

By attending the 2018 NCSEA Summit through the first time attendee scholarship, I was able to participate in several opportunities for professional growth and development. Over the course of the conference, I was able to continue my structural engineering education by learning from leading figures within the industry. The numerous presentations and discussions attended during the conference allowed me to gain not only practical knowledge but also “soft skills” to aid career success. On the first night of the Summit, the River Cruise portrayed Chicago’s most renowned buildings and bridges through a structural engineering lens that contributes to the history and tradition of the city. Then the next afternoon at Bill Bast’s presentation, I learned practical project information about the Wrigley Field Renovations, including the challenges encountered and solutions that followed during the process of repairing the foundations, trusses, and concrete stadia at the landmark ballpark.

I also had the opportunity to consider professional society involvement and career growth during the roundtable discussions and presentations at the 2018 Summit. The Mentor Roundtable, which involved NCSEA committee members sharing their experiences with younger members, provided insight into the variety of opportunities that NCSEA offers as a professional society. Furthermore, Ben Nelson’s presentation near the close of the conference stressed the importance of being willing to accept new assignments and promoting the success of others, while also constantly striving to improve yourself. As a whole, the 2018 Summit offered unique perspectives and allowed for continued education, both of which will prove invaluable to my development going forward as a young structural engineer.