



In Remembrance Of

Joe Ehasz

Last month the USSD community lost a great colleague and friend. USSD Life Member, past Vice President, and 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Joe Ehasz passed peacefully in Lake San Marcos, CA, on January 9, 2025.

Joe was a legend in the Dam Engineering Community of Practice.

Joe earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at Rutgers University School of Engineering, joining Ebasco Services in 1965 after completing his MS in Civil Engineering. He then began what became a distinguished professional career in the field of water resources and geotechnical engineering, travelling the world to assist with some of the most challenging projects. He led many large projects that all remain today and still have a profound positive effect on people of many countries. Joe served two terms on the USCOLD Board of Directors and served as Chair of the USCOLD/USSD Earthquake Committee for over 30 years. During his tenure as Chair, the Earthquake Committee produced many bulletins and whitepapers that are still in use today.

During his 60-year career, Joe achieved international recognition as a world leading professional, starting with Ebasco, then through acquisitions including Raytheon Engineers and Constructors, Washington Group International, URS, and AECOM. He achieved extraordinary accomplishments encompassing planning, design, and construction of some of the world's largest, most complex, and challenging critical reservoirs, dams, levees, hydroelectric facilities, and other heavy civil structures. Not only was Joe a visionary in delivering solutions to the world's most complex water resources projects, but he also had a unique ability to build, mentor, and nurture high performing, unstoppable teams. Joe had a special way of tapping into the souls of his colleagues, employees, and friends; inspiring, empowering, and motivating each to achieve their very best. At the same time, Joe had a wonderful personality and sense of humor that made him a delight to know and work with.

A few of the dam and hydroelectric projects for which Joe was a key contributor include: 660-ft-high, 395 MW San Roque Multipurpose Project in the Philippines; 320-ft-high RCC Olivenhain Dam Emergency Water Storage Project in California; 1,960 MW Ludington Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Power Plant, Ludington, MI; Susitna Underground Hydroelectric Power Plant, Talkeetna Alaska; 800,000 ac-ft capacity Diamond Valley Reservoir, Hemet, CA; 880-ft-high, 1,330 MW Keban Hydroelectric Dam Project, Turkey; and 1,100 MW BC Hydro Site C Reservoir / Hydroelectric Power Plant, British Columbia, Canada. In 2011, Joe was named one of the 20 most influential people in dam engineering by International Water Power and Dam Construction magazine.

Joe will be sincerely missed by his colleagues and friends in the dam engineering community, and by his family, personal friends, and mentees who have all been enriched by Joe's impeccable knowledge, wisdom, kindness, and wit. If desired, donations in Joe's memory can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital <http://www.stjude.org>.



In Remembrance Of

Donald Lee Basinger

The engineering community is deeply saddened by the loss of Donald Lee Basinger, PE, a distinguished design engineer whose career spanned several decades and left a lasting impact on our field and touched the lives of all who knew him.

Don began his career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS) as the Head of Design and Construction in Raleigh. He later served as an Assistant State Conservation Engineer in New York and Massachusetts. From 1974 to 1977, Don was the Head of Design at the South Technical Services Center before becoming the National Director of Engineering. His leadership during this period was marked by significant advancements in engineering standards that continue to guide dam engineering practices today.

After retiring from SCS, Don joined EBASCO Services. In 1994, he co-founded Applied Geosciences and Engineering (AG&E) in Greensboro, NC, which merged with Schnabel Engineering in 2000. Serving as the Chief Engineer for the North Carolina office until his retirement in 2015, Don's expertise and leadership significantly contributed to the office's growth, and successful completion of many notable projects. His ability to address complex engineering challenges with effective solutions earned him widespread respect and admiration.

Don's contributions went far beyond his technical expertise. He was a mentor to many, shaping some of the finest professionals in dam engineering. His commitment to sharing knowledge, nurturing talent, and fostering friendships has left an enduring legacy within our community.

Don's legacy will continue to inspire and guide us. His experience, professionalism, and unwavering support have left an indelible mark on our practice and our lives. His work has ensured the safety and reliability of critical infrastructure, and his influence will be felt for generations to come. We honor his memory and celebrate his remarkable achievements.