

Thank You, Sharon.

We will soon have to wish our Executive Director, Sharon Powers, a sad but grateful farewell. As many of you may already know, Sharon will be leaving us at the end of May. Sharon and her staff have brought strategic thinking and, most notably, tireless efforts to increase the credibility and visibility of USSD in the regional, national, and international space. By all measures, USSD has benefited and improved during her watch. Some of her accomplishments include:

- A membership increase of nearly 30%, and we now have over 1,470 members.
- Tremendous improvement in our financial position over the past four years.
- Launching education and training programs including the highly successful *Leveraging PFMA to Perform SQRA workshop*.
- Launching a new learning management system that houses all USSD online and on-demand education.
- Contracting with Naylor Solutions in 2020 to publish the USSD Bulletin and monthly e-Newsletter which has improved professionalism, and increased circulation and frequency of communications with our members.
- Successfully transitioning several technical papers into webinars after cancellation of the 2020 conference due to the COVID pandemic.
- Successfully holding a virtual conference in 2021 with over 470 registered attendees.
- Negotiating out of two years of conference contracts due to the pandemic, saving our organization approximately \$500,000 in penalties for each contract.
- Securing PPP loans in 2020-2021, both forgiven, that helped carry USSD through the pandemic after the loss of its main conference revenue stream.
- Leading the effort for receiving a multi-year \$630,000 grant from FEMA to develop Tailings Dam Guidelines, representing by far the largest contract ever held by USSD. We've completed the first year and met its first deliverable on time and on budget, and are currently successfully working on the second year.
- Ushered in USSD's updated strategic plan to help guide our initiatives and growth over the next five years.
- Increased social media following from 40 in 2018 to over 3,200 in 2021.

The effort to hire a new Executive Director is well on its way and we are excited to begin talking to potential candidates soon. USSD is working with the Moran Company, an executive search firm specializing in non-profits, in this effort and we hope to make the announcement on our next Executive Director later this spring. Feel free to reach out to me or other USSD board members if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Del Shannon, President  
USSD Board of Directors