

The Role of Regional Governors

by

**F. Jay Burress,
Region 7 Governor representing Kansas City and Kansas Sections**

ASCE has a vertical structure, based at the local level with *Sections* which polls have shown are the basis for most ASCE members experience with the Society. Sections can actually be subdivided into *Branches*. At the top of the pyramid are the *Society* level officers, led this year by our President, Blaine Leonard, and the Board of Directors. An intermediary between the society-level decision makers and the members “on the ground” in the sections and branches are the *Regional Governors*. Middle America (Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Colorado & Wyoming) has been designated ASCE *Region 7*. Region 7 has 7 governors, each of whom technically represents every member in the entire region. Practically, the 7 Governors in Region 7 have divided the region into smaller areas in order to more closely communicate with the section and branch leadership and be more in tune with local concerns.

My name is Jay Burress. I live in Stilwell, KS, a southern suburb of Kansas City. I was appointed an interim governor in 2007 to replace Dr. Bobb Stokes when he was elected to the Board of Direction. In 2009, I was elected by all of the Region 7 membership to a full 3 year term. As stated above, I technically am here to serve the entire membership of the region. However, most of my time and effort is spent serving the Kansas Section and the Kansas City Section.

As a “conduit” between the Society-level officers and staff (many of us grew up call them “National” officers, but now that ASCE is truly an international organization, “National” would technically be under-representing their reach) and the sections, I’d like to discuss a concern President Leonard recently voiced. Every year, society allots funds to the regional governors to distribute among their respective sections, branches and student chapters. Some of these regions have amassed reserves two to three times their annual allotments. My message today is those funds are available for distribution within our Region. The governors have stated a preference that these funds go for specific items or events which will help the membership as opposed to financing everyday or on-going expenses. For example, the Colorado section received funds to help with their Centennial dinner. The governors also granted partial funding for students who attending the Annual Conference in Kansas City last October. The message I hope to leave is that events don’t have to be as unique as that, but the desire is that sections, branches and student chapters apply. Money sitting around does not help our membership! The process to apply is pretty straightforward. Send a quick email or letter to the governor who represents your Section or Branch (after October 1st your Colorado Governors will be Amber Kauffman and Ed Stafford). Describe how the money is to be used, and how much is requested. That governor will champion your request in

front of the Regional Board of Governors for consideration. The idea is to help the membership get things accomplished. If you have any questions, please contact me or your local governor for more information. More information on Region 7 and all the Governors' contact information can be found at <http://region7.asce.org/leadership.html>