

Yeisson C. Diaz – Committee Member Young Professionals & Organiser YP Simplified Series



Yeisson is currently the R&D Subsea Project Engineer at SMS Oilfield working on different research projects to produce the sensing technology required for integration into the Subsea Industrial Internet of Things Initiative. Previous professional experience includes joining Petronas as a sponsored overseas talent in Malaysia and working at Indra on an information technology project for Ecopetrol, the Colombian National Oil Company.

Before starting his current position, Yeisson gained an MSc in Subsea Engineering from the University of Aberdeen and a BSc in Petroleum Engineering from the National University of Colombia – Medellin Campus.

Yeisson joined the YP Committee in 2017 and has helped to organize the Simplified Series Events since 2019. He has been an active SPE member for almost 12 years, since 2009, when he joined as a volunteer at the SPE Unalmed Student Chapter and later as the YP Chair for the SPE Colombian Section.

In the Spotlight

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Believe in yourself, no matter the circumstances and obstacles you may find on the way. Confidence is one of the best tools for overcoming these obstacles and moving forward. Asking for help and expressing what you want are also essential to progress; we are not alone in this world, and collaboration is always needed. Think big, take any opportunity given to you and don't be afraid of new challenges - that's the only way to grow.

What do you think are the benefits of being a member of SPE?

I joined SPE 12 years ago and since then have continued to find benefits. I think, at every stage of your career, the benefits evolve and increase to fit your needs and professional objectives. In general terms, I would say that the most relevant are networking, internationalization, volunteering, career guidance, knowledge, new technologies and soft skills development – the list is endless.

Best achievement so far?

I was selected to present my university dissertation at the 2018 Underwater Technology Conference in Norway and was fortunate to be awarded the Best Master Student Presentation. This achievement helped me obtain my current job. Being able to work abroad as an engineer, I believe, is my second professional achievement so far. In my personal life (here my inner adventurer takes over) I can say that I have already visited the five continents, which I consider a traveller's milestone!

What did you want to be when you were younger?

The answer to this question reflects quite a range of occupations! When I was five, I wanted to be a milkman, so I could eat cheese all the time! Soon I changed to fireman so that if needed, I would be able to rescue my mum. It sounds funny, I know, but that's the innocence of a child. Later, I wanted to be an architect or painter, reflecting my interests in building models and every type of manual art. But finally, in high school, I focussed on maths and science, which lead to me becoming an engineer.

What are the main career stepping stones you have taken?

Everything began when I left home and started to live by myself far away from my family at the age of 17. At that time, I moved from my hometown to a bigger city in Colombia to study Petroleum Engineering. After graduation, I was selected to be part of a graduate sponsorship programme for overseas talents in Malaysia, where I lived for one year. Later, I decided to come to Aberdeen to study the MSc degree in Subsea Engineering and was awarded for presenting my dissertation at an international conference in Norway. The final step so far has been to join the R&D team at SMS working as a project engineer, where I have been given the opportunity to continue developing and growing professionally to prepare myself for the next career step. The path has been closely linked with my SPE membership, first joining as a volunteer at the student chapter level. Without SPE and its many benefits, these steps would not have been possible to take.

Who has been your greatest influence?

Without the slightest doubt, my family is my greatest influence. They have been my inner engine since I decided to pursue this journey to become an engineer. No matter the circumstances they always have believed in me, their support in every stage of my life has been essential. Thanks to them, I am who I am right now.

What is the best way to motivate others?

By making them feel they are doing a great job in the activity or role they are doing or are in charge of. Recognize them when possible, value their strengths and be grateful in return. When you feel useful and know you are contributing to a good cause, this is when your passion for doing something is switched on, and the best results are achieved.

Your favourite stress-buster?

I usually exercise at home, running or swimming. Listening to my Spotify playlist, meeting friends and going for some drinks also helps me a lot. In general, any kind of activity that is a change to my normal routine is the perfect stress-buster. But being Latin, I have to say that the activity which is top of my list and I enjoy the most is dancing!

Where is your favourite place to go on holiday?

I always plan to visit new countries and must-see destinations around the world, especially where adventure and adrenaline are involved! Such as going on safari in Kenya, which I was fortunate to do on my holidays last year. Other than that, just relaxing and enjoying any warm and sunny beach is what I call a real holiday!

What's on your bucket list – the things you still want to accomplish?

Professionally, I plan to achieve chartered engineer status and continue studying towards an MBA. In relation to hobbies, I want to learn to play the violin and be fluent in Portuguese. In the long term, to ensure financial independence, I would like to run my own business. In addition, I want to continue exploring the world, so travelling more to visit the seven wonders are still on my bucket list!

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