured from the ground to the top of the fin. Even though Kenosha's airport is miniscule and could not relate in operation, it was a very interesting session.

Monday's sessions were primarily focused on technology. The General Session with the Technology Panel pointed out many futuristic advances coming along in the automotive industry. Car to car technology is being developed so cars will communicate with each other for safer travel. I personally liked the Traffic Light Genie – a device that will turn lights green as cars drive up to an intersection if no traffic is coming. The members of the panel did say that self-driving cars are coming in the future, which I think is very exciting!

Other sessions I attended included the Mobil Device for Increase Efficiency on the Job Site, Sustainability in Emerging Technologies, The Loop – Recreation Infrastructure Investment and the Awards Ceremony.


Although it was already in the mid 80's at 7:00 am on Tuesday with humidity near 30% (due to the historic monsoon the night before), I took part in the 5k Fun Run-Walk. As I am not much of a runner, it was still fun to get out and walk around a new amenity in Phoenix. I was amazed at how many new buildings were under construction in this area! A small group of my Chapter Members and I were able to drive up to Sodona for dinner and enjoy the beautiful red rock formation scenery.

I learned so much during Congress, but to keep it simple and to satisfy Brian Usher's suggestion of taking away three items, I would like to list mine as:

1. Construction projects in Phoenix must include 5% local artwork.
2. When developing a policy for smart phone use consider when it will become public record.
3. Solar panels have been developed to an advanced technology, but there is not enough storage for converting the energy to maintain power to a residential house.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to experience APWA Congress as a Wisconsin Emerging Leader. I am looking forward to discussing and incorporating topics I learned into my office's policies.

Sincerely,



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