

## The Importance of Connecting Surveyors

The surveying profession's role(s) span disciplines all over the world. Surveyors, in particular, serve their roles in accordance to the niche qualifications embedded in history, law, mathematics, physics, education (and much more!) expected of those in their county, state, prefecture, and/or country. Each geographic area has developed and structured their own set of government and rules for their existing and upcoming generation to follow; however, many of these principles overlap among passionate practicing individuals.

## The FIG Foundation & YSN

In the relatively short time that I've found myself in surveying, I've met and surveyed with folks in areas from all over. But, as a young surveyor (same as many other young surveyors) there are endless opportunities to continuously learn why and how things are done elsewhere. This often (and should) develop into a deep respect and curiosity among our shared profession. This emphasizes the importance of the FIG Foundation's purpose to bring surveyors and geospatial professionals from all over the globe to converge and share similar ideals and principles to learn from one another. The FIG/YSN's 2<sup>nd</sup> Americas Regional meeting was a special opportunity to bring these ideals together in practice. I can speak from personal experience that my time during this meeting has proven to me that surveying crosses boundaries that exceed geopolitics, topography, and language. I am proud to reflect upon this experience and excited to continually follow other young surveyors who are able to do so afterwards.

## Role of Young Surveyors

A shared aspect of this young group of surveyors is the ambition to build each other up – for those who were present in the room but also for those who were absent – those who don't even know these opportunities exist for them yet. This is, in fact, our mission as young surveyors, and those as representatives of FIG Foundation to share these opportunities and close these gaps via outreach and education. I felt this mission exercised through every conversation from folks of all ages and areas who had attended. It is a shared goal among the young surveyors – the same as the goals among the average aging population of licensed surveyors in each state – to encourage more individuals to enter and support our profession.

## Takeaway from 2nd Americas Meeting

Leadership and problem resolution is rife (and at many points) the beginning and end of our roles on a project. Depending how we, as emerging professionals, navigate this process will define how we will uphold the impression of our work for the upcoming



*Figure 1. FIG Foundation Award Presented from FIG Foundation.*

generation. Thus, this was one of the most beneficial aspects of this meeting. The entirety of sessions emphasized the importance of us as young professionals to navigate the very core of our roles: how do we work towards peace among conflicting client/neighbor, how do we exemplify accountability as a leader, how do we honor the contributions of the past, how do we keep up with the rapid developments of the future? These are all questions posed among our YSN peers, and they were answered in this meeting and set the stage for the next.

### Reflection and Next Steps

It was tough to reflect on this meeting for a handful of reasons: it was short but impactful. I was left thinking of (*what I NEED TO DO*), it was diverse but I was left wanting to learn more from my ‘Americas’ counterparts (*The whys and hows of surveying and mapping*)... much to discuss but we need more time. So, what is next? Well, as an individual, there is only what we *can* do – *SPREAD THE WORD!* On a more personal level and local scale, we’ve encouraged the engagement of state organizations and to revitalize the YSN where needed. The benefit of starting the YSN is that there are folks equally as passionate looking for opportunities of engagement in the surveying profession. It is only a matter of leadership or accountability to make it happen. It is one meeting at a time. I believe that opportunities to sponsor passionate surveyors funded through the FIG Foundation make this awareness and passion happen among the individuals who want to spread the same enjoyment and challenges they feel in this profession.

### Concluding Thoughts to Upcoming Folks

Passion is contagious. If you feel the same spark about surveying (that many other folks do), it is likely that there are others who are looking for the same drive or meaning in life. I, and many others who’ve taught me to survey or vice versa, wish we had known of this unique and niche profession sooner. There are many avenues of learning of surveying, but *your words and outreach are likely the most accessible to those around you*. Get involved in your state’s local professional surveying organization chapter and/or FIG 😊 Thank you again FIG Foundation and YSN for enabling me to attend and share this opportunity with others. - Hunter



Figure 2. Informative session talk provided by professional licensed surveyor, Byron Freeman.



Figure 3. FIG/YSN 2nd Americas Regional Meeting 2025.