

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Scott L. Melnick

In a recent conversation with my brother-in-law (who, amongst other pursuits is a contract entertainer), he went on-and-on-and-on about the lack of competence and creativity among many of his employers. And to be honest, I often hear friends and acquaintances complaining about the people with and for whom they work.

One of the true joys of publishing *Modern Steel Construction* magazine is the amazing people with whom I meet or speak. Almost without exception, the engineers, fabricators, detailers, and erectors that I speak with on a regular basis are wonderful people—whether they are world-renowned designers or entry-level draftspeople.

I still smile when I think of Leslie Robertson patiently answering my probably-pretty-stupid questions about high-rise construction my first year out of school or Jim Fisher returning my call on his cell phone from the roof of a building he's inspecting. Or people like Ted Galambos never realizing how grateful everyone in the industry is that he always has time to help anyone who asks.

One group of people who rarely get the credit they deserve for all of their efforts on behalf of the steel industry is The Lincoln Electric Company. The amount of hours donated by Omer Blodgett and Duane Miller are astronomical. Equally impressive is the company's willingness to help in other ways. For example, in 1999, The Lincoln Electric Company allowed the North American Steel Construction Conference to use their Toronto facility (and many of their staff members) for a welding tutorial—a highly successful program that attracted more than 100 engineers and fabricators. And, of course, Lincoln (through the James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation) is a sponsor of the Student Steel Bridge Competition. Most recently, Lincoln donated a welding machine to the University of Minnesota to help in research on new alternatives for column transverse stiffeners and web doubler plates—and just as importantly provided expert resources in the persons

of Scott Funderburk and their local Minneapolis representative just when their input was critical. And in typical Lincoln fashion, they did it without any expectation of recognition or other recompense.

Of course, Lincoln isn't alone in their desire to help whenever an extra effort is needed. One of AISC's little known but very successful efforts is the "Adopt-A-School" program. AISC's Adopt-A-School program matches fabrication shops with universities offering steel design programs. Typically, fabricators involved in the program offer such support as shop tours to student groups, NASCC sponsorship for faculty, internships or co-ops, and ASCE chapter involvement. Through this partnership, the students and educators gain firsthand knowledge of what working in the steel design and construction industry is like. In return, fabricators are rewarded with a pool of future engineers and architects who have been exposed to both steel in the classroom and the structural steel industry and will, when practicing, confidently select steel as a design and construction solution. As of mid-June, 147 schools have been "adopted" (you can see the complete list at www.aisc.org/adopt-a-school).

I know that there are many, many more individuals and companies donating time and money to the industry—heck, I could simply print out a list of all the individuals spending time on AISC's, NSBA's, ASCE's, NCSEA's and all the other association acronyms' many committees. And I wish I could thank all of them individually, but in an effort to save a few trees, I'd like to offer a blanket thanks to everyone who regularly donates effort—and to remind those who don't that there are always opportunities available.

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