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Concrete Industry Management Program's National Steering Committee Announces New Board

Murfreesboro, Tenn. (Aug. 24, 2026) - The National Steering Committee (NSC) for the Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program recently announced the election of nine new or returning members to its board of directors as well as two newly recognized honorary board members.

"Over the last 30 years, we have seen many changes in our industry, but one thing has not only endured, but grown - the support for CIM's mission to identify, educate and inspire the next generation of leaders in the concrete industry," said NSC Executive Director Nicole Maher. "The engagement of these companies, along with our national concrete association and foundation partners, ensures that the program continues to graduate well-rounded future leaders ready to guide the evolution of our state-of-the-art industry. We appreciate the service of our board members and their commitment to the continued success of CIM."

The NSC officers include:

- Executive Director – Nicole Maher, National Steering Committee for CIM
- Chairman – Dr. Bruce Christensen, Chief Executive Officer, FORTA
- Vice President – Dr. Heather Brown, Vice President of QC/QA, Irving Materials, Inc.
- Secretary/Treasurer – Steven Bishop, President/COO, Maschmeyer Concrete Company of Florida
- Immediate Past Chairman – Karl Watson, CEO, Baker Construction Enterprises

All officers also serve on the board of directors.

In addition to the officers, the NSC voting board of directors includes:

- Jake Ables, Terminal Manager, Silvi Materials*
- Ben Blankenship, Regional Director - Logistics, Ash Grove Cement Company*
- Stephan Buol, Accounts Manager, Teichert
- Jaymi Fridley, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Verifi
- Brian Gallagher, Vice President, Corporate Strategy and Development, PPC Partners, Inc.
- Julie Garbini, President, Concrete Advancement Foundation*
- Ray Hefner, Executive Director, American Society of Concrete Contractors
- Michael Hoagland, Vice President of Business Development, Shumaker Industries*
- Natalie Martin, Director of Membership and Business Development, Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute
- Guillermo Martinez Sans, Senior Vice President Human Resources USA, CEMEX
- Paul Ozinga, President, Ready Mix & Aggregate, Ozinga RMC, Inc.
- Andrew Pinkerton, President/CEO, Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association*
- Ben Robuck, Vice President - Infrastructure and Direct Work, CEMEX
- Tom Strittmatter, Executive Vice President – Construction Chemicals, Sika Corporation
- Griffin Taylor, Director of Business Development, Van Eaton Ready Mix, Inc.
- Rob Van Til, Executive Vice President, Central Region, Knife River Corporation*
- Tim Wrinkle, Senior Product Manager, Vocational and Medium-Duty Mack Trucks
- Aleck Yancey, President/Owner, Yancey Concrete Solutions, LLC*

** Indicates new and re-elected board members.*

“We continue to see a growing number of CIM alumni elected to our board,” continued Maher. “This speaks volumes to the success of our program as their careers advance to roles of leadership within their companies. Further, they are returning to give their time and talent to ensure the program remains a cutting-edge opportunity for those who are following in their footsteps.”

Additionally, the organization recognizes its honorary directors for their enduring contributions and unwavering support. Their legacy and dedication continue to inspire and guide the NSC's mission.

- Dr. Rex Cottle, former CIM National Steering Executive Director
- Steve Cox, formerly Command Alkon
- Douglas Guerrero, Chairman, CIM Patrons, California State University, Chico
- Wally Johnson, former CIM National Steering Committee Chairman
- Earl Keese, former CIM National Steering Committee Executive Director
- Eugene Martineau, former CIM National Steering Committee Chairman and Executive Director
- Michael Philipps, formerly National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA)
- Michael Schneider**, former CIM National Steering Committee Chairman,
- L. Michael Shydlowski,
- David Vickers, former CIM National Steering Committee Chairman
- Pierre Villere**, Chairman and Senior Managing Partner, Allen-Villere Partner

** *Indicates newly recognized honorary board members.*

The CIM Program

Recognizing the need for people with enhanced technical, communication and management skills, the CIM program launched in 1996. Graduates of this program will have the skill set necessary to meet the growing demands of the evolving concrete industry of the 21st century. It is a business-intensive program, providing solid management skills that can be used in any industry, but has been developed specifically for the concrete industry. The program offers students numerous advantages, including gaining early industry exposure and entering the workforce with concrete experience, unlike those with generic business degrees.

The goal of the program is to produce broadly educated, articulate graduates who are grounded in basic business management, knowledgeable about concrete technology and techniques, and able to manage people and systems, as well as promote products or services related to the concrete industry. It entails a broad range of courses, from English and history to science and mathematics. A series of required business courses, such as finance, marketing, management and business law are also taken throughout the length of the program. The concrete-specific courses teach the fundamentals of concrete, properties and testing, concrete construction and more. All these courses use practical case studies and an internship to ensure the student gains real-world experience essential to starting a successful career. Additional opportunities for

growth include on-campus socials and other organized events providing industry networking and professional development.

About CIM

With strong support from the concrete industry, the CIM program is the first four-year, STEM-focused business degree in the U.S. designed to develop technically skilled leaders for the modern concrete industry, offering a unique career path with broad opportunities. The need for such a program was recognized in 1994 and was put into action by the concrete industry. The result was a partnership between the concrete industry and Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) to develop the CIM program, which was implemented with its first two students in 1996. Available at MTSU, California State University, Chico, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, South Dakota State University and Texas State University, the program has been successful for both the industry and the graduates. To learn more about the program, visit www.concretedegree.com.

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