

Article for the Region 7 Board of Governors

ASCE Committee on Scholarship 2011

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Having just started my term as Region 7 Governor for IA/SD and just finishing up my four-year term as a member of the Committee on Scholarship (COS), I have made the national scholarship process one of my talking points at the section and conference events that I have been attending. My intent is to try to generate more interest especially with student chapter members and advisors for participating in the national scholarship process.

For the past four years, we have tried to increase the interest level of the students at South Dakota State University in applying for the society level ASCE scholarships. As can be seen in table 1, the number of individual applicants and the number of scholarship applications were both highest in Regions 7 and 8. However, when thinking of the total number of qualified student members within the 10 Regions, the 76 scholarship applications from 45 unique applicants seem like very small numbers.

| Region | # Apps | # Applicants |
|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 9 | 5 |
| 2 | 6 | 3 |
| 3 | 11 | 7 |
| 4 | 7 | 4 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 2 | 2 |
| 7 | 17 | 9 |
| 8 | 15 | 9 |
| 9 | 9 | 6 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Summation | 76 | 45 |

Table 1. 2011 ASCE Society Scholarship Applications by Region, # of Apps, and # of Applicants

The amount of money available each year for the main scholarships varies with the size of the scholarship fund as well as the performance of the fund in the investment market. However, some knowledge of past performance would certainly give students the ability to formulate a strategy for pursuing scholarship and fellowship funding in the future. Table 2 shows the scholarships that were awarded this year as well as the number of applicants for each scholarship and the funds that were available.

| Scholarship | \$ Available | # Applicants | # Awards | \$ Individual | Total Awarded |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Figg | \$3,000.00 | 7 | 1 | \$3,000.00 | \$3,000.00 |
| Tapman | \$27,000.00 | 19 | 9 | \$3,000.00 | \$27,000.00 |
| Tiney | \$2,000.00 | 22 | 2 | \$1,000.00 | \$2,000.00 |
| Yang | \$6,000.00 | 15 | 2 | \$3,000.00 | \$6,000.00 |
| Freeman | \$30,000.00 | 2 | 1 | \$4,000.00 | \$4,000.00 |
| Tuttle | \$6,000.00 | 11 | 3 | \$2,000.00 | \$6,000.00 |
| Total | \$74,000.00 | | | | \$48,000.00 |

Table 2. ASCE Society Scholarship funds available in 2011 with number of applicants and awards.

Besides the rather shocking fact that ASCE Committee on Scholarship had \$74,000 to give away this year and only had valid applications for \$48,000 of the funds, the number and distribution of the scholarship applications is certainly out of alignment with the available funds. For instance, The Freeman Graduate fellowship had \$30,000 of available funding, and COS hoped to make two awards at the \$15,000 level. However, COS was only able to make one award for \$4,000 based on the applications received. The 19 applications for the \$27,000 available in the Tapman fund seem logical, while the 22 applications for the \$2,000 in the Tiney fund seem out of alignment.

Suggestions for the future include that student chapters and advisors should do a better job of advertising scholarship opportunities as well as encouraging active student chapter members to apply for scholarships. Additionally, we can all do better in the future of helping students realize the relative size of the sources of larger funding instead of directing such a large number of students for the smaller funds. Perhaps the society could provide some guidelines or approximate amount of funding available each year from each fund. Finally, the outreach to graduate students for fellowships needs more guidance from the chapter advisor perhaps through coordination with local graduate faculty to direct students to this great source of funding for research support.