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**Delaware Valley
Chapter**

DELAWARE VALLEY GEO-INSTITUTE

DVGI - September 2026

Volume 26, Issue 6

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September 2026 DVGI Dinner Meeting

SPEAKER: Jay McKelvey, PE, BC.GE, PhD — Vice President, Earth Engineering, Inc.

TOPIC: "Design and Construction of a New Roadway Over Soft Soils"

DATE: Tuesday September 22, 2026 – Social Hour 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM;
Dinner 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM; Presentation 7:30PM to 8:30PM

WHERE: Valley Forge Casino – “The Venue”

1160 1st Ave, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Cost: \$70 General*, \$35 Government/Retired*, \$10 Student

***Complimentary Drink Ticket Included for Registrants Over 21**

2026 DVGI SEPTEMBER MEETING ABSTRACT:

Two retaining walls were proposed for a new roadway alignment through a low-lying wooded area featuring two small streams. The two walls would be aligned parallel to each other, forming the geometry for the new roadway. One of the walls was proposed to be over 188 meters long with a maximum height of over 8 meters, the other 294 meters long with a maximum height of 11 meters. The bearing soils that would need to support the retaining walls were found to have varying thicknesses of saturated soft clays and silty sands that were expected to consolidate as much as 70cm under the roadway stresses. Several options were evaluated for the retaining wall including pile supported load transfer platforms supporting mechanically stabilized earth walls, tie-back supported sheet pile walls, and temporary geogrid supported wire basket walls to provide surcharge to the bearing soils. This presentation will discuss the subsurface investigation and laboratory test results, design considerations, instrumentation and construction for the two walls.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

Jay McKelvey is a Vice President and Executive Director of the Geotechnical Design Division at Earth Engineering Incorporated. He is a registered professional engineer in sixteen states and the District of Columbia. Jay is a graduate of Drexel University, receiving his Bachelors, Masters and Ph.D. from there. A Past Chair for DVGI, Jay is the Chair for the Geo-Institute's Earth Retaining Structures Technical Committee, Past Chair of the Local Involvement Committee and also serves on the Geo-Institute technical committees for Geosynthetics, and Embankments, Dams and Slopes. A voting member in ASTM committees Soil and Rock (D18), and Geosynthetics (D35), Jay also serves on the Editorial Board for ASTM's Journal of Geotechnical Testing.

Please register at:

[DVGI September 2026 Dinner Meeting](#)





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May 2026 DVGI – Annual Gardner Lecture Dinner Meeting

Speaker : John C. Volk, PE — Vice President/Principal, AECOM
Topic : "Forest City Landslide Stabilization – US Rt 212, SDDOT"



2026 ANNUAL GARDNER LECTURE SUMMARY:

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026, the Delaware Valley Geo-Institute (DVGI) met at Valley Forge Casino's Parkview Ballroom for the 2026 Gardner Lecture featuring a presentation by John C. Volk, PE of AECOM on Forest City Landslide Stabilization – US Rt 212, SDDOT. John began his presentation by paying tribute to William (Bill) Gardner, for whom the lecture is named. He discussed Bill's role in the project and in mentoring several of the meeting's attendees.

Mr. Volk was the Project Engineer for a team that stabilized a large landslide (Forest City Landslide) near Pierre, South Dakota. This mile-wide and half-mile long landslide in a bentonitic shale (Pierre Shale Formation) was slowly moving a 4,600-foot long bridge (Route 212) into the Oahe reservoir. This landslide is one of the largest in North America and was stabilized over several years. John discussed the history of the site and the surrounding area, as well as the associated geotechnical challenges they presented. Completion of the Oahe Dam, located 60 miles downstream on the Missouri River, required the construction of a new bridge at Forest City. This 4,600-foot long structure was completed in 1958. Filling of the Oahe Reservoir began in 1958. By 1968 the pool had risen at the bridge site from El 1490 to El 1610. Distress in the structure was first observed in 1962 and major repairs have been made several times.

Mr. Volk explained the geotechnical solution was based on the assumption the landslide could be stabilized by unloading the slide with a large cut through escarpment located upslope from the bridge. Additionally, feasibility studies were conducted that evaluated the use of stone columns, counterberms, reinforced concrete drilled shafts (i.e., shear pins) and geosynthetic reinforcement to stabilize the independent slides within the approach embankment. Ultimately, the SDDOT chose the shear pins to stabilize the approach embankment. The final design of the approach embankment stabilization was performed in 1997 and construction completed in 1998.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

John C. Volk, PE, is a Vice President/Principal Geotechnical Engineer with AECOM in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Volk received B.S. and M.S. degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Delaware. He has 39 years of geotechnical engineering experience which includes numerous projects in the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and New York area involving geotechnical investigation, analyses and design of building foundations, retaining walls, highways, levees, landfills, and industrial facilities.

Mr. Volk has considerable experience in soft ground engineering with projects including: Atlantic City/ Brigantine Connector in New Jersey, I-15 Highway Reconstruction in Salt Lake City, Utah (\$1.6B design-build project), Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project (\$2.5B project), and New Orleans Levee Reconstruction. Mr. Volk also has significant experience in landslide stabilization, instrumentation, and soil-structure interaction.

Mr. Volk works regionally and nationally, is registered in 14 states and helps coordinate the North American Geotechnical Practice for the last several years.



May 2026 DVGI – Annual Gardner Lecture Dinner Meeting

Photo Gallery





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May 2026 DVGI – Annual Gardner Lecture Dinner Meeting

Photo Gallery



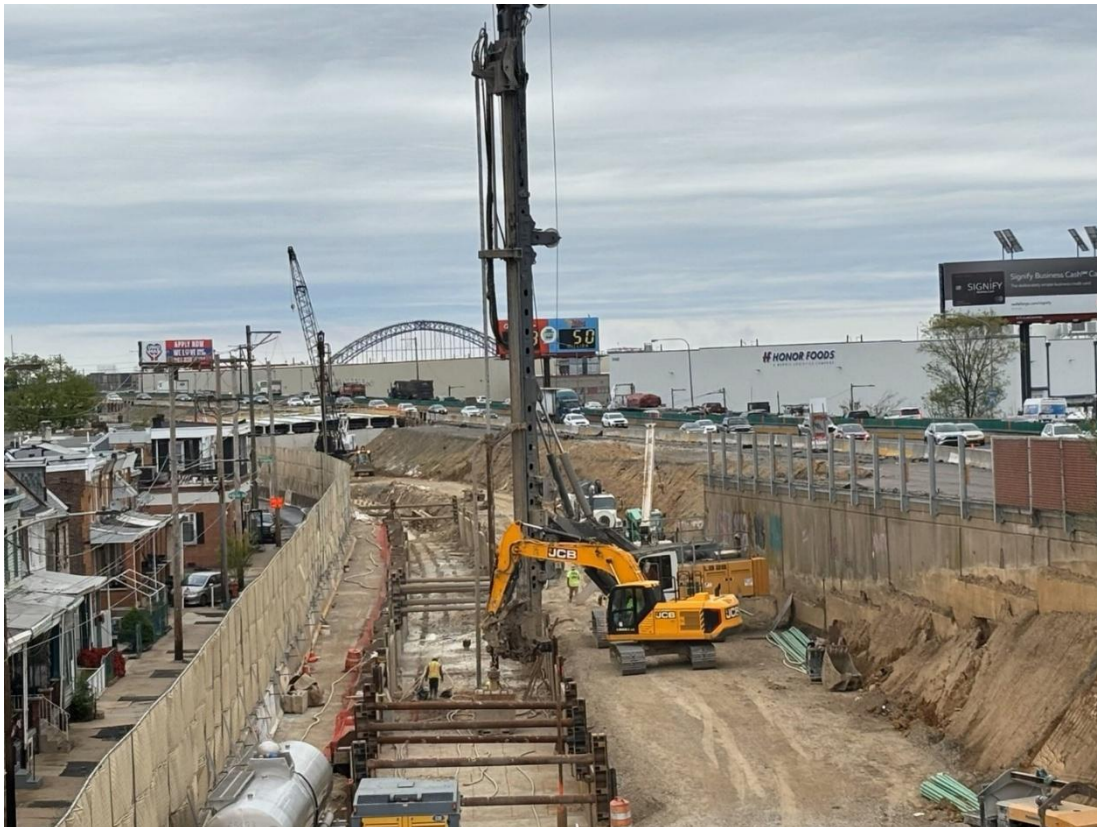


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ANNOUNCEMENTS: DVGI PROJECT OF THE YEAR 2026

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2026 PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD
WINNER: MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL & STV, INC.!**

**October's dinner meeting will include a presentation on this project,
I-95 Section BS2 Retaining Walls.**





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ANNOUNCEMENTS—SAVE THE DATE FOR THE GETT EXPO 2026

The Girls Exploring Tomorrow's Technology ® (GETT) Expo is an annual event for girls in grades 4-10, along with their parents and educators, to learn more about career opportunities in a broad scope of STEM related industries. The day is filled with exciting and enlightening experiences including hands-on activities lead by successful women in STEM fields. GETT is a free event to all students, however accompanying adults will be charged a fee of \$10 to attend, to help offset event costs.

GETT 2026 is taking place at the The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks, PA on October 24th from 10am – 2pm. For information about registration, please visit <https://gettpa.org>.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS—GOLF OUTING REVIEW

On Thursday, June 18th, 2026, more than 80 DVGI members and friends participated in the annual DVGI Golf Outing at Kimberton Golf Club in Phoenixville. Engineers, contractors, and suppliers took time out of their busy schedules to support the DVGI scholarship fund.

Despite a light morning rain, the event remained a great chance for DVGI members and friends to socialize in a more casual setting. Shout-out to DVGI Director, Kayla Nelson (Schnabel Engineering) for staffing the registration table and to Keithe Merl (Morris-Shea Bridge Company) for roaming the course with refreshments. And a big THANK YOU to DVGI Director, Lei Gu (Michael Baker International) for his continued efforts as our Golf Outing Chair!

Special thanks to our 17 sponsors which made the event a huge success and supported the DVGI Scholarship Fund. The money will be distributed to students during DVGI's annual Student Night dinner meeting next March. Thank you for helping us make this another record-setting year! We hope to see you all again, at next year's outing.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS – STEMFEST – AMERICAN HELICOPTER MUSEUM

DVGI had an amazing time at the American Helicopter Museum and Education Center connecting with families and future engineers through our edible soil profile activity—a hands-on way to explore the layers beneath our feet!

Families and students explored subsurface layers in a creative, interactive way—proving that learning about soil mechanics can be both educational and fun.

Huge shoutout to our 9 incredible DVGI volunteers who made this experience possible: Kayla Nelson, EIT, Marissa Ciocco, Juan Felipe Hernandez, EI, Candace Hickey, Lei Gu, PE, PMP, ENV SP, Robert Crawford, John Healy, Angela Saade, EIT, and Theresa Andrejack Loux, Ph.D., P.E., ENV SP

We were also inspired by the “Meet a Pilot” panel featuring women in aviation—such an empowering addition to an already fantastic event!

Thanks to everyone who joined us—we can’t wait for the next one!





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Flexible Schedule

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- Review PennDOT district submissions for DM-4 and AASHTO LRFD compliance
- Design Earth Retaining Systems and temporary shoring/sheetpile systems
- Run geotechnical analyses using LPILE, PCSTABL, ABLRFD, or similar software
- Coordinate boring and testing programs with drilling subcontractors

What You Bring:

- 10+ years of geotechnical engineering experience on PennDOT projects
- Strong background in PennDOT geotechnical reviews and subsurface investigations
- Proficiency with LPILE, PCSTABL, ABLRFD, or similar geotechnical software
- Active PA PE license (or an active out-of-state PE, eligible to obtain PA licensure)
- Sharp communication skills and a collaborative, detail-oriented mindset

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The advertisement for Langan features a background image of a bridge under construction. The company name 'LANGAN' is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, a brown banner contains the text 'WE ARE HIRING!'. To the left of this banner, a white box contains text about hiring in the Philadelphia Geotechnical group. To the right, two award logos are shown: 'Hot Firm 2024' and '2024 Best Firms To Work For'. At the bottom, a dark blue banner contains the website 'LANGAN.COM/CAREERS'.



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Upcoming Dates for 2026-27 Dinner Meetings, Webinars and Events are as follows:

9/22/2026 – Tuesday – Jay McKelvey, PE, BC.GE, PhD —

"Design and Construction of a New Roadway Over Soft Soils "

10/20/2026 – Tuesday – Matt Lunemann, PE — "2026 DVGI Geotechnical
Project of the Year, I-95 Section BS2 Retaining Walls"

10/24/2026 – Saturday – GETT Expo 2026

11/17/2026 – Tuesday – John Peirce, Jr., PE, BC.GE –

"I-95-CP3 Box Sewer & Ramp F SOE"

01/19/2027 – Tuesday – Ricardo Fernos-Jones, PE – "North Millsboro Bypass
113 to SR 24 / US 113 at SR 20 Grade Separated Intersection"

One PDH will be awarded for most meetings that you attend.

*If you are interested in presenting at one of our monthly meetings or have ideas about
potential speakers, please get in touch with a DVGI board member.*

NEW DVGI.ORG WEBSITE

Check out our revamped website at [DVGI.ORG](https://www.dvgi.org)!

Welcome to Delaware Valley Geo-Institute!

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HAVE DVGI PUBLISH YOUR ARTICLE, ADVERTISEMENT, OR JOB POSTING

- Do you have an interesting article on a project or individual in your organization that you would like to have published in the DVGI newsletter?
- Would you like to get the word out about a job opening, new venture, etc. to our membership via the newsletter?

Please submit your articles or news items for consideration in the next edition of the newsletter or get in touch about our reasonably priced advertising by contacting Joseph Murray (jmurray@mrce.com).

Geo-Institute

On Director's Cut, Geo-Institute Director Brad Keelor interviews G-I members about anything and everything. You might hear about their favorite geotechnical project, their favorite music, or their favorite pie. In Episode 30 of Season 7, our guest is Ana Maria Parra Bastidas of Carlos Parra and Associates!

<https://gi-directorscut.asce.org/e/s07-e30-ana-maria-parra-bastidas-carlos-parra-and-associates/>

ASCE/G-I Members:
Read past and present issues of Geo-Strata magazine online at

<https://www.geoinstitute.org/publications/geostrata>





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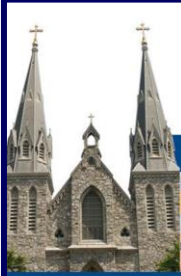
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<http://www.lehigh.edu/~incee>



Beena Sukumaran, PhD
Chairperson
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Department of Civil &
Environmental Engineering
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