

Risser named PCI President

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**Robert J. Risser, P.E.**

PCI has named Robert J. Risser to be its new president. Risser has more than 20 years of executive association-management experience and, prior to joining PCI, served as president and CEO of the Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute (CRSI) in Schaumburg, Ill.

"Bob has made significant contributions throughout his career and helped grow each organization he has worked for," says Chris Pastorius, PCI board chairman. "He prides himself on developing strong value propositions for members through a leadership model that is driven by collaboration. We are very pleased to have an executive of Bob's caliber take the helm of our institute."

Risser joined CRSI in 2006 and accomplished many key objectives, including leading CRSI to accreditation as a Standards Development Organization of the American National Standards Institute. He also developed CRSI's government-affairs committee and established its Rebar Political Action Committee.

Before joining CRSI, he served as executive director of the Michigan Concrete Paving Association for 10 years. He has also served in a variety of construction- and concrete-related roles, including director of engineering design, director of market development, and engineering editor.

"I am honored and excited to be asked to serve such a fine organization as PCI," Risser says. "I look forward to meeting the PCI members and regional directors and working with the PCI staff to help lead PCI into this next phase."

Risser serves the ACI Foundation as a member of the board of directors for the Strategic Development Council and the executive committee of the Concrete Research Council. He was elected the first formal chairman of the Concrete and Masonry Related Associations group. He received his master's and bachelor's degrees in civil engineering from the University of Illinois and is a registered professional engineer.

PCI's Krohn Named SEI Fellow, Freedman Honored

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**Jason Krohn****Sidney Freedman**

The Structural Engineering Institute (SEI) of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) named Jason Krohn, PCI's managing director of technical activities, a fellow during its Structures Congress in Portland, Ore. The SEI Fellow program recognizes distinguished SEI members as leaders and mentors in the structural-engineering profession.

Meanwhile, Sidney Freedman, PCI director of architectural systems and industrial operations and safety, received the Henry Crown Award from the Illinois chapter of the American Concrete Institute. The organization's highest honor, it recognized his record of professional excellence, extensive involvement with ACI and substantial contributions to the concrete industry for more than 50 years.

Hollowcore Plank Aids Framingham State University Dorm

FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Hollowcore planks used as flooring/ceiling components are helping Framingham State University add a 97,000-square-foot building for residential housing to its campus in a fast and economical way while also helping to resolve some design challenges.

The 8-inch-thick precast concrete hollowcore planks are supported by masonry walls and provide long, clear spans that facilitated design flexibility. The top face of the planks received a topping covered with sheet-rubber flooring or carpeting, while the underside received a smooth trowel finish and will be painted.

"Precast concrete provided value in several ways, especially in giving us the dimensional opportunity of reducing floor-to-floor heights," says Mark Dolny, associate principal at ARC/ Architectural Resources Cambridge. The shallow depth of the hollowcore, combined with its long-span capabilities, provided an efficient design. "Residence halls are all about efficiency, and steel beams would have reduced that efficiency," he says. "We looked to precast concrete to provide the dimensional benefits we needed."

A key structural challenge came in leaving a large central opening on the first floor, which serves as an access point for pedestrians coming onto campus from the adjacent parking facility. Strescon Ltd. in St. John, New Brunswick, cast 93,029 square feet of hollowcore plank. Consigli Construction Co. in Milford, Mass., is serving as construction manager.

The building's shell will be erected by June 2016, giving interior trades enough time to complete outfitting the facility so it will be ready to welcome students in August 2016.

Coreslab Clads Bridgeport Hospital Outpatient Center

TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT

The 100,000-square-foot Park Avenue Campus Outpatient Center for Bridgeport Hospital is being clad with creatively designed architectural precast concrete panels, providing an aesthetically pleasing appearance that was cost effective and quickly erected.

The facility offers a range of hospital and health-system services, including ambulatory surgery, cancer treatment, radiology, urgent and primary care, and breast care. The center serves as a hub for a unified patient-care campus, joining two existing buildings housing radiation oncology and medical offices, which are being renovated.

The panels were selected due to their speed of erection as well as the economics and aesthetics they provided, according to William Fitzgerald, project architect at Shepley Bullfinch for the project. "Precast concrete is such a plastic material that it allowed us to create some visual interest through the incorporation of a wavy pattern that extends around the building. It provides a friendly, inviting appearance and breaks down the scale of the building."

The panels feature projecting 4-inch fins that maximize or minimize their widths at window openings, creating an undulating appearance. The design provides a bas-relief motif created using BIM software. Coreslab Structures (CONN) Inc. in Tomaston, Conn., is casting 14,000 square feet of architectural precast concrete panels for the project. Gilbane Building Co. in Glastonbury, Conn., is serving as general contractor.



The outpatient clinic for Bridgeport Hospital being constructed in Trumbull, Conn., features architectural precast concrete panels with 4-inch fins that create an undulating pattern over the facade. Photo: Coreslab Structures (CONN) Inc.

Hartford Civil-Engineering Students Tour Blakeslee

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



Civil-engineering students at the University of Hartford toured the plant and received a presentation on Tekla software during a visit to the Blakeslee Prestress plant in Connecticut.

Civil-engineering students from the University of Hartford in Connecticut visited the Blakeslee Prestress Inc. plant in Branford, Conn. Included was a presentation on Tekla three-dimensional-modeling programs and tours of the plant.

Blakeslee regularly provides tours to local engineering classes interested in working with the precaster and has donated money to the University of New Haven's 2015 American Society of Civil Engineers' Concrete Canoe Contest entry.

Strescon Casts Two-Color Panels for Mixed-use Project

WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Street-level retail and 230,000 square feet of high-performance office space is being constructed at 10 CityPoint in Waltham, Mass. The project features bands of large glass windows separated by architectural precast concrete spandrels in two colors that created some challenges in production and erection.

Elkus Manfredi Architects in Boston designed the project, which has leased its first-class office space to Wolverine Worldwide to serve as the headquarters for its Sperry Top-Sider, Saucony, Keds, and Stride Rite brands, specified precast concrete due to its economics, speed of construction, and aesthetic design. The appearance consists of white spandrels with deep charcoal bands underneath the window lines, with a second thinner charcoal band at the base of the panels above the window line below.

Precaster Strescon Ltd. supplied 149 spandrels, all with the combined white and gray mix design, as well as 13 architectural infill panels and 14 architectural base panels. A key concern was the number of false joints in the panels, two of which divide the colors at the top and bottom while three more run through the white middle portion. A special system was devised to ensure the colors remained segregated during casting. Self-consolidating concrete was used for the white concrete to facilitate a crisp line between colors. A wood-float finish was applied to the panels.

Even with these added activities, the precaster produced six panels in a bed in eight hours. The typical panels were 26 to 35 feet long, 3 to 5 feet high, and 7 to 8 inches thick. The thickness was needed due to the false joints' 1 ¾ inch-deep thickness, which offered deeper shadowlines.

The project is on track to be completed in December.



The architectural precast concrete panels cast for the 10 CityPoint office building in Waltham, Mass., features a two-color design that required special care to maintain the color segregation. Photo: Strescon Ltd.

Precast Concrete LCA Completed

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PCI has completed a third-party prepared Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) for precast concrete that outlines the benefits offered by precast concrete for sustainable design.

"Precast concrete fabricated in a quality-controlled plant employing continuous PCI Plant Certification is not only sustainable but has lifetime cradle-to-grave benefits that are hard to match with competing materials and systems," says Doug Mooradian, executive director of PCI West, a chapter of PCI representing California and Nevada.

PCI Producer Members can batch a higher strength and more durable concrete that results in less material use, with better longevity and performance, he says. "Couple this higher strength concrete with prestressing, less waste, and the use of regional and recycled supplementary cementitious materials, and the benefits and efficiencies of precast concrete become clear."

For more information on the LCA, visit https://www.pci.org/Design_Resources/Sustainability_Resources/.

Precast Concrete Balcony Slabs Used for Sepia at Ink Block

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Designers of the Ink Block residential complex, on the site of the former Boston Herald newspaper building, wanted to create high-end residential units that would attract renters and buyers quickly to this popular part of town. One element of that design involved the addition of precast concrete balcony slabs that project out from residences to provide dramatic views.

The \$200-million project—which was 60% sold before construction began—will create a residential building with 85,000 square feet of retail space and a 50,000-square-foot upscale grocery store. The building will house 315 apartments for rent and 160 condominiums.

Strescon Ltd. in St. John, New Brunswick, cast 49 6-inch-thick solid precast concrete balcony slabs for the Sepia building in the complex, encompassing 2,800 square feet. The precast concrete components provide durability and low maintenance while offering rapid construction to help keep the project on schedule. The building is scheduled to open this fall.



Precast concrete balcony slabs will provide an additional amenity to the Sepia building in the Ink Block residential complex in Boston when it opens this fall. Photo: Strescon Ltd.

Gate Makes Appointments

WINCHESTER, KENTUCKY



Steve Schweitzer



Jim Stini

Gate Precast Co. has named Steve Schweitzer to serve as vice president and operations manager at its Winchester plant. He has more than 35 years of experience in the precast industry, including most recently in the commercial sales and estimating departments at Prestress Services Industries. In his new position, Schweitzer is responsible for all operational and administrative issues for Gate's Kentucky facilities.

In addition, Gate has promoted Jim Stini to manage operations at its Pearland, Texas, hollowcore concrete plant. Stini has worked for Gate since 1996, most recently as estimating and sales manager. Stini will handle all duties associated with operations in the Pearland office.

Precast Design Handbook Edition Published

LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND

The second edition of the Planning and Design Handbook on Precast Building Structures has been published by The International Federation for Structural Concrete (*fib*). The reference book has been completely updated and widely expanded to include recent developments. The aim of the handbook is to promote a greater awareness and understanding of precast concrete buildings.

Single copies are available from *fib*, and customized copies in bulk numbers for corporate-member companies and national member groups of *fib* are available from ad-media GmbH. The first version of the Planning and Design Handbook on Precast Building Structures was published in 1994. More than 45,000 copies of the handbook in several languages have been distributed.

Sassaman Joins JVA Sales Staff

LINCOLNWOOD, ILLINOIS

A. J. Sassaman has joined the sales staff of JVI Inc. to cover the Middle Atlantic and New England regions as well as Canada. He also will assist in technical presentations throughout the country due to his involvement with the precast concrete industry for more than 27 years.

Precasters Hold Barbecue Contest for PCI Foundation

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

More than a dozen precasters took part in a barbecue competition held by the PCI Foundation in September. The program consisted of sponsoring a lunch or dinner for employees, who in return donated money for the foundation. A panel of judges reviewed the various programs to select the most comprehensive and will award a grand prize of a \$2,500 grill. Additional prizes will be awarded in other categories.

Precasters taking part in the program as of late August included Gate Precast Co. (five plants), Molin (two events), Gage Brothers, Kerkstra, Knife River, and several precasters organizing a Nebraska Tailgate Party. The winners will be announced on October 15, 2015.

Schipper Joins eConstruct.USA Ownership

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Bradley L. Schipper has become an owner in eConstruct.USA LLC, a structural-engineering consulting firm with special expertise in precast prestressed concrete buildings and bridges. Schipper has managed the precast building division for the past five years. His experience includes 10 years at Wilson Concrete Co. (now Coreslab Structures in Omaha) and eight years at Rick Berry Associates. Schipper, as part of eConstruct.USA, a Premiere Partner of PCI, has contributed to PCI's technical activities over the years, such as work on the PCI Industry Handbook Committee and the Fire Protection Committee.

Kerkstra Joins AltusGroup

GRANDVILLE, MICHIGAN

Kerkstra Precast has become the seventh precast concrete manufacturer to join AltusGroup in the past two years. The precaster will manufacture CarbonCast high-performance insulated wall panels and insulated architectural cladding. Kerkstra represents the 19th precaster to join the group.

Diaphragm Seismic-Design Methodology Progresses

RESTON, VIRGINIA

Code-change proposals as the result of Diaphragm Seismic Design Methodology (DSDM) research have been approved by the American Society of Civil Engineers/Structural Engineering Institute (ASCE/SEI) 7 committee for inclusion within the 2016 edition of Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures (ASCE 7).

The proposals include a modification to the diaphragm design force level as well as major changes to the precast concrete diaphragm design methodology.

Wyoming Students Use Precast Concrete for Senior Projects

LARAMIE, WYOMING

Students at the University of Wyoming College of Architecture and Engineering designed precast, prestressed parking structures for their senior class projects under the direction of David Mukai, associate professor.

The classes were separated into small groups, which research architectural, functional, and structural design parameters and prepared schematic and design-development drawings and calculations. They then made a formal presentation to a panel of judges who helped determine the students' final grades in the class.

Site and basic parking-structure criteria are provided along with reference materials, including the PCI Design Handbook: Precast and Prestressed Concrete, the International Building Code, and the fifth edition of The Dimensions of Parking, published by the Urban Land Institute and the National Parking Association.

The class also toured Rocky Mountain Prestress in Denver, Colo., and saw how double tees, beams, walls, spandrels, and columns are made.



University of Wyoming College of Architecture and Engineering students designed parking structures as a senior class project. This rendering by a student was made using Revit. Photo: David Mukai.



Mike Hemberger of Rocky Mountain Prestress explains production methods to students from the University of Wyoming who toured the plant in Denver, while working on a parking structure project. Photo: David Mukai.

Submit your headline news for consideration in a future issue of *Ascent* to Stephanie Corrigan at scorrigan@pci.org.