

**PANEL**  
**RELEVANCE TO NYC INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**RISK - ACTIONS**

**Introduction to Panelists**  
**by Patrick Mahon, PE**  
**GZA**

*Chair of ASCE Met Section Infrastructure Group*



2016  $M_w$ 7.8 Ecuador Earthquake  
 Mini-Symposium, NYC, 5/30/17



**SISSY NIKOLAOU, PHD**  
**Principal, WSP USA**



Dr. Nikolaou is Principal in the Technical Excellence Center of WSP's Geotechnical & Tunneling with 20+ years of experience, and capabilities of geotechnical & structural engineering, with emphasis on performance-based design and soil-structure interaction. She has a civil engineering diploma from NTUA, and master/PhD from U. Buffalo & holds board positions in EERI and ATC. She has participated in missions after disasters including the 2016 Ecuador where she co-led the GEER-ATC team. She is active in seismic codes development and was the chair for the seismic committee for the NYC Building Code. Dr. Nikolaou is recognized as ASCE Fellow, WSP Fellow of Earthquake Engineering, Prakash Prize for Excellence in Geotechnical Practice and an invitation by Pres. Obama to the 2016 White House summit on Earthquake Resilience



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**COL. FERNANDO VINIACHI**  
**EACE & ESPE**



Colonel Fernando Viniachi holds a Master in Planning and Strategic Management. He has pursued research projects on the scientific needs in the Galapagos Islands. He was Director of Road Development at the Corps of Engineers of the Ecuadorian Army and the Chair of the Department of Civil Engineering and Earth Science at the University of the Armed Forces of Ecuador - ESPE. He was part of the Engineers Delegation to the special missions of Ecuador in Haiti.



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**PAUL NIETZSCHMANN, PE**  
**Senior Vice President, WSP USA**



Paul has been a structural engineer for 39 years concentrating in project management, design, inspection, and seismic/structural analysis of bridges and transit structures. He has been with WSP USA for 14 years, currently a Senior VP and Project Director and was with Steinman for 25 years prior to that. His overall bridge experience includes the rehabilitation and seismic evaluation of the Ed Koch Queensboro, approach replacement to Bronx-Whitestone, raising of Bayonne, cable investigation of George Washington, reconstruction of Metro-North's Park Ave viaduct, retrofit of Atlantic Ave over LIRR and many tasks for the Delaware Memorial. His education includes bachelor's from City College of NY and masters from Columbia. He holds PEs in NY/NJ.



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## KARL RUBENACKER, PE, SE, CWI

Partner, Gilsanz Murray Steficek



Karl Rubenacker is a partner at Gilsanz Murray Steficek in NYC since 2007. His civil engineering education includes a bachelor from Cooper Union and a master from Caltech. He has 25 years of structural design experience including high rise, commercial, residential, educational/industrial, and bridges, aqueducts, garages, arenas, treatment plants, and inspection of steel, concrete, masonry, and wood structures. Karl is Past-President of SEAoNY and active in professional committees, including the ACECNY Sstructural Codes, SEAoNY Codes & Standards, and ASCE/SEI Disproportionate Collapse Standards & Guidance Committee. He is licensed PE in NY and SE in California.



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## MELISSA UMBERGER

Hazard Mitigation Project Manager NYCEM



Melissa Umberger is a Hazard Mitigation Project Manager for the NYCEM where she coordinates over 40 agencies' mitigation projects and composes hazard risk profiles. She has served as Infrastructure Emergency Support Function Coordinator for multiple emergency activations. She is responsible for managing the development of a city-wide resiliency projects database, developing recovery protocols/tools, incorporating mitigation into emergency plans, and facilitating agency participation in Mayoral initiatives. Melissa led the development of NYC's Risk Landscape and created a user-friendly guide to reduce risks for the public. Melissa holds a master in Urban Planning & Historic Preservation and teaches a course to union workers at SUNY Empire State.



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