

Evaluation Report - 2018 FIG-NSPS YSN North American Meeting



THE FIG
FOUNDATION



Acknowledgements

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Introduction

In October 2017, Jeremy Burns, Maryland Young Surveyors Representative, proposed that the FIG YSN and the NSPS YSN hold the biennial FIG-NSPS YSN North American Meeting in conjunction with NSPS and the Maryland Society of Surveyors (MSS) during the 2018 MSS Fall Conference. The proposal was that MSS would help the YSN host a meeting in College Park, Maryland on October 17, 2018 at the College Park Marriott. The proposal was accepted and the meeting planning began. This report evaluates the preparation and execution of the 2018 FIG-NSPS YSN North America Meeting.

The Meeting

Preparation for the meeting began in November 2018. The planning began with recruiting a planning team, organizing a location to store documents for collaboration, and identify tasks to be accomplished. Preparation took 12 months and was divided into various phases. Each phase is described below and includes planning, execution, and recommendations for future meetings.



2018 FIG-NSPS YSN NA Meeting Attendees

Business Plan

During initial planning a few sponsors requested a meeting business plan. The business plan provided an executive summary, timeline, proposed budget, and overall goals. It is recommended that a business plan be drawn up prior to requesting funds to make sure the thoughts of the planning team are organized.

Room Details

The YSN didn't account for meeting room costs because MSS and NSPS had a contract with the Marriott. Room arrangements and logistics were handled by covered NSPS and MSS. Arrangements and logistics included Wifi, Audio/Visual, and the physical table arrangement.

Although the YSN could have procured its own room, it recommended to team with another conference to aid in the logistics, even if the room will be paid for by the YSN.



Food and Beverage

Since there was an existing contract with the Marriott in place, Food and Beverage was handled by MSS and NSPS as well. However, the costs were paid for by the YSN. Food and Beverage included a morning coffee break, buffet-style hot lunch, and an afternoon coffee break.

It is recommended that future meetings include pre-meeting morning coffee and snacks.

Registration

In the past, YSN meeting registration was handled through a Google form and payment was taken on-site. A problem arose with the fact that payments could only be made in cash or check. To alleviate this issue, registration was handled online through the NSPS website.

Cost per attendee was set at \$50 and included the meeting, social hour, post-meeting group event, and attendance to specific MSS sessions and events. Overall there were 48 registrants bringing in \$2,400.



NSPS' Curt Sumner, Trish Milburn, and Sara Maggi

Theme

The planning team decided to keep the meeting's theme consistent with our host's theme which was "Plotting a Course for the Future." The theme was aviation themed because Washington DC was an aviation hub and also because the YSN is looking and planning for the future.

Marketing

Marketing was handled by the planning team. A flyer and meeting details were created for dissemination. The team communicated through a number of supporters including:

- xyHt Magazine - Gavin Schrock
- RPLS Today - Wendel Harness
- NSPS News and Views - Trish Milburn
- Lidar News - Gene Roe
- NSPS YSN and FIG YSN social media
- Individual planning members social media
- Email notifications to YSN members

Sessions

The goals of the YSN are to be inclusive, encouraging, and forward-thinking. With these goals in mind the planning team settled on four major session themes:

Looking Ahead

Since the meeting was held close to Washington DC, it was nearly a requirement to include the National Geodetic Survey (NGS). The timing of the meeting was especially important because the NGS is planning a major datum update in 2022 and the meeting gave them an opportunity to discuss the role of the YSN in that update.

Dr. Dru Smith and Dr. Jacob Heck from NGS presented on the datum update and how surveying has changed over time and what a young surveyor needs to be successful.



NGS' Dr. Dru Smith and Dr. Jacob Heck

Technology

Surveyors that are under the age of 35 are nearly all digital natives. They've grown up with digital technology. Technology is important and disruptive. The planning team invited Trimble, Leica, and Esri to discuss the skills a young surveyor needs to stay relevant.

Chad McFadden, PLS, from Trimble, discussed technology as it relates to forensic surveying. Brent Jones, PE, PLS, from Esri, discussed a surveyors role in Modern Land Administration and the disruption caused by technology.

Frank Lenik, PLS, from Leica Geosystems, discussed how disruptive surveying technology can be and what a young surveyor should be prepared to know.



Trimble's Chad McFadden



Esri's Brent Jones



Leica's Frank Lenik

Leadership

Leadership is a trait that all young surveyors need to be successful. Leadership can be learned and used from any perspective and in any position. Leaders from the surveying industry were invited to discuss leadership in a panel setting. The panelists were:

Pat Smith, RPLS, Vice-President, Sam Inc.

Jason Graf, PLS, Vice-President, Gayron de Bruin Land Surveying and Engineering

Mark Sargent, LLS, Owner, Richard D. Bartlett and Associates

Lisa Van Horn, PLS, Owner, Benchmark Surveying

Stewart Ward, PLS, Owner, Dioptra Surveying



Survey Leadership Panel

Feedback

Feedback is an important part of a career. Feedback can be from a boss, client, or a family member, but all is important. A panel of non-surveying professionals was brought together to discuss what surveying looks like from the outside. The panel consisted of:

Jim Lowe, PE, Regional Vice-President, Atwell

Dusty Rood, PE, CEO/President, Rodgers Consulting

Ronald Rye, PE, The Wilson T. Ballard Company

Thomas W. Simmons, Esq, Eagle Title



Ice-Breaker Sessions

In addition to the heart of the content, it was important to the planning team to get attendees up and about talking with one-another. There were two ice-breaker sessions planned:

The Dating Game split the attendees into two groups: one group received a paper with a question and the other group received a paper with an answer. The goal of the game was to find the person with the question that matched the answer.



The other game was *Three Truths and a Lie*. Each attendee would write down three truths and a lie about themselves on a piece of paper. They would then walk around and try and guess which lie was written on other attendees papers. Time ran over during the previous session, so this game was skipped.



The women of the YSN!

Sponsorship

Meeting

It was understood by the planning team that a successful meeting would require funding. Since the YSN doesn't charge for membership, funding would need to come from sponsors. The team reached out to industry for support and raised \$22,763.44.

Sponsors included:

The FIG Foundation

Trimble

Sam, Inc.

Leica Geosystems

Maryland Society of Surveyors

DC Land Surveyors Association

NSPS

David Doyle and David Weber

It is recommended that a business plan be accompanied with any sponsorship request. The plan shows that the meeting has been thought out and properly vetted.



The FIG Foundation Grant

The FIG Foundation supports YSN endeavors. To request support, a grant application must be applied for and submitted to the current FIG Foundation Chair. The grant covers travel and accommodation costs. The application must be submitted 90 days prior to the event.

Attendee Travel

One of the overall goals of the meeting was to support as many attendees as possible. A way to do so is to help provide travel and expense reimbursement for those who need support. The FIG and NSPS YSN created a travel scholarship which would spend the funds provided by the FIG Foundation.

A Google Form was set up and the scholarship was promoted on the meeting website and social media. There were 37 applicants, but only 6 qualified. Unqualified applicants didn't meet criteria or failed to submit the proper paperwork. It is recommended that a planning team member be assigned to watching the applications and reminding applicants of the requirements, so failure to submit paperwork is minimized.

Four candidates were awarded a travel scholarship from the planning team. Their funds were paid for by the FIG Foundation Funds. NSPS handled all accommodations.



John Hohol with the scholarship winners Amanda Bajhart, Melissa Retana, Julia Herrera, and Cassandra Quintal.

Team-Building

A benefit of the YSN is the ability to grow the member's professional network. To help this, the planning team organized a few group activities.

Group Events

Social Hour

After the meeting, the planning team hosted an event for all attendees, speakers, and anyone who was interested in getting to know the YSN better. The event was held at a local restaurant near the University of Maryland campus. There were nearly 50 attendees.

Capitol Tour

In addition to the social hour, the planning team organized a tour of the US Capitol building hosted by the US Capitol Historical Society. A group of 30 young surveyors toured the capitol building. The NSPS Lobbyist, JB Byrd, chaperoned the attendees from the hotel to the capitol building.



Post-Meeting Survey

After the meeting a ten-question survey was sent to all of the attendees. The ten questions that were asked were:

1. Overall how would you rate the event?
2. Would you recommend the event to others in the future?
3. How did you hear about the event?
4. Did the meeting meet your expectations?
5. What did you like most about the event?
6. What did you like least about the event?
7. Rate each of the speakers
8. What would you like to see at the next event?
9. Would you be willing to help plan a future event?
10. What other recommendations would you make to improve the event?

Eleven responses were returned. Overall the event was well received. All responders rated the event high and would recommend the the event to others in the future.

Some key takeaways from the survey are:

1. Meeting new people and networking is a benefit of the event
2. The attendees enjoyed the Capitol tour. It gave them an opportunity to learn about one another outside the meeting.
3. A number of respondents wanted a hands-on portion with technology, software, or some other tool that will help them do their jobs.
4. The dual registration (MSS and NSPS) was clunky.
5. More activity during the day would have been great. Reduce the number of speakers and allow the attendees to interact more.
6. A few respondents wanted to focus more on the future of the organization. Planning goals for 1, 5, and 10 years.
7. Most respondents heard about the meeting through their state society, NSPS News & Views, and NSPS Director

Recommendations

The meeting was a success, but within the success there are lessons to be learned. Below are recommendations for planning of future events.

1. Future meetings should be held in the Spring. The reason for this recommendation is due to the fact that the summer and fall are busy times for land surveyors. It was difficult to find enough volunteers to spread the work around. Additionally, the NSPS Student Competition is in the spring, and the planning team can coordinate with the schools to hopefully allow student attendance at the meeting.
2. A meeting business plan should be drawn up within the first month of planning. The plan can be shared with prospective sponsors, NSPS, and FIG.
3. Solidify location and meeting logistics (A/V, Food and Beverage, etc.) at least two to four months prior to meeting. This will be important for planning and promotion.
4. Coffee should be provided in the morning prior to the meeting instead of at a morning break.
5. Open registration two to four months prior to meeting. If possible, continue to handle registration through NSPS. It was flawless and a huge weight off the planning teams shoulders.
6. Meeting promotion should happen as soon as possible. The FIG YSN meeting planning spreadsheet is a good tool to use for timelines, but it is especially important to get information about the meeting out in as many venues as soon as possible. Four to six months notice is a good start for initial promotion. Once the initial promotion starts, continual (bi-weekly to monthly) promotion should continue. A flyer or website can be a good way to promote the meeting. Additionally, the planning team should identify one person to handle marketing and promotion.
7. Request FIG Foundation Grant as soon as possible. Ideally,
8. The travel scholarship is a great way to promote the meeting. A recommendation is to identify one person to watch the application submittals and ensure applicants submit the proper paperwork. Also, the travel grant should precede the meeting by two to three months, allowing the planning team to review applications and identify candidates.
9. Maryland Society of Surveyors graciously offered sessions to the attendees, but they had to register separately for them. If this will happen in the future, it is recommended that the registration for the state events happen in conjunction with the registration for the YSN meeting. That way the attendees only sign up once and all details are handled.
10. A consideration should be made to increase the length of the meeting to two days. One of the two days could include a workshop on technology, leadership, business, management, or public speaking. The second day could then be a traditional meeting. A benefit of the two day meeting is that there will be less of a feeling to cram as much value in one day as possible. The two days should end earlier allowing for more professional networking.