

FIELD NOTES

School of Civil and Environmental Engineering
Georgia Institute of Technology
Ep. 4: Student Org Speed Dating

<NATS - CLUB MEETING>

JOSHUA STEWART: This is the largest room in the Mason Building — and it is standing-room-only. Air's thick with the smell of pizza. Presenters are loading PowerPoint slides up front.

This is the CEE Club Fair — an early in the semester gathering to learn about the clubs for civil and environmental engineering students — or really any engineering student.

So, like I said, packed house. But for those of you who missed it, we're bringing the club fair to you, right here on the podcast, lightning-round style. Let's call it Student Org Speed Networking.

<THEME MUSIC POPS IN>

OK. You know what. Let's stop.

<MUSIC STOPS>

All right. Let's dispense with the music and all of that. We have a ton to get to. This is Field Notes from the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Georgia Tech. Hi, I'm Joshua Stewart. And let's jump right in with our first group. Hi.

LAUREN GARDNER: Hi. My name is Lauren gardener. I'm the current president of the American Society of Highway Engineers. Also called ASHE.

STEWART: And are you guys open to undergrads, grads, both?

GARDNER: We are open to everyone.

STEWART: And when do you meet?

GARDNER: We typically meet one day every month. It depends. We kind of coordinate with some of the other transportation organizations, but once a month we'll have pizza and a meeting.

STEWART: And how do students find out?

GARDNER: We post everything on our social media and also on OrgSync, so it's pretty easy to get connected to that.

STEWART: What are your signature activities? What are the things that you guys do?

GARDNER: So our biggest thing is professional networking. We have a lot of events with ASHE Georgia, such as tailgates or social events. We also have them come and speak and they usually are always hiring. So. It's very easy to get some internships out of that. New for this year, we are trying to do skills workshops. We're preparing to do some workshops held by professionals or graduate students on things like LinkedIn, interviews, and some other skills that graduates and undergraduates could really use some brushing up on.

STEWART: How do I join if I'm interested?

GARDNER: Easiest way to join is to go on OrgSync and find us: American Society of Highway Engineers. From there you get all of our e-mails. You can also attend a meeting and we'll have sign-up sheets and I can manually add you to our list. And then the other way is to contact me through my e-mail address.

STEWART: And do you have dues?

GARDNER: We do have dues: \$20 a semester. So if you're only here for one semester you don't have to pay for both. And that includes membership into ASHE Georgia.

STEWART: All right. So the 30-second pitch — what is it?

GARDNER: We are extremely diverse. We include any type of major, not just transportation. We have plenty of companies come in and talk about things like surveying or environmental. We have a whole bunch of free opportunities to meet professionals through networking events or the transportation career fair and now these skills workshops. We have a ton of scholarship. The Georgia chapter gives an undergraduate and graduate student a scholarship every year, and new to this year we will be providing scholarships for students to attend transportation related conferences.

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STEWART: All right that's Lauren Gardner, president of ASHE this year. Thank you.

GARDNER: Thank you very much.

STEWART: Oh, I probably should have mentioned this at the top. We're keeping these short. And just like a speed dating or speed networking event, we'll hear that bell when it's time to move on. OK. Next. Hi.

ANNA DEILY: Hello. My name is Anna Deily. I'm a fourth-year environmental engineering student and the co-president of Association of Environmental Engineers and Scientists. Known as AEES.

STEWART: So are you guys open to undergrads, grads, both?

DEILY: Both of them actually. We're trying to increase our undergrad membership. We have quite a few grad students.

STEWART: And when do you meet?

DEILY: We meet Thursdays from 10:50 to 11:50. We usually have lunch and fun speakers.

STEWART: Do you have a place where you usually meet?

DEILY: Yes. Mason 3133, so you have to go up a few flights of stairs.

STEWART: And what are your signature activities? What are the things that you're known for?

DEILY: The things that we're known for. So we do meetings with different companies in the area that hire engineers, and then we also do some fun social events. So we have a tailgate, usually, and a potluck. And then we do an adopt-a-stream program where we've adopted two or three streams in the Atlanta area where we go test dissolved oxygen, pH, and E. coli, and then have usually we'll picnic afterwards. It's a lot of fun.

STEWART: How do I join if I want to get involved in all this?

DEILY: We have a Facebook page. Website. And you can just email us if you're interested.

STEWART: Basically get in touch with you and say, I want to join.

DEILY: We also have an email list goes out that has all of our information.

STEWART: And you guys have dues?

DEILY: Yes it is \$20 for the whole year or \$10 per semester.

STEWART: OK, 30 seconds. Give me the pitch. Why do I want to be part of AEES?

DEILY: You want to be part of AEES because you want to meet other environmental engineering students, which might be kind of hard in these civil engineering classes, and to network with different companies in the area and to learn more about how to apply environmental engineering skills into daily life

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STEWART: Anna Deily, who is the co-president of AEES, thank you.

DEILY: Thank you so much, Josh.

XENIA WIRTH: Hello, my name is Xenia Wirth, and I'm a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the civil and environmental engineering program and I'm the president of the Geotechnical Society.

STEWART: OK so GeoSociety, open to undergrads, grads, both?

WIRTH: So GeoSociety is primarily a grad student organization, specifically for members in geotechnical engineering. This is usually Ph.D. in master's students who want to pay dues and then be part of a social group. So it's less of an academic group and more of a social group for any students involved in geotechnical engineering.

STEWART: So do you guys have regular meetings then?

WIRTH: We do. We tend to do a regular coffee break every week. It's just a chance for us to get together, have some coffee, and talk about our research and get to know each other.

STEWART: Commiserate a little bit sometimes.

WIRTH: Commiserate, definitely, especially on those rough weeks for lots of tests.

STEWART: What kind of signature activities do you guys do?

WIRTH: Because it's mostly a social club, we just try to get people involved in the School. It's hard sometimes to get Ph.D. students, in particular, out from their research or out of the lab, so we do coffee break every week, we do happy hours sometimes. We go to Rocky Mountain or another area around campus. We do tailgates in the fall, and in the spring we've been doing some Atlanta United tailgates, which has been pretty fun. And then we do some group lunches maybe once a month.

STEWART: How do I get involved if I want to?

WIRTH: If you want to get involved, you can talk to any of the professors who are in geotechnical engineering, because they'll know who you should contact regarding the society. We can put you on an email list. And every time we have a meeting, we send out weekly reminders and you can just show up.

STEWART: And you said, you mentioned earlier there are dues.

WIRTH: There are dues. So this pays for a fridge we have full of Cokes that you can buy and the coffee breaks and tailgates. It's \$40 a semester. So it's not too bad.

STEWART: All right. Give me the 30-second pitch. Why, if I'm a grad student in geotechnical, why should I join this group?

WIRTH: I think everyone should join it just to get to know the other people in the group. It's just a chance for you to get out of your head, maybe gain a new perspective from other students. I've collaborated with a lot of other students in geotech that way. Just a chance to like say hi, have some coffee, just be social. I think it's been really helpful. I'd be open to a couple undergrad presence, but usually it's only undergrad students who do research in the department. But if any undergrads would like to talk to me about it, I'm happy to talk and see what we can do for them as well.

STEWART: Yeah that's what I was going to ask you. If an undergrad was doing a track or sort of focusing their studies in that...

WIRTH: Yeah, if they're particularly focused in geo, I'm not going to exclude you. I think you would be welcome, and you would learn a lot, and there would be a good opportunity. But just realize if you want to join us, we'll be talking about geo. [Laughs]

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STEWART: Xenia Wirth, who is currently the president of the Geotechnical Society. Thank you.

WIRTH: Thank you very much.

CALVIN CLARK: My name is Calvin Clark. I am the communications chair for ITE at Georgia Tech.

STEWART: So what is ITE?

CLARK: ITE or the Institute of Transportation Engineers, it's an international organization. So there's 15,000 members in 90 different countries throughout the world.

STEWART: And are you guys open to undergrads, grad students?

CLARK: Any students can join. Whether it's within civil engineering or any other transportation-related discipline.

STEWART: The idea is to be interested in some way in transportation.

CLARK: Right.

STEWART: When do you meet?

CLARK: We usually have a monthly meeting. It's usually on a Thursday at around like the 11 o'clock hour but we keep a pretty up to date list of when it things are going on.

STEWART: Where do I find out about all of that stuff?

CLARK: The easiest way to keep in touch is through our e-mail list. So you can contact any of the ITE board members, or anyone affiliated with the transportation group can point you in the right direction. And we send out e-mail reminders of everything that goes on.

STEWART: What are the signature activities of your group?

CLARK: We usually try to do one big activity each semester. The fall semester we have a picnic at the beginning of the semester and we usually try to do a Tech Rec night sometime in the spring. We try to get some networking opportunities, whether it's through professional forums or other type of career fair type setups. There are other organizations out there that are a little bit more specific in subdisciplines of transportation. We're just the general transportation body. If you're not sure where to go, this is usually a good first stop for people.

STEWART: How do I join if I'm interested?

CLARK: So you can contact any of the ITE board members. The dues are \$40 for the academic year or \$20 a semester.

STEWART: OK. So give me the 30-second pitch.

CLARK: So this is a great organization for anyone interested in general transportation. We have a lot of networking events. We sponsor students' travel to the Transportation Research Board every year in January. For example, last year we were able to sponsor each student up to \$200 for travel expenses. Which, if you want to get into transportation, this meeting is one of the ones that you'll want to have on your calendar, and ITE at Georgia Tech is that the best way to help students get there for the first time.

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STEWART: Calvin Clark, who is the communications chair this year of the Institute for Transportation Engineers, ITE. Thanks a lot.

CLARK: Thank you.

STEWART: Hi there.

CAROLINE STANTON: I'm Caroline Stanton. I am the current president of the American Society of Civil Engineers, which is ASCE for short.

STEWART: And are you guys open to undergrads, grads, both?

CAROLINE STANTON: We are open to undergrads and graduate students. Anybody who's interested and wants to have networking and social opportunities.

STEWART: And when you meet?

CAROLINE STANTON: We meet Tuesdays from 10:50 to 11:50 a.m. in Mason 1133.

STEWART: Always the same place?

STANTON: I think so, yes. Should be.

STEWART: What kind of signature activities do you do?

STANTON: We like to have social events for our members. Last year, we went to an Atlanta United game. We have a student-faculty kickball game, usually, that we started last year. So that's always fun. And, you know, smaller events throughout the semester, like an ice cream social or maybe a tailgate with a company.

STEWART: How do I join if I want to get involved?

CAROLINE STANTON: So the easiest way to join would be to go on OrgSync and just search for ASCE and we will pop up. And we've got our 2017-2018 membership form all ready to go.

STEWART: So you fill it out and are there dues?

STANTON: There are dues. They are \$20 a semester or \$35 for the year — unless you are an incoming freshmen or a transfer student, in which case they are discounted at \$10 a semester.

STEWART: A little enticement to get you in the door.

STANTON: Just a bit, yes.

STEWART: OK. So give me the 30-second pitch. Why do I want to be a member of ASCE?

CAROLINE STANTON: So ASCE provides a lot of great professional and social networking opportunities. We host an annual spring career fair, which we have about 40 civil and environmental engineering firms. So that's a really great way to talk to companies and get your resume out there. And it's just a really great way to meet people within CEE. You should also join our conference teams. We do a steel bridge and a concrete canoe project every year. And those are always really fun. You can learn to weld or learn how to test concrete cylinders and all sorts of cool, hands-on engineering activities.

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STEWART: Caroline Stanton who's the president this year of ASCE this year. Thanks.

STANTON: Thank you.

STEWART: Hello.

CHARLIE MAYNARD: My name is Charlie Maynard, and I'm a project leader for Engineers Without Borders at Georgia Tech.

STEWART: Are you guys open to undergrads, grad students, both?

MAYNARD: Both. We're open to everyone, even including business or computer science majors. We're just looking for people who are interested in positively impacting the world.

STEWART: When do you guys meet?

MAYNARD: So each project meets at different times, Monday through Thursday, normally in the evenings.

STEWART: But there is a regular meeting time. And you guys have five projects going on?

MAYNARD: Five projects. Each one meets for about an hour and a half to two hours each week. And then the leaders within each project normally meet for about five hours each week.

STEWART: So do you join Engineers Without Borders or do you join a specific project?

MAYNARD: So you become a member of all of Engineers Without Borders USA nationals. But within Georgia Tech, you join a specific project and play a specific role within that project.

STEWART: So you kind of apply for a specific job, if you will?

MAYNARD: Exactly. So each project has three committees: finance, technical and communications. So when you join a project, you will be put on a specific committee within a specific project.

STEWART: And how do you do that? How do you get involved in one of these?

MAYNARD: So we have an application cycle in fall and in the spring at the beginning of the semester.

STEWART: Do you guys have dues?

MAYNARD: \$20 a semester to cover T-shirts and other social activities. But if that's an issue for anyone, then they can reach out to a project leader or the president.

STEWART: You're involved in the Uganda project. What are you guys doing?

MAYNARD: We've already had three implementation trips where we have worked with the community and a local non-governmental organization to build a portion of a water distribution system within a small community in central Uganda.

STEWART: So give me the 30-second pitch. Why should I join Engineers Without borders?

MAYNARD: You get to apply the things you've learned in class. You get to work with a community that's really not like your own. You get to work with different mentors and leaders that influence you and your career. And this is like a takeaway from college that I've been able to really enjoy. It's influenced a lot of my career choices for the future. Honestly, the project has been very tough. I've had experiences that haven't always been ideal, but it's been both good and bad in extreme measures.

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STEWART: Charlie Maynard, who's a project leader for the Uganda project of Engineers Without Borders, thank you.

MAYNARD: You're welcome.

STEWART: OK, next up. Hi.

SARA DOUGLASS: Hey there. I'm Sara Douglass. I am the current president of Women's Transportation Seminar, also referred to as WTS, here at Georgia Tech.

STEWART: And are you guys open to undergrads, grads, both? Anyone?

DOUGLASS: Yes, anyone. Specifically, this year, we are reaching out to more undergraduate students. We have a strong base of graduate students who are getting their degrees in some type of transportation-related field.

STEWART: Do you have regular meetings?

DOUGLASS: No, so we don't have a standing meeting for our members. But we do try to host professional development events at least once a month.

STEWART: What signature activities, and I guess you probably sort of hinted at one of them but...

DOUGLASS: Yeah, actually, we have a really great partnership with the WTS Atlanta chapter. And with them, we have a mentorship program for high school girls at Grady High School. We serve as kind of support for that program. They have events focused on transportation planning or engineering or something like that.

STEWART: If I'm interested in joining the organization, how do I do that?

DOUGLASS: We do have dues for our organization that go to WTS International, and we do get a cut of those dues to help support our event programming on campus, but...

STEWART: So you essentially become a member of both?

DOUGLASS: Correct. Yeah. And so you benefit from being a member of the international. And our student chapter here at Georgia Tech. But we do not require people to pay the dues in order to come to our events or anything like that.

STEWART: OK. So 30-second pitch — why should I be part of WTS?

DOUGLASS: Yeah. I think that even if you aren't interested in transportation-related issues or industries, joining WTS is a great way to work on your professional development skills and networking with professionals in the Atlanta area and also with faculty on campus. So even if we don't perfectly align with your interests, I think that joining us for an event or two can really help give you an idea of what you want to go into later, or if transportation might be a field that you're interested in.

STEWART: I feel like before I let you go, I also have to ask: You don't have to be a woman to join do you?

DOUGLASS: Correct, correct. We actually are open to all genders and all backgrounds.

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STEWART: Sara Douglass is president this year of WTS, the Women's Transportation Seminar. Thanks.

DOUGLASS: Thank you.

DANIELLE DIEHL: My name is Danielle Diehl, and I am vice president of Chi Epsilon this year.

STEWART: Tell me about Chi Epsilon. Are you guys open to undergrads or grads or do you have both?

DIEHL: We do take both, but undergrads only your junior and senior year. You'll receive invitation if you're in the top third of your class and a junior or senior.

STEWART: You guys are a little different because you don't accept members more traditionally. How do you invite people? How will they find out that they're eligible to be a member of Chi Epsilon?

DIEHL: You'll receive an email at the beginning of semester. We recruit both semesters, fall and spring, and so if you receive an invitation through e-mail, then you'll know you got invited.

STEWART: What do you... what does Chi Epsilon do?

DIEHL: Chi Epsilon has weekly meetings every Thursday. And we invite a company to come in and speak to us, tell us a little about themselves. So that's our main thing that we do. But we also have community service events, some fun tailgates during sporting events. Different things. Social events. Networking.

STEWART: Do you have dues, if you get invited?

DIEHL: There is a one-time internship cost for new initiates. So just paid once. It's \$90, but you get a lifetime membership. So it's a big upfront cost, I know, but it is a lifetime membership, so in long run, it does pay out.

STEWART: And is that a lifetime membership to Chi Epsilon at Georgia Tech or Chi Epsilon, there is a national organization.

DIEHL: It's Chi Epsilon the national organization.

STEWART: So you get both.

DIEHL: Yes.

STEWART: Give me the 30-second pitch. If I find out I'm eligible, why do I want to be part of Chi Epsilon?

DIEHL: Well, if you find out you're eligible, then you really earned that distinction and it's a great honor, and you deserve to be recognized for that. So I would recommend joining Chi Epsilon to get that distinction and, also, because we're really just a group of people who are trying to help our members in any way we can. So we're helping you get internships. Our president, Lin, is always sending out exclusive internships or first, entry job opportunities. And then, we've got plenty of upperclassmen who will set you up with professors if you want to do some research, or if you're looking into grad school, they can help you out with that. So, really, anything that you want to do and wherever you want to take your career, Chi Epsilon members are here to help.

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STEWART: Danielle Diehl, who's the vice president of Chi Epsilon this year — it's the civil and environmental engineering honor society. Thanks a lot.

STEWART: Now, before we go, I should also mention there were a few clubs who couldn't join us on the 'cast. But you should still go check out the Construction Engineering Association; the Earthquake Engineers Research Institute, EERI; and Engineers for a Sustainable World. We've got links to them, and to all the student groups, <https://ce.gatech.edu/clubs>. We always want to hear your feedback and ideas, too. You can e-mail us at communications@ce.gatech.edu or find us on Facebook, on Twitter, on Instagram. We're C-E-E-a-t-G-T. That's CEEatGT. I'm Joshua Stewart. Thank you for listening, and we'll see you next time.

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