STUDENT RECRUITMENT IN THE US
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Surveying Engineering Program

Surveying Student Recruitment
• A problem for many surveying programs in the US
• Several surveying programs eliminated, others threatened because of low enrollment

Surveying Student Recruitment
• New requirements for 4-year degree in many states
• Supply of survey graduates is not meeting the demand from the surveying profession

Surveying Student Recruitment
• Professional surveying societies at state and national level have stepped in to aid recruitment
  – Visits by surveyors to schools on career day
  – Visual aides to assist surveyors and others with classroom presentations
    • PowerPoint, video, etc.
Historical background

- University professional-level degree for surveying is relatively new in the US
  - Many states still use technical programs
  - States are requiring surveying programs to be in-state (some exceptions)

Historical background

- Public perceptions of the surveying profession are weak or non-existent
  - Surveyors stand outside grocery stores asking shoppers what they bought
  - Survey technicians holding a rod or cutting brush

Efforts to increase student recruitment

- Trig*Star
  - Started in 1984 by ACSM/NSPS
  - Aimed at high school (secondary) students taking trigonometry courses
  - Competition exam with surveying questions

- Pennsylvania Society coloring book
- LSRP recruitment webpage
- CLSA recruitment webpage
- NSPS/NCEES recruitment video
- Boy Scout surveying merit badge

Trig*Star

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Trig*Star

- Competition at local, state and national levels
  - Local surveyors or societies buy the exams
  - High school teachers proctor the exams

- Competition winners receive scholarships
  - Teacher of winner also wins a cash reward

Most winners do not enroll in surveying programs

Many non-winners are exposed to surveying and do enter surveying programs

Recently revised incentives for winners

Pennsylvania coloring book

- Developed by the Pennsylvania Society of Land Surveyors

- Aimed at elementary (primary) school children (5-12 years of age)
Pennsylvania coloring book

- Final page references the Surveying program at Penn State
- Other states granted copying privileges with editing of the final page
- Interest has dropped from initial printing

The LSRP recruitment webpage

- www.lsrp.com
- Dedicated to surveying profession
- “Promoting Land Surveying in Our Schools”
  - Originally developed by Dr. Charles Ghilani of Penn State Surveying program
- Most US surveying programs are listed with links to program websites
- Aimed at students coming to universities
  - Passive approach but with some effect
- Designed to let pre-university teachers to incorporate materials into their classrooms
The CLSA recruitment webpage

- Hosted by the California Land Surveyors Association
- "Choose Your Path – Make Your Mark"
- Again aimed at students seeking to make surveying their career

The NSPS/NCEES video

- Developed by NSPS with a grant from NCEES
- Targets secondary school students
- Includes a PowerPoint presentation

The CLSA recruitment webpage

- Many links to surveying-related websites
- A “Teacher Guide” link specifically for primary and secondary school teachers
  – Designed to let teachers incorporate materials into their classroom studies

The NSPS/NCEES video

- Designed to be used by surveyors or surveying academics going into classrooms or attending job fairs
- Video can be put on a continuous loop for passive presentation
Boy Scout merit badge in surveying

- The merit badge has been around for many years
  - Map reading and trail following
  - Typically administered by non-surveyors

- Recent interest by surveyors to become more involved as a recruitment method

Discussion on US recruitment

- Problems with public perceptions of surveyors – the surveyor image problem must be addressed simultaneously with student recruitment
  - Parents of students do not see surveying as a prestigious profession

Boy Scout merit badge in surveying

- Recently upgraded to reflect tasks a land surveyor would perform
  - First aid procedures for injuries surveyors may sustain
  - Measure and mark a tract of land
  - Draw a plat of survey

Discussion on US recruitment

- Lack of coordinated effort
  - Each group seems to focus on different strategies
  - Duplication of efforts
Discussion on US recruitment

• No long term vision or plan for recruitment
  – No organization to coordinate efforts
    • Integrating plans for primary and secondary students
    • Updating recruitment materials
    • Organizing volunteer recruiters

Summary and Conclusions

• University surveying student recruitment is not meeting demand from profession for new surveyors

• Student recruitment was left to universities, professionals have only recently recognized the need to become more involved

Summary and Conclusions

• There are several surveying student recruitment efforts now ongoing in the US

• Recruitment efforts lack long term vision and coordination