Bethancourt named ASSE’s 2017 Safety Professional of the Year

PARK RIDGE, Illinois — Jeremy Bethancourt, a professional member of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) and government affairs chair of its Arizona chapter, has been selected as ASSE’s 2017 Edgar Monsanto Queeny Safety Professional of the Year. He plays a lead role in getting billboards posted throughout Arizona to bring attention to the dangers of distracted driving, the hazards of heat stress, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) National Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction.

Bethancourt is director of safety, health and training for LeBlanc Building Co. Inc., a commercial and residential specialty framing contractor based in Scottsdale, Arizona. He has developed a reputation as a tireless advocate for workplace safety, serving as co-founder and program director of ACTA Safety, member of the ANSI/ASSE A10.32 fall protection subcommittee, chair of Arizona’s annual Workers Memorial Day ceremony, co-founder of the Drive Smart Arizona coalition, and collaborator in several national construction research projects. In 2013, he was awarded ASSE’s inaugural Triangle Award – commemorating the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire – for his commitment to promoting fall protection.

“Jeremy’s ability to inspire others and lead them toward a common goal has been nothing less than extraordinary,” said John LeBlanc, CEO and owner of LeBlanc Building Co. Inc. “Our achievement as a premier expert in worker safety and progressive fall protection is in no small part due to Jeremy’s technical understanding of the building process and his willingness to integrate new approaches into safety while maintaining productivity.”

For more than 10 years, Bethancourt has actively promoted the use of fall protection systems and equipment to protect the nation’s residential home builders. His drive to prevent falls in construction led to his appointment to two terms (2012-16) on OSHA’s Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health. ”The best way to see the impact of Jeremy's efforts is to look on the OSHA website,” said Bill Parsons, Air Force chief of occupational safety and a member of ASSE’s New Mexico chapter. “A lot of the information given to the residential construction industry is due to the consultation and sharing he has provided.”

Bethancourt also volunteers for Kids’ Chance of Arizona and Kids’ Chance of America, organizations that provide educational scholarships to children of injured workers. And he is a regular speaker at ASSE chapter events and the Society's annual conference.

Those who know him believe his passion for safety and serving others will likely drive him to push for even greater improvements. As LeBlanc said, “I can only imagine what else he will accomplish.”

Bethancourt will formally be honored during ASSE’s Safety 2017 Professional Development Conference & Exposition, held June 19-22 in Denver. The global event will have more than 4,000 safety professionals learning about a wide range of best practices and the latest product innovations in the occupational safety and health field.

The award is given annually to recognize an occupational safety and health professional who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the safety field while making significant contributions to advancing the safety profession. The award is named after Edgar Monsanto Queeny, president of the Monsanto Company on April 16, 1947, when a freighter explosion destroyed the company’s Texas City plant. The incident killed 512 people, including 145 Monsanto employees, and forever enhanced safety at the company through Queeny’s leadership.

About ASSE – Working together for a safer, stronger future
For more than 100 years, the American Society of Safety Engineers has been at the forefront of helping occupational safety and health professionals protect people and property. The nonprofit society is based in the Chicago suburb of Park Ridge. Its global membership of over 37,000 professionals covers every industry, developing safety and health management plans that prevent deaths, injuries and illnesses. ASSE advances its members and the safety profession through education, advocacy, standards development and a professional community. Its flagship publication, Professional Safety, is a longtime leader in the field. Visit www.asse.org and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.