

## A Note from the Editor

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As of October 1, 2005, Dr. Zeki Demirbilek has stepped down from the position of Editor of the *Journal of Waterways, Port, Coastal, and Ocean Engineering*. He served in this position for 6 years and prior to that as Assistant Editor for 5 years.

As a result of working closely with him, I can attest that Dr. Demirbilek has been indefatigable in his efforts to promote the highest quality for the technical papers published in the *Journal*, to expand the author base and topic areas covered by the *Journal*, to recruit the best talent to the Editorial Board, to accelerate the review and processing time for papers submitted to the *Journal*, to work constructively with ASCE staff on several issues (including legal ones!), and, most important, to be fair to every author while simultaneously balancing the interests of the *Journal's* diverse audience. His receipt of the Torrens Award is testimony to his tireless work and to nearly every weekend that he devoted entirely to the *Journal*.

As I take over the editorship, both Professor Ronald Riggs, the new Assistant Editor, and I realize that we have big shoes to fill. We are committed to maintaining the preeminent status of the *Journal* in this field. At present we are working with ASCE toward establishing a system for electronic submission and processing of manuscripts submitted to the *Journal*. We are attempting to further expand our Editorial Board, and toward this end, we welcome nominations from all parts of the world. Ideas for special issues are also welcome, and I am pleased to report that two such issues are planned: one on tsunamis, under the leadership of Professor Riggs and one on soil liquefaction, under the leadership of Professor Sumer. It would appear that recent hurricane activity in the Gulf of Mexico may provide the opportunity for another special issue, especially since questions pertaining to the adequacy of various design codes have been raised as a consequence of the failure of several structures. For instance, significant wave heights recorded in the Gulf of Mexico during Hurricane Ivan (some as large as 17.9 m) easily exceeded the 100-year conditions (Wang et al. 2005) frequently used for design.

Opportunities for innovation in our field, which allows the *Journal* to thrive, abound. For instance, a report of the Heinz Center (1998) notes that many U.S. ports need extensive renovation. It is pointed out that they were built for navigation technologies of a different era involving much smaller ships. Evolving infrastructure must accommodate ever larger ships (many of which have greater draft and higher speeds) operating under demanding schedules in a world with increasingly complex environmental regulations. In general, U.S. ports and waterways are considered to be at a "critical juncture," and failure to modernize "will adversely affect the economy, environmental security, and national security" (Heinz Center 1998). To address these and other scientific and socioeconomic issues pertaining to the coastal

zone, watersheds, and ecosystems noted by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (2004), engineers will have to tackle challenges such as increasing environmental regulations (pertaining, for example, to the disposal of ballast water and dredged material), increasing economic pressures (leading to tighter scheduling and minimizing down-time due to adverse met-ocean conditions), and possibly heightened storm activity leading, for example, to new models of coastal evolution and decadal fluctuations that in turn may influence statistical analyses used to develop engineering design parameters (e.g., Ravens and Sitanggang 2005; Wang et al. 2004; Graham 2005; Coles 2001). Some economic models call for new methods to estimate *total* project costs. For example, it has been argued that the total cost of water provided to citizens in upstream locations should include the cost of depriving downstream coastal areas of sand that is trapped by upstream dams (Dean 1999). These are a few examples of complex, interlinked, and evolving issues that afford engineers great opportunities. Some are admittedly age-old problems but with a new twist that reflects the prevailing appreciation for sustainable development.

As we address traditional and new engineering problems, Professor Riggs and I look forward to working with the Editorial Board, with ASCE staff, with prospective authors and reviewers, and with the *Journal's* audience to ensure that the *Journal* remains indispensable to those involved in engineering study, research, or practice. We welcome suggestions for enhancing the role of the *Journal* in our profession.

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