

'Noble Profession' Takes Center Stage at OPAL Gala

BY Ben Walpole

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[2016 OPAL Gala](#) [ASCE Excellence in Journalism](#) [Charles Pankow Award for Innovation](#) [Henry L. Michel Award](#)

[new faces of civil engineering](#) [OPAL Gala](#) [OPAL Leadership Winner](#)



ASCE members enjoy the OPAL Awards Gala. Photo by David Hathcox for ASCE.

The awards went to individuals, but the honor seemed to go to something bigger, something shared.

The 2016 ASCE Outstanding Projects And Leaders Awards Gala showcased the best of civil engineering, March 17 in Arlington, VA. As the honorees regularly mentioned the family and collaboration and the altruistic nature of the work, it became clear that the profession as a whole was being celebrated.

"We do have a noble profession. We do good things. We make a world a better place," said Rudy Bonaparte, Ph.D., P.E., D.GE, F.ASCE, NAE, in accepting his OPAL

Award for Design Award.

"I'm proud to a part of that profession with all of you and our flagship organization, the American Society of Civil Engineers."

Richard Morales, M.Sc., P.E., F.ASCE, director of engineering construction products for LB Foster in Suwanee, GA, was honored at the Gala as a new Fellow: "As engineers we do so many amazing things that help society, helping the general public. The OPAL Gala really highlights a lot of our great accomplishments as an engineering profession. These are the greats in attendance, so I'm humbled to be here."

Lifetimes of Achievement

The OPAL Awards honor outstanding leaders whose lifetime accomplishments have contributed to civil engineering in one of five categories – construction, design, education, government, or management.



ASCE Executive Director Tom Smith and ASCE President Mark Woodson join the 2016 OPAL winners, from left, Chris Traylor, George Pierson, Rudy Bonaparte, Dan Frangopol, and Jerry DiMaggio. Photo by David Hathcox for ASCE

This year's class included:

- Design – [Rudolph Bonaparte](#), president, CEO, and senior principal for Geosyntec Consultants in Atlanta; leader in the design and performance evaluation of waste-containment systems for all types of solid-waste landfills
- Government – [Jerry DiMaggio](#), P.E., D.GE, M.ASCE, is a principal engineer at Applied Research Associates Inc. for the research and technology deployment group, following a career that has spanned five decades featuring many specification-setting highway geotechnical contributions
- Education – [Dan Frangopol](#), Sc.D., P.E., F.SEI, F.EMI, Dist.M.ASCE, the first Fazlur R. Khan Endowed Chair of Structural Engineering and Architecture at Lehigh University, professor emeritus at the University of Colorado at Boulder; leader in the development of life-cycle civil engineering
- Management – [George Pierson](#), Esq., P.E., M.ASCE, president of the Pierson Advisory Group, following seven years as president and CEO of Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc.; under his leadership, Parsons Brinckerhoff employed approximately 14,000 professionals in 150 offices on five continents and had annual revenues of \$2.7 billion
- Construction – [Christopher Traylor](#), M.ASCE, co-president of Traylor Bros. Inc., a third-generation company and one of the leading heavy civil contractors in the nation