

Change = Opportunity



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We often hear that the only real constant is change, and this is especially true today. We live in a dynamic world where things move faster than we can anticipate. Factors such as the economy and sustainability have forced us to change how we live, spend, think, design, build, conduct business, and even view the world.

We all have to deal with change whether we like it or not. Personally, I am preparing for my almost 16-year-old son to drive, which means I'm wrestling with the ideas of greater insurance rates, increasing stress levels knowing he's out there with two tons of steel at his control, and the fact that my son is growing up. Where did that little boy go who used to want me to read him bedtime stories? However, I am sure this pales in comparison to the day my now eight-year-old little girl comes home with her first boyfriend — hopefully not for another 10 years!

No doubt, change can be scary. However, it can also provide us with great opportunities. Change makes us move out of our comfort zones. It forces us to question, to re-evaluate, and to think outside of the box and consider new options—which may offer more benefits than we expected! It forces us to take a different perspective. This can be a healthy process that helps us advance and evolve. We simply must find those opportunities and embrace them.

There are many architects, engineers, owners, etc. that have not worked with precast concrete, or have only used it for specific applications. But today's economy and emphasis on sustainability encourage us to try new things. Precast concrete is a great option for all types of projects, including multi-family housing, schools, universities, healthcare facilities, bridges, offices, retail centers, and of course, parking structures, while providing incredible opportunities to contribute to sustainable goals.

As this issue's articles show, more military projects — both domestic and international — are taking advantage of the benefits of precast concrete. Precast concrete's inherent strength can be used to protect our loved ones in the military. Recently, the Marine Corps used precast concrete for the first time. Parris Island is in the process of completing several barracks constructed from structural precast concrete. You can read more about the project on page 32.

Ascent magazine is changing, too. This is our first issue as the magazine returns to its quarterly production schedule, and we will be making changes based on your feedback. You will see that *Ascent* has some new sections, including **Sustainable Insights**, which focuses on a particular area of sustainable design, and **Perspective**, where industry professionals provide their viewpoint and experience on a topic of interest. We welcome your feedback as we continuously improve *Ascent*, and strive to provide you with a valuable, insightful, and enjoyable resource.

I encourage you to embrace change and seek out the opportunity that enviably comes with it. As for me, I'll just have to get used to being able to send my son to the store the next time we need milk on a cold Chicago winter day, while I wait warmly by the fireplace. Change really can be for the better.



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ASCENT On the cover: Wright Patterson AFB Sensor Lab (see page 16)

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