

## ALUMNI

### Distinguished Alumni Receive ASCE Lifetime Achievement Award



The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) this year bestowed one of its highest honors, the Outstanding Projects And Leaders (OPAL) Lifetime Achievement award, on CEE Alumnus Nicholas DeNichilo '73 '78 and Mechanical Engineering (ME) alumnus Edward Schmeltz '71. NJIT alumni, DeNichilo and Schmeltz, have made substantial and lasting contributions to the field of engineering. The awards, given annually, recognize engineering leaders who have made a significant difference in one of five key areas, including construction, design, education, government, and management

Nicholas DeNichilo, the president and CEO of Hatch Mott MacDonald, received the 2015 OPAL award for management for his dynamic leadership of one of the country's largest and most influential engineering firms. Edward Schmeltz, senior vice president and director of maritime and special projects for AECOM Technology Corp., won the 2015 OPAL award for design for his marine engineering work around the globe.

Under DeNichilo's leadership, Hatch Mott MacDonald (HMM) has more than tripled in size, from a staff of 866 in 2002 to 2700 in 2014, with engineers in 76 offices across the U.S. and Canada. ASCE noted that the firm now ranks 31st on the 2014 Engineering News Record's list of Top 500 design firms and attributes its success to DeNichilo's desire to maintain a "strong culture of providing quality services, safety, ethics, professionalism, and innovative solutions."

In 1999, he was named ASCE's Engineer of the Year, and he has also received the George Warren Fuller Award for his distinguished professional and volunteer service in the water field from the New Jersey Section of the American Water Works Association.

DeNichilo, who spent much of his now 40-year career focused on water-utility projects throughout the country before taking the helm of HMM, declined to name a single water facility, bridge, tunnel or highway as a high point. Rather, he pointed to the firm's broader mission.

"I would say more generally that the many large and small infrastructure projects we have completed that serve the public are most satisfying to me," he said. "They bring a real sense of accomplishment."

Schmeltz '71 was recognized for designing some of what ASCE deems "the finest and most iconic and leading-edge projects," including the Pier 400 Development for the Port of Los Angeles. He has been responsible for projects in a variety of ports and harbors in the U.S. and internationally, including his work with the U.S. Navy in designing berth and support facilities for the battleships U.S.S Iowa in New York Harbor and U.S.S. Missouri in Pearl Harbor. His coastal engineering projects include the restoration of Whiskey Island, one of the barrier islands that protect New Orleans.

In 2010, Schmeltz was an inaugural inductee into ASCE's Academy of Coastal, Ocean, Port & Navigation Engineers, and he was recently appointed to the Academy's Board of Governors. In 1988, he was presented with the Admiral Frederic R. Harris Award for Professional Excellence.

"I've been doing great projects with great people all over the world, from Europe to the Middle East, to China and Australia. I've now worked on six of the seven continents," Schmeltz said, adding, "It's our firm's motto that we "make

the world a better place.” From my end, I feel the projects I’ve done have major impacts in terms of driving economies and quality-of-life issues for people around the globe.

Both men have deep ties to NJIT, where they have played key roles in university governance and strategic planning. DeNichilo is a longtime member of NJIT’s Board of Overseers, the governing body that oversees the Foundation at NJIT, the university’s fundraising arm. Schmeltz has served on the advisory board of Albert Dorman Honors College for more than a decade. Both are generous supporters of the university.

DeNichilo, who earned both an undergraduate and master’s degree from Newark College of Engineering, said of his longtime connection, “A lot of my success goes back to my days at NCE, where I had great mentors who made a big difference. I was the first in my family to graduate college, so NCE became that much more special. A lot of my lifelong friends are from NCE as well. For these reasons I feel it’s important to give back.”

Schmeltz noted, “I enjoy my interaction with the students. They are really sharp people. I always say I’m glad I don’t have to compete with them. In the long run, it’s an issue of ‘giving back’ for the education and opportunities that NJIT provided to me. I feel this is time well spent.”

NJIT President Joel Bloom called both men “giants in their professional achievements “who are also generous and highly engaged alumni who have supported their alma mater “with their time, talent, and treasure.”

“Nick’s decades of service to NJIT, his contributions to his profession, and his leadership of Hatch Mott MacDonald, which has experienced phenomenal growth under his direction, are truly exceptional,” Bloom said, adding, “It has been a delight to work with him.”

"Ed's tireless commitment to the Board of Albert Dorman Honors College, his leadership of its strategic planning process, and his pursuit of a partnership between NJIT and AECOM has resulted in significant benefits for his alma mater, its students and his company," Bloom said. "His professional achievements are extraordinary and on behalf of the NJIT community, I heartily congratulate him."