

# FRIEDMAN FAMILY VISITING PROFESIONALS PROGRAM



## Visit to University of Southern California: February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

This report summarizes the visit of **David Cocke** from Structural Focus that took place at the University of Southern California on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

### ITINERARY OR AGENDA

Provide the itinerary of the visit. For example:

TIME:	ACTIVITY:
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Guest lecture by Visiting Professional
8:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Dinner with student chapter executive board at local restaurant Bacaro LA

### STUDENT CHAPTER VISIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

**LEAD ORGANIZER(S):** Cindy Wei & Natasha Nazarian

- Cindy Wei, Chapter President, cindywei@usc.edu
- Natasha Nazarian, Vice President, nrnazari@usc.edu
- Rana Kashani, SDC Co-Captain, sadatkas@usc.edu
- Ryan Meier, SDC Co-Captain, rmeier@usc.edu
- Piyounik Hakopian, Secretary, phakopia@usc.edu
- Taniket Sawant, Treasurer, tanikets@usc.edu

### VISITING PROFESSIONAL LECTURE OVERVIEW

David Cocke's lecture began with describing a brief general background on his life, including colleges he has been to, where he has worked, how to began his career in the city, and the reasons for why he decided to build his own structural firm. He then on went on to describe various recent projects Structural Focus has worked on, and ended the lecture with professional advice to the students for the future.

### Lecture Abstract

Lecture topics covered:

- General biography of David Cocke/path to creating own company
- Specific projects worked on with Structural Focus

- Advice on how to go about life and general points on career in engineering

## Professional Bio

David Cocke has been practicing structural engineering since he moved to California from Virginia in 1981. He received his Bachelors degree from Virginia Tech and his Master's degree from San Jose State University. He founded Structural Focus in 2001 after working for 20 years at Degenkolb Engineers in San Francisco and Los Angeles. David is a registered structural engineer in California and several other states, with expertise in seismic evaluation, historic preservation, retrofits, and new design.

## SUPPLEMENTAL PHOTOS







## RESULTS, FEEDBACK AND LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges included general organization of the visit due to lack of knowledge from past visits. This was the first time the University of Southern California hosted a visiting professional, and we received great advice from David Cocke himself for the future. We consist of a relatively small chapter, which made it more difficult to reach out to non-members and students outside of the communication channels. Some ideas for the future include:

- Co-hosting with ASCE for greater exposure/during Viterbi Expo or Career Fair
- Announcements in class sessions
- Snacks during the meeting
- Campus tour

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The University of Southern California EERI Student Chapter gratefully acknowledges the support of the Friedman Family for sponsoring the travel of David Cocke through their Friedman Family Visiting Professional Program endowment.

## LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Included at the end of this report are various attachments to supplement the information included above. A list of the attachments is included below:

- Email for event
- Flier for event

# Guest Lecture

David Cocke, S.E.



President of Structural Focus  
Charter member of USC EERI

Wednesday, February 24  
6:30 PM  
KAP 209  
Snacks will be provided.

If you are interested to pursue a career in Civil/Structural Engineering, come to the guest lecture to learn more about David Cocke's experiences and ask questions.

## ***Real Life as a Structural Engineer: More Than Designing Buildings***

David Cocke, S.E. has been practicing Structural Engineering since he moved to California from Virginia in 1981. He received his Bachelors from Virginia Tech and his Masters from San Jose State University. David founded Structural Focus in 2001 after 20 years at Degenkolb Engineers in San Francisco and Los Angeles. He is a registered structural engineer in California and several other states, with expertise in seismic evaluation, historic preservation, retrofits and new design.



## **ABSTRACT:**

**David Cocke, SE, President of Structural Focus**

### **Real Life as a Structural Engineer: More Than Designing Buildings**

Engineering students learn a lot about analyzing structures, designing systems and connections and other tools to be successful as a practicing engineer in the real world. In real life, engineers have a tremendous impact on our society. The profession plays a major role affecting important issues such as sustainability, public safety, the aesthetics of our built environment, community resilience and recovery from disasters, preservation of historic structures and our client's needs for a viable facility. Structural Focus is a smallish Structural Engineering consulting firm located in the metropolitan area of Los Angeles. David founded S. F. in 2001 after 20 years at Degenkolb with the goal to work on the most interesting and meaningful projects in Southern California. With 18 million people within an hour's driving distance, he theorized that his firm could focus on finding the most challenging and interesting architectural projects out there, say the top 5%, and be successful. The firm's mission is *"to do projects we can be proud of, and be proud of how we do them."* Now, 14 years later, the Structural Focus portfolio includes film studios, performing arts venues, historic landmark buildings, university and labs, and other projects like Red Bull Headquarters, Google and YouTube. In his presentation, David will explain some of their philosophy and strategies, as well as review several case studies including Red Bull, Annenberg Center for Performing Arts in Beverly Hills, 3Labs, Agensys and the historic Wilshire Boulevard Temple restoration. David will also introduce you to their latest work with community resiliency involving post-disaster inspection programs. Finally, David hopes to show you how a wide diversity of projects can provide engineers with the opportunities to contribute to a better future.