

The Los Angeles Section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers presents:

**LA ASME FEBRUARY 2016 Presentation:  
“Serendipity and Contrarianism in Scientific Research:  
Hit ‘em where they ain’t”**

**At The Metropolitan Water District, Conference Room- 6-199**

**February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM**

**All ASME members, student members, public, engineering students and teaching staff are invited.**

**PARKING IS LOCATED IN THE MWD UNDERGROUND STRUCTURE. ASME WILL BE PROVIDING REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE PARKING.**

Prior to the presentation there will be a short business meeting of the LA Section Executive Committee.

**Topic:** Almost every great scientific or technological discovery involves a degree of **serendipity**, *i.e.*, a chance encounter with unexpected results. This is no coincidence, for if one already expects a particular result and research confirms the expectation, nothing fundamentally new was learned. Another key aspect of discovery is **contrarianism**, that is, challenging accepted wisdom in order to resolve its weaknesses or contradictions. This seminar discusses some famous examples of serendipitous and contrarianistic scientific and technological discoveries as well as the presenter’s own less-famous examples.

**Speaker (bio):** Paul Ronney is a Professor in the Department of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering at USC. Prof. Ronney received a BSME from UC Berkeley, an MS in Aeronautics from Caltech, and a Sc.D. in Aeronautics and Astronautics from MIT. He held postdoctoral appointments at the NASA Lewis Research Center and the U. S. Naval Research Laboratory and a position as Assistant Professor at Princeton University before assuming his current position at USC. He was also a Payload Specialist Astronaut (Alternate) for Space Shuttle Missions STS-83 and STS-94 in 1997. In recognition of his achievements he is a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, an Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and a recipient of the National Science Foundation Presidential Young Investigator Award.

**Directions:**

**Fwy 110:** Drive to downtown LA, Take 101 South Fwy and exit at Alameda East to the Union Station.

**Fwy 5:** If going North, take 101 Fwy and exit at Alameda East. If going south, take Fwy 10 exit to downtown, and then Fwy 101 and take Alameda East exit.

**Fwy 10:** Drive to downtown LA, take 101 North Fwy and exit at Alameda East to the Union Station.

**Metro/Rail:** As the MWD is next to the Union Station Metro rail stop, Metro/Rail can be used to attend the event.

Park anywhere in the underground garage (it’s after hours so there is plenty of parking). Take an elevator to the lobby, and register at the Lobby guard desk. The Meeting is in the MWD Conference Room 6-199, on the 6th floor. The guard or MWD employee will need to use a keycard to operate the elevator to the 6th floor.

**Metropolitan Water District Building**

(Next to the Union Station)

Enter Union Station parking and immediately turn right, drive around to the back to the garage. Mention ASME to the guard to let you in. When inside, push a speaker button, mention ASME for the gate to open.

