A Renaissance of Structural Engineering

David J. Odeh, PE, SECB.F.SEI, M.ASCE
Vice President and Principal, Odeh Engineers, Inc.

Thursday, April 9, 2015
3:30pm-4:30pm
138 DeBartolo

Structural engineering today is a vitally important, but rapidly evolving profession. Our work touches everything from the ordinary buildings and infrastructure that people interact with every day, to the most challenging and inspiring works of construction. At the same time, the pace of change in the global economy demands that all engineers exhibit near constant innovation and adaptability to maintain competitiveness and relevance. To keep structural engineers at the vanguard of the design and construction industry, change will be necessary in both the way we practice and the way we educate and train our students and interns.

This presentation will begin with a report from the “front lines” of structural engineering practice, exploring the latest methods of project execution, the growing dominance of computer software in the execution of technical work, and illustration of how the most successful structural engineers have become leaders in their fields. Next, we will look at the defining challenges for future engineers entering the industry, including the competitive pressures of globalization, the need for new materials, and necessity of creative design solutions to ever more complex structures. Finally, we will review initiatives of the Structural Engineering Institute of ASCE, including the Committee for Reform of Structural Engineering Education, to prepare our industry for a future of leadership and innovation.

David J. Odeh, SE, PE, SECB, F.SEI is the current Vice President of the Structural Engineering Institute of ASCE. He is principal at Odeh Engineers, Inc. of Providence, RI, and also serves on the adjunct faculty in the School of Engineering at Brown University. His recent work includes a new 21-story Residence Hall for the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, MA; the structural restoration of the 1681 Old Ship Meeting House in Hingham, MA (among the oldest existing wood frame churches in North America); and a new large scale fire test center for Factory Mutual Research in West Glocester, RI. Since 2001, David has served as the co-chair of the ASCE-SEI Building Information Modeling Committee since 2009, and has served on the SEI Business and Professional Activities Division Executive Committee since 2010. In 2012 he was elected to the SEI Board of Governors. He also serves on the Existing Buildings/Structural Retrofit Subcommittee of NCSEA’s Code Advisory Committee. David was a founding board member and former president of the Structural Engineers Association of Rhode Island. David received a BS in Civil Engineering from Brown University (1992) and an MS in Structural Engineering, Mechanics, and Materials from the University of California at Berkeley (1993).