

2026 ASCE Utah EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



DR. CLIFTON FARNSWORTH
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

“As the ASCE chapter advisor at BYU, Clifton inspires students by cultivating leadership, expanding competition involvement, and strengthening industry engagement. Nationally, through ASCE ExCEED, he mentors faculty whose influence reaches thousands more students, multiplying his impact on civil engineering education.”

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“Dr. Farnsworth’s strengths in curriculum development and program building are exceptional. Over more than 15 years of teaching at BYU, he has prepared 13 distinct courses, including four developed entirely from the ground up and six substantially redesigned. Many of these courses continue to rely on the materials he created even after transitioning to other faculty, reflecting their quality and lasting impact...

He has played a central role in expanding construction-related education within the civil engineering curriculum. His courses are grounded in both strong technical competency and integration of soft skills and professional development. He developed Infrastructure Asset Management, Managing Risk in Construction, and Civil Infrastructure (Heavy Civil) Construction, significantly broadening elective course options and strengthening infrastructure-focused content for students. Within the recently merged Civil Engineering and Construction Management department, he led the development of an infrastructure construction track that bridges the two disciplines. He also redeveloped the Introduction to Civil and Construction Engineering course to emphasize a comprehensive built-environment life cycle perspective.

Over the past five years, Dr. Farnsworth has intentionally integrated his teaching and research around three core principles: people as the focus of built-environment applications, life-cycle thinking for sustainable decision-making, and interdisciplinary problem-solving for complex infrastructure challenges. As a founding member of the CCE Sustainability Lab, he has advanced research on sustainable communities and infrastructure while reintegrating that scholarship directly into coursework.

His work has contributed to campus-wide sustainability initiatives, the Nepal Brick Kiln Community project, and housing and infrastructure reconstruction in Puerto Rico, where he has helped develop interdisciplinary decision-making frameworks. Similarly, he recently participated with the development of the Utah Section Infrastructure Report Card, where he led the Hazardous Waste team.

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“Student development remains central within each of these efforts. Over the past five years he has mentored 49 undergraduate research students and 25 graduate students (serving as chair for 11 and committee member for 14), fostering meaningful research engagement and strong scholarly writing within a collaborative lab environment.

Dr. Farnsworth has made significant national contributions through his sustained involvement with the nationally renowned ASCE ExCEED (Excellence in Civil Engineering Education) teaching workshop. This premier program mentors new civil engineering faculty through intensive seminars, demonstration classes, and peer-reviewed teaching practice... Through this work, he has influenced not only hundreds of BYU students, but also thousands of civil engineering students nationwide who are taught by faculty he has helped mentor...

Dr. Farnsworth’s service efforts strongly emphasize experiential learning and leadership development. As faculty advisor for the ASCE student chapter, he meets weekly with the student leadership team, provides strategic direction, coordinates professional seminars featuring industry leaders, and advises multiple competition teams. Participation has grown significantly under his leadership... This level of student participation and excitement is a direct result of the positive culture that Dr. Farnsworth has helped to foster among the students. Chapter engagement has expanded as well, with opening and closing social events now drawing 150–200 students. Dr. Farnsworth has played a significant role in helping the BYU ASCE student chapter continue to remain strong under his direction. He also helped lead preparations for and host the ASCE National Student Championships, held at BYU in 2024, guiding student leaders, assisting in raising over \$100,000, helping coordinate nearly 100 volunteers, and supporting a three-day event welcoming more than 500 students and faculty from across the country. Collectively, these efforts demonstrate his deep commitment to enriching the student experience and preparing future civil engineers for professional leadership.”