Statement of Linbing Wang

Summary of My Past Involvement with EMI/EMD
I have attended almost every EMI annual meeting since the first time I attended in 2001. I am currently an EMI member and the vice chair of the Nanomechanics and Micromechanics committee; a member of the Granular Materials committee, the Modeling Inelasticity and Multiscale Behavior committee, and the Mechanics of Pavement committee of which I am the founding chair. For every time I attended EMI, I always served as a session chair/co-chair, and a minisymposium chair/co-chair. I am also one of the editors for the 1st EMSP special publication. In addition, I also served the organizing committee of the EMI annual meeting twice and the local organizing committees of the EMI annual meetings three times (in Baton Rouge and Blacksburg). I have run the Task Committee of Mechanics of Pavement and gradually evolved it into a full and active committee. At the 2011 annual meeting, my colleagues and I successfully organized the Dallas Little symposium with five sessions, and this Year’s James Lai symposium with 4 sessions.

When I accepted the nomination and started to prepare this statement, I brainstormed the areas that I considered important and that I am interested in. Three aspects arose in my mind: (1) recruiting graduate students and young members—our future; (2) tightening industrial and agency partnership—our audience; and (3) strengthening international collaborations—our recognition and influence. I looked at the EMI website more carefully this time and noticed quite a few activities in these aspects, thanks to our past and current EMI leaders for their pioneering work. The consistent visions will grant me plenty of opportunities to work with our board and committees to better serve the institute.

Recruiting Graduate Students and Young Faculty Members
Engineering mechanics departments in almost all US universities have merged into departments of mechanical, civil, aerospace, and bio engineering. This means engineering mechanics has become an inherent part of its hosts: there is no one single place (engineering mechanics department) where the majority of our future members can be recruited. The boundaries and job markets have also become smeared among these disciplinary areas. When students and young faculty members select their hosting institutes (other ASCE institutes), we are facing competitions from the construction institute, the transportation development institute and so on. However, we do have an advantage in that members in these institutes can all have interest in applied mechanics and can become members of EMI. I would be interested in student and young member recruiting activities and will try to work productively and effectively with the board’s support.

Tightening Industrial and Agency Partnerships
Although the merging of engineering mechanics departments into other departments might present some challenges, it has also presented us with new opportunities, which may require rational analysis and plan development. Due to the merging, faculty members in engineering mechanics and applications in any of these departments may not be able to individually pool resources or gain joint forces to approach industrial and agency partners for a large scope support, or to bring upon an event of significant scope and influence. Research activities are often independent and lack well-coordinated national or regional efforts or programs. However, I will work with the board and committees to develop plans to approach large industrial partners and agencies to investigate potential service, education, workshops, and other needs for EMI if the board also envisions the importance of the partnerships and needs for improvements or strengthening. This might also be jointly tied into the fund-raising activities for workshops, and special teachings.

Strengthening International Collaborations
EMI has a sound and solid reputation worldwide. When the world becomes smaller and more flat, international activities will have no boundaries across different countries, and EMI can better serve the developing countries and develop partnerships with European countries. My tight collaborations with researchers in mechanics of civil infrastructure materials, multiscale modeling, and simulation will allow me to help or lead activities such as future joint conferences in other countries, such as the UK, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and China.

These are the three areas that I am interested in. Specific initiatives or assignments should be discussed with the board and committees. I am also flexible with other assignments from the board. I am honored and excited to be nominated, and I conclude with the Virginia Tech Motto: Ut Prosim (That I May Serve).