





Great design with precast and prestressed concrete

As we honor the 2024 PCI Design Award winners, it is a great time to reflect on what is potentially the most important attribute of our products in the marketplace. The ability to design precast and prestressed concrete to fulfill almost any purpose in our built world is unique to our products. No competing system or material can do all that precast concrete can. Precast concrete structures can be stunning architectural achievements, withstand the worst punishments man and nature can inflict, last for many generations, and contribute to sustainable building systems.

Great design can be a tool for marketing, and the PCI Design Award winners are good examples to present to the community. Iconic designs almost sell themselves. Elegant design in consumer products can provide decades of sales. People wear the same Chuck Taylors that have been around since 1917. The KitchenAid stand mixer has been around since 1919. Apple has made design a selling point for 40 years. Our industry can't sell the same thing over and over again, but we do embrace great design and have been doing so as an institute for 70 years.

One of the biggest opportunities and challenges of great design with precast concrete is that it can't be done alone. The collaborative approach to great design is exciting and sometimes difficult. A fabricator has the duty to work with the building and infrastructure communities to reach and expand the capabilities of our systems. This takes many forms, including PCI and PCI Foundation outreach to the education community, working with architects and engineers to expand the capabilities of precast concrete, providing a code framework, and conducting vital research. PCI and the PCI Foundation are the organizations to help industry stakeholders achieve these goals, and it takes all of us to make sure we are successful.



When learning about the 2024 PCI Design Awards, please reflect not only on the great designs but also on how we can use design itself to create great products for the built environment. There are certainly great ideas, details, and concepts in each of these projects that we can look to and incorporate into our own projects, but this isn't enough. In a broader sense, think about how each of these projects used great design to solve unique challenges. Consider how the project team you are working with can leverage the unique abilities of all of the members to push the envelope of what our industry can accomplish.

Great design in the built environment achieved through collaboration leads to great outcomes for our industry and for society. People who participate in great projects will look forward to future opportunities to work together. Society benefits by having a built world that reflects our best aspirations. Our industry and institute benefit by having good projects to look back on as we build more and greater projects in the future.

Cheers, and I look forward to seeing you all this year. 🍷

Jim Fabinski
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