

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Giving back

Giving back is a sentiment many PCI members share in why they devote their time and energy to PCI. 2020 showed us even more than ever how important it is for us to take care of those around us. Like many PCI members, the PCI staff also believes in trying to give back to our community by supporting others who are less fortunate than we are. This has never been more important than this past year.

Several years ago under the leadership of PCI staff member Trice Turner, we started PCI Cares to support not only worthy causes here in Chicago, Ill., but also in cities where we hold the PCI Convention. Creating PCI Cares has allowed our staff and our members to be a part of the mission of giving back to others and truly being the change we wish to see in the world. To quote Trice, "I think we all have the capacity to be better humans, and it's the giving-back aspect that brings forth that better version of ourselves." Trice, Becky King, Lisa Scacco, Cody Kauh, Chris Hurst, and other PCI staff members continue to lead in these efforts each year.

Here are some of the activities we undertook to give back in 2020.


Last January, the PCI staff devoted an afternoon to volunteering at the Greater Chicago Food Depository. We spent several hours helping sort food meant for those going hungry in our community. PCI Cares participated in Association Forum of Chicago's annual CSR book drive for Open Books' child literacy programs and a subsequent book drive to benefit Chicago Books to Women in Prison. PCI staff members donated a total of 359 books, CDs, and DVDs to Open Books and 98 much-needed paperbacks to Chicago Books to Women in Prison.

For the second year in a row, the PCI staff gave back to the community by participating in the *Chicago Tribune's* Letters to Santa program. This program was created to ensure that children who live below the poverty line have gifts they might otherwise not receive at Christmas. PCI is proud to once again be Santa's helpers for 28 children and truly make a difference this holiday season. We also contributed to Ryan Banks Academy in Chicago, supporting three families in need during the holidays.

Beginning with the 2019 PCI Convention in Louisville, Ky., PCI Cares started supporting a charity in the convention city with an eye toward a charity that represents the spirit of our host city. In Louisville, home of Churchill Downs, we encouraged members and staff to support Second Stride, an organization dedicated to creating a haven for horses in Louisville. The 2020 PCI Convention in Ft. Worth, Tex., saw PCI Cares supporting The Warm Place, which provides grief support for children ages 3½ to 18 and their families as well as young adults 19 to 25 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Who would have thought how important this would become as COVID-19 descended on us all?

Headed to the 2021 PCI Convention in New Orleans, La., PCI Cares is encouraging members and attendees to help us support Roots of Music. Its mission is to empower the youths of New Orleans through music, education, academic support, and mentorship while preserving and promoting the unique musical and cultural heritage of the city. It also provides warm meals and transportation to those who wouldn't be able to make it to music practice. As we approach the 2021 PCI Convention in May, please consider contributing at <https://therootsofmusic.org/>.

Closer to the PCI family, please consider giving back to the future of our industry with a contribution to the PCI Foundation. The education of the next generation of designers about the benefits of precast concrete is essential to keep our industry thriving and growing. Congratulations to all involved in the successful virtual Concrete Chefs program in December. If you missed it, you can still see the videos and donate at <https://www.pci-foundation.org>.

Be safe as we head into 2021—and consider giving back! 



Bob Risser, PE
PCI President and CEO