

# Get involved, be seen

Mason Nichols

Over the course of several decades, Jason Lien has had a tremendous impact on the precast concrete industry. But if you asked Lien where he wanted to take his career after he completed his master's degree in engineering systems with a specialty in computational mechanics from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, he likely would not have said precast concrete.

Thankfully, after earning his bachelor's degree at the same school just a few years earlier, Lien spent time working as a design engineer at Sirko Associates of Denver, Colo., where he was introduced to companies like Metromont, Gage Brothers, and Finfrock, igniting his interest in the field.

"It was a long interview process," Lien says. "I would call Jim Sirko, the owner, every Tuesday at 9 a.m. and ask, 'Is this the right week?' Weeks and months went by until finally, Jim said, 'Why don't you come in and start on this day?'"

After Lien accepted the job, the company didn't have an office for him; he would have to build one himself. Lien was up for the challenge. His willingness in that moment to make things happen is a trademark of his work, representing a career approach that has allowed him to blaze a path to success everywhere he has contributed.

At Structureworks, where Lien served as president from 2003 to 2007, he led a team that created one of the earliest three-dimensional (3-D) building information modeling (BIM) solid modeling packages available in the United States. That package helped revolutionize the speed and accuracy with which precast concrete shop drawings could be developed. In 2007, Lien met the president of EnCon United, where he took a job as the vice president of design before eventually becoming executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Along the way, Lien has worked on numerous projects that have shaped his career. Right out of the Colorado School of Mines, he played a role in what he described as "a total precast office boom" around the turn of the new millennium. While working as an engineering manager at Rocky Mountain Prestress, Lien was involved in the construction of numerous precast concrete office buildings in Colorado, including offices for Starz Encore, American Family Insurance, Level 3, and others.

Lien also played a significant role on the $2.15 billion State Route (SR) 99 tunnel project in Seattle, Wash., which entailed the manufacture and installation of nearly 1500 rings having an outer diameter measuring 56 ft (17.07 m) in diameter. As the onsite project manager for EnCon United during the work, Lien spent seven months building the plant that produced the project's precast concrete segments. When the SR 99 tunnel was completed in 2019, it was the largest-diameter tunnel in the world.

No matter where Lien has been or what projects he has worked on over the course of his career, he has always been inextricably tied to PCI. Since his days at Sirko Associates, Lien has been a firm believer in the benefits PCI can deliver, as evidenced by his wide-reaching activity that includes serving as chair on numerous committees, including BIM, Marketing Communications, and Online Academy, and, most recently, the Educational Activities Council. He has also served on the Technical Activities Council and Marketing Council for nearly a decade.

"My involvement in PCI has included a lot of things, from creating simple relationships to actively promoting my company as a member of PCI and promoting PCI nationally," Lien says.

Lien has been instrumental in the development and execution of PCI's Marketing and Sales Schools, which offer the opportunity to generate and deploy successful sales and marketing strategies while networking with industry experts. He is also committed to helping others advance their careers through education. In addition to serving as a speaker for the Marketing and Sales Schools, Lien also serves as an adjunct professor at the Community College of Denver. When the sixth and seventh editions of the *PCI Design Handbook: Precast and Prestressed Concrete* were developed, Lien provided more than 50 national seminars.

For all this and more, Lien was recognized as a PCI Fellow in 2011 and as a Titan of the Industry in 2024, evidencing just how much he has shaped the trajectory of the precast concrete industry. Even as Lien looks to the future, which is in many ways unknown due to advancements such as the adoption of artificial intelligence technology, one thing remains certain, the critical nature of being involved with PCI.

"Get involved, commit to being involved, stay involved, and be seen," he says.