

The Dodson Drive Foundation and Thoughts on the YP Summit 2011

By Benji Kojo Addo, P.E., PMP

The WEF and AWWA YP Summit held April 13 –16, 2011 in Louisville KY was a blast! I am grateful to Mr. Kenneth D. Dodson, the Dodson Drive Foundation, and WEAT for sponsoring my participation in this great summit. I also appreciate the support I have received from Pate Engineers, Inc.

Ken has served the water/wastewater industry for 30+ years and has passionately supported YPs in many ways. I was able to attend the summit this year because I was chosen from a group of dynamic YP WEAT members working in the water/wastewater industry, every one of which frankly deserved to attend.

I enjoyed meeting other colleagues from different parts of the country and from Canada as well. I have worked in the water/wastewater industry for 8+ years and yet the experience from this summit for me was like no other. I understood first-hand how regulatory requirements in other states have impacted wastewater treatment plant design in those areas and how my everyday design should always consider cost-effective alternatives that allow for future retrofits but ultimately meets the client's needs and budget. The best part of the summit was when YPs from across the country had the opportunity to share their experiences from special projects undertaken to help their local communities.

I urge all YPs across the great State of Texas to get involved in both their section and state WEAT activities and to help grow our organization. Let's not be afraid to question the status quo –probably even offer unconventional ways to conduct our YP activities. For instance, we can probably explore further the use of social media as a tool for organizing YP functions. Yes, we face challenges like the lack of access during business hours. However, we should not allow that to stop us from exploring the limitless possibilities and even connecting in unique ways outside of regular work hours.

It is clear that our collaboration with the AWWA is beneficial to both organizations and we want to continue pursuing mutually beneficial programs that will help us offer well thought-out services to promote the health of the public.

I want to encourage everyone to consider supporting the Dodson Drive Foundation by visiting www.weat.org. The Dodson 5K and 10K runs will always be a part of Texas Water and is yet another way to get involved to support YP activities.



Pictured are Yatasha L. Moore of the Tennessee Dept. of Environment & Conservation, Pretreatment Section and Benji Addo, Pate Engineers, Inc. at the YP Summit Reception.