

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AREMA is focused on your education and helping you advance in the railway industry. AREMA's convenient webinars provide Professional Development Hours (PDH) to serve your educational needs.

Designing a Functional Bulk Terminal Facility Webinar
Date: Tuesday, April 20
Time: 2-3:30 p.m. ET
PDH: 1.5

Environmental Permitting for Railroad Project Managers
Date: Wednesday, May 19
Time: 2:30-3:15 p.m. ET
PDH: 1.25

Welded Wire Reinforcement Webinar
Date: Tuesday, June 1
Time: 2-3 p.m. ET
PDH: 1

Retaining Wall Design for Railroad Application Webinar
Date: Wednesday, June 9
Time: 2-3:30 p.m. ET
PDH: 1.5

Design & Construction of Highway/Railway Grade Crossings
Date: Tuesday, Aug. 3
Time: 2-3:30 p.m. ET
PDH: 1.5

Critical Geometry Defects Webinar
Date: Wednesday, Nov. 3
Time: 2:30-3:15 p.m. ET
PDH: 1.25

These courses are comprised of recommended practices and relevant accumulated knowledge from subject matter experts in the railroad industry. They are not intended as a regulatory qualification.

For more information on our educational programs and to register, please visit www.arena.org.

Getting to know Committee 30's, Marcus Dersch



MARCUS S. DERSCH, P.E.
Principal Research Engineer,
University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign

Why did you decide to choose a career in railway engineering?

DERSCH: I chose a career in the rail industry because of the people. I appreciate that relationships matter and have witnessed that the people I worked with in graduate school at the Rail Transportation Engineering Center (RailTEC) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Illinois) and as an engineering intern at Union Pacific (UP) are some of the same people I am interacting with today. I have remained in the rail industry because I have appreciated that the work has been challenging, rewarding, and always changing.

AREMA: How did you get started?

DERSCH: I started as a research assistant at Illinois and was able to work on a project funded by BNSF investigating the effect of coal fouling on ballast strength. I was then exposed to additional industry challenges and solutions through the William W. Hay Railroad Engineering Seminar series put on by Illinois. At one of these seminars I met David Connell, former vice president of Engineering at UP, and subsequently accepted an internship with UP. Through these experiences I was hooked on the rail industry.

AREMA: How did you get involved in AREMA and your committee?

DERSCH: I learned about AREMA via the Illinois AREMA Student Chapter, which does a fantastic job of recruiting and educating students about the rail industry. I naturally became more involved upon graduation given RailTEC believes that our findings must be relevant to industry and adequately disseminated. I have been actively involved with Committee 30 - Ties since 2011 and regularly work with colleagues and students to turn research findings into improved recommended practices.

AREMA: Outside of your job and the hard work you put into AREMA, what are your hobbies?

DERSCH: Being a father of two young girls keeps me plenty busy. But, when I am not working or spending time with them, I love being outdoors, woodworking, volunteering with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), cooking, and building into and mentoring young men.

AREMA: Tell us about your family.

DERSCH: I have been happily married to Kristen since 2013 and have been blessed with two girls, Madison (3) and Kinsie (5), and have one boy expected to arrive in May.

AREMA: If you could share one interesting fact about yourself with the readers of RT&S, what would it be?

DERSCH: I grew up in sports and my favorite was baseball. As a pitcher, my fastball could regularly hit 92 mph and top out at 95 mph. I have also torn my ACL three times playing three different sports.

AREMA: What is your biggest achievement?

DERSCH: I feel so blessed to be where I am. I work with a fantastic team, get the opportunity to encourage the next generation of railroad engineers, and make an impact on the industry with research findings. I see it as my job to help students grow into mentors who will be prepared to thrive as engineers and have the skills to solve the challenges they will face throughout their career. Therefore, though I am hopeful that the improved recommended practices will lead to more resilient components and safer railroads, I am more hopeful that the students I get to

interact with go on to make an even bigger impact in the industry with their careers. I am fortunate to now regularly interact with multiple former students who are serving the industry well.

AREMA: What advice would you give to someone who is trying to pursue a career in the railway industry?

DERSCH: I would recommend being quick to listen; there is so much wisdom within the industry and when we stop to listen, we can learn what has been tried in the past which can save time and resources moving forward. Additionally, be open to new ideas; though the industry can be slow to change in some areas, it is always changing. Working to create positive change helps to better serve the industry. **RT&S**



AREMA is going virtual. Save the date: Sept. 26-29, 2021. We look forward to seeing you online at the AREMA 2021 Virtual Conference.

Order the 2021 Manual for Railway Engineering now. With more than 40 new or revised Parts, it's the perfect time to get the 2021 Manual. Order online now at www.arena.org or contact publications@arena.org for more details.

Call for Entries for the 2021 Dr. William W. Hay Award for Excellence. The selection process for the 23rd Dr. W.W. Hay Award has begun. Entries must be submitted by May 21, 2021. Please visit www.arena.org for more information.

Leverage the power of your trusted association's Railway Careers Network to top into a talent pool of job candidates with the training and education needed for long-

term success. Visit www.arena.org/careers to post your job today.

Did you miss the AREMA 2020 Virtual Conference & Expo? The platform will be open through Sept. 15, 2021, for you to network and learn while on the go. Purchase now at www.arena.org.

Not an AREMA member? Join now to get exclusive rates on products and educational courses, committee opportunities, access to the directories, subscriptions to your favorite magazines, and much more.

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UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

2021 MEETINGS

MAY 18-19

Committee 15 - Steel Structures
Virtual Meeting

MAY 26

Committee 14 - Yards & Terminals
Virtual Meeting

JUNE 3-4

Committee 8 - Concrete Structures and Foundations
Kansas City, Mo.

2022 MEETINGS

FEB. 8-9

Committee 15 - Steel Structures
Fort Worth, Texas

MAY 17-18

Committee 15 - Steel Structures
Chicago, Ill.

JUNE 10

Committee 33 - Electric Energy Utilization
Virtual Meeting

SEPT. 14-15

Committee 15 - Steel Structures
Virtual Meeting

SEPT. 16-17

Committee 8 - Concrete Structures and Foundations
Sandpoint, Idaho

JUNE 9-10

Committee 8 - Concrete Structures and Foundations
Anchorage, Alaska

SEPT 27-28

Committee 15 - Steel Structures
Virtual Meeting

Join a technical committee

Joining a technical committee is the starting point for involvement in the association and an opportunity for lifelong growth in the industry. AREMA has 29 technical committees covering a broad spectrum of railway engineering specialties. Build your network of contacts, sharpen your leadership skills, learn from other members and maximize your membership investment. If you're interested in joining a technical committee or sitting in on a meeting, please contact [Alayne Bell at abell@arena.org](mailto:Alayne.Bell@abell.arena.org).

For a complete list of all committee meetings, visit <https://www.arena.org/events.aspx>.