In celebration of its 90th anniversary, ITE is recognizing each of its District Administrators throughout the year in a series of profiles in ITE Journal. Each month, this column will also feature historical facts and figures on the various Districts, including important dates and people throughout their history to present day.

Should you broach the subject of her impressive resume, ITE Mid-Colonial District Administrator Susan L. Best, P.E. (R), has a modest reaction. “Part of it is, I just can’t say no,” she tells ITE Journal with a laugh. “It’s just always been something that I do—I just like to get involved with things.”

Now in her eleventh year as District Administrator, Susan recently received a service award from the Mid-Colonial District marking her decade-long tenure in the role. Growing up with a father who was actively involved in his profession, Susan remembers vacations based around where the American Society of Agricultural Engineers conventions were held. Witnessing his service to that organization, including his term as president in 1979, partly inspired her to be involved with ITE and a variety of other professional organizations.

A Fellow of ITE since 1996, Susan has served in numerous leadership positions in the organization, including Mid-Colonial District Director for the International Board of Direction (IBOD). When the idea of having a District Administrator came up during her IBOD term, Susan applied her meticulous attention to detail, surveying other Districts within ITE that had the position. “I actually did a survey of the other Districts and looked at what they had online. I emailed all of the Directors and said, ‘How do you define your District Administrators, what roles do they have?’…and they sent me whatever documents they had that outlined the role,” she says.

After working with the District board to prepare a job description for the position, it wasn’t long until Susan was approached with the suggestion that she take on the job. “Even as I was writing the description, I wasn’t writing it for me—but I knew I was interested in doing it,” she notes.

Having served as executive director of the Engineers’ Club of Philadelphia from 2010-2014, among various other leadership roles, Susan brings a wealth of experience to the role of District Administrator. She says her main responsibility as District Administrator is “to provide continuity,” which is needed as the elected leadership changes term-to-term. “I’m a resource, particularly with the new revisions of bylaws and charters, as I’ve had a lot of experience over the years with that kind of work,” Susan notes. She also maintains the District’s operations manual, and helped the District achieved and maintain its 501(c)(3) status.

With a career spanning more than four decades, Susan has enjoyed learning new technologies as they emerge, and puts her computer aptitude to use as District Administrator. She says having the ability to collaborate via technology has transformed the entire profession, recalling a time when ITE technical committees conducted business via mail. “It was just harder,” she says. “Today the technology—conference calls, emails, and sharing online—has helped a lot. Being involved is certainly something I would encourage people to do more.”

The Mid-Colonial District is unique in that it only consists of two Sections—the Mid-Atlantic Section and the Washington, DC Section. The elected board consists of the secretary/treasurer, vice president, and president, as well as International Director and past president, and an elected representative from

Susan has enjoyed traveling with her husband since retiring in 2014. This 2018 trip to Alaska marked visiting their 50th state.
Getting to Know
ITE’s Mid-Colonial District

Sections
Washington, DC Section of ITE (WDCSITE)
Mid-Atlantic Section of ITE (MASITE)

U.S. States Covered
Pennsylvania
Maryland
Delaware
Washington, DC
West Virginia
Northern Virginia
Southern New Jersey

Members
Approximately 1,200 members

Student Chapters: 11

District Leadership
President – Gerard Baxter, P.E., PTOE (M)
Vice President – Nicole Kline-Elsier, P.E., PTOE (M)
Secretary/Treasurer – Jeff Bergsten, P.E. (M)
Immediate Past President – Kate Russo, P.E., PTOE (M)
MASITE Representative – Al Federico, P.E., PTOE (M)
WDCSITE Representative – Vivek Hariharan, P.E., PTOE (M)
International Director – Jeff Riegner, AICP, PTOE (F)

Did You Know?
• The Mid-Colonial District has two Sections and no Chapters because the District’s geographic area is relatively small. You can drive from east to west or north to south of the District in just four hours.
• With the exception of five years in Arlington, VA, USA from 1973-1978, ITE has been headquartered in Washington, DC, USA since 1956.

Historical Perspective
• The Mid-Colonial District and specifically the Mid-Atlantic Section is the birthplace of ITE, which was formed from discussions in October 1930 at the National Safety Council’s Annual Convention in Pittsburgh, PA, USA at the William Penn Hotel. The historic hotel was the site of ITE’s Annual Meeting and Exhibit in 1980 as part of its 50th anniversary celebration. To celebrate the 100 year anniversary, ITE’s Annual Meeting will be held in Pittsburgh in 2030.
• Arthur N. Johnson of College Park, MD, USA was a founding member of the Institute of Traffic Engineers. In 1936, he was named ITE’s third Honorary Member.
• ITE’s first official Annual Meeting was held in what is now the Mid-Colonial District. “The 1945 Annual Meeting held in September in Philadelphia was the first annual meeting the Institute held by itself,” according to ITE historical documents. “Prior to that time, it had piggybacked its efforts onto those of the annual meetings of the National Safety Council.”
• ITE had Sections before Districts were formed. Washington, DC was one of the original Sections in addition to New York and Michigan.