

ASCE Texas Section Officer Election 2026 Contested Position Questions

Each candidate of a contested VP position is given the opportunity to provide brief responses to at least 3 posed questions. Responses are being made public for all subscribing Section members to review and consider during voting.

VP Technical Elect candidate questionnaire for Mahsa Arastoo:

1. Explain what drew you to be considered as a candidate for this VP position.

Mahsa Arastoo: *I have always been passionate about staying engaged with developments in our industry and contributing to the professional growth of others. My involvement with ASCE began when I served as the Younger Member Technical Activities Chair for the Houston Branch, where I organized technical tours, coordinated lunch-and-learn sessions, and helped connect members with resources for the PE exam and emerging industry trends.*

I later served as ASCE Houston Vice President of Technical, where we organized two technical sessions each month and secured keynote speakers for our branch meetings. When I became Branch President, I had the opportunity to help lead efforts during the Region 6 Student Symposium hosted in Houston, where we coordinated a range of sessions for students covering both technical topics and professional development skills.

Through these roles, I discovered how much I enjoy bringing people together, sharing knowledge, and supporting professional growth within our community. As my career progressed, I also began mentoring colleagues and providing technical guidance in bridge engineering, which has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my professional journey.

These experiences have motivated me to be considered for the Vice President Technical-Elect position, as I would welcome the opportunity to continue supporting and advancing our profession in a leadership role.

2. Tell us about an ASCE initiative or program that had the most impact for you. How has that experience, and others like it, affected your work as an engineer?

Mahsa Arastoo: *After graduating from Texas A&M University and joining Aguirre & Fields, my advisor encouraged me to become more involved with ASCE. I saw it as a great opportunity to build connections within the profession and learn from others in the industry.*

I began attending leadership-focused programs through ASCE, including Houston Branch leadership sessions, where we worked as a board to define and brainstorm annual initiatives for the branch; the Texas Section Leadership Development Weekend (LDW), where I learned valuable lessons in interpersonal communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution; and the Multi-Region Leadership Conferences (MRLC) in Omaha (2018) and Cleveland (2025). Over time, these experiences helped me develop and strengthen my soft skills, particularly in communication, teamwork, and leadership.

As I took on leadership roles over the past 11 years, I became increasingly confident in public speaking and in leading groups and discussions. Looking back, I do not believe I would have developed in the same way without ASCE's influence and support. ASCE has played a defining role in both my

professional growth and career trajectory, shaping not only the engineer I am today but also the leader I continue to strive to become.

3. In this role, how can ASCE increase membership value in attracting new civil engineers to full membership?

***Mahsa Arastoo:** In this role, I would hope to share my own experience and how ASCE has supported my career development in every aspect, from technical growth to leadership and communication skills. One of the most effective ways to increase membership value for new civil engineers is by ensuring they are aware of the tools, programs, and opportunities already available within ASCE, and by helping them directly connect those resources to their early career needs.*

I would also like to see more targeted programming for recent graduates that integrates both technical and soft skills development. By offering sessions specifically designed for early career engineers covering topics such as industry expectations, communication, and leadership, we can help bridge the gap between academic preparation and professional practice.

For more experienced engineers, I see value in highlighting projects and initiatives from different regions across the state. This would help members stay informed about ongoing work in Texas while also creating additional opportunities for collaboration and professional connection.

Ultimately, I believe ASCE provides tremendous value, and my goal would be to help engineers recognize that value early, engage with it fully, and use it as a platform to accelerate both their technical and professional growth.