

# News and Information

## SECB Receives Donation

At its quarterly Board meeting in Dallas, Texas, the Structural Engineering Certification Board (SECB) was granted a \$10,000 donation from Professional Liability Agents Network (PLAN). Daniel Bradshaw, PLAN representative, announced the donation. According to Mr. Bradshaw, PLAN recognizes the importance and benefits of a national certification for structural engineers as it relates to liability insurance underwriting considerations and decisions. Plan believes the SECB is the only national organization with a program in place to certify engineers in the practice of structural engineering.

The Professional Liability Agents Network is a select group of insurance agencies specializing in risk management and loss prevention programs for architects, engineers and environmental consultants. PLAN is a nonprofit organization covering the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico with more than 50 member firms representing XL Insurance (formally DPIC). For more information about PLAN activities, please visit their web site at [www.plan.org](http://www.plan.org).

The Structural Engineering Certification Board is a recently organized national accrediting association for licensed and practicing structural engineers with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. Representing the regulated professional practice



interests of over 19,000 structural engineers nationwide, the SECB is accepting applications and donations. For more information, applications, and Board contacts, please visit their web site at [www.secertboard.org](http://www.secertboard.org).

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## RMP Corner Stone

A “Corner Stone” in the foundation for the future of the structural engineering profession was laid at the SEI/ASCE Headquarters in Reston, Virginia on November 5-6, 2004. The 2004 CASE/RMP Convocation for an engineer-directed Risk Management Program commenced with an afternoon of discussions on personal observations from practicing engineers on insurance claims history, the role of the insurance community, and the definition of Standard of Care for Structural Engineers, and “War Stories” from participants.

Victor Schwartz, Esq. from Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP, spoke on “The Status of Tort Reform Legislation in the U.S.” at the evening banquet. Mr. Schwartz is battling for Tort Reform to preclude the liberal plaintiff lawyer community from extorting settlements with small business, specifically structural engineering firms.

Excitement permeated the meeting rooms during the discussions and breakout sessions held on Saturday, November 6th. 150 structural engineering leaders and interested parties partook in the discussion on how we are all in the same boat, all with a hand on an oar, and how it is time to look over our shoulders and see who has their hand on the tiller directing our professional and financial futures.

The immortal words of Professor William Schindler, “that

there ain't no such thing as a free lunch” echoed in my mind as I considered the number of attendees at the first convocation. The 150 engineers attending the first annual convocation expressed their desire to have annual convocations. All structural engineers need to become active participants in our community of practice to reverse the trends that will soon overtake us if we don't invest our time and money in our own futures. Future CASE/RMP convocations will provide the vehicle for that to happen.

A question and answer session concluded the convocation on Saturday afternoon. Opinions and comments were expressed for the need to have annual, semi-annual, or even quarterly convocations, as well as the possibility of holding the meetings regionally. CASE/RMP is looking for input from the engineering community.

CASE/RMP is a joint effort of CASE/SEI/NCSEA. Structural engineers need to become active participants in at least one of the three groups. Members of each group receive STRUCTURE magazine as a benefit of their membership.

The CASE/RMP committee spent November 7, 2004 planning for the next convocation. Stay tuned to STRUCTURE magazine for future times and places. We look forward to meeting you at the next CASE/RMP Convocation. ■

## “New York State Reports School Roof Collapse”

The State Education Department of New York State issued a Structural Advisory to all school districts following the partial collapse of a roof at an elementary school. It occurred while the room was unoccupied. The sudden collapse was attributed to corrosion of the top chord of bar joists which had a U-shaped chord. Reportedly, there had been no indications of water leaks in the plaster ceiling below the joists.

The advisory recommended that schools examine their buildings for this type of joist construction. In addition, they emphasized the importance of conducting building inspections and, particularly, visual inspections by a qualified design professional of the entire roof.

The engineering report with additional photographs can be found at [www.ws.k12.ny.us/taftceiling.htm](http://www.ws.k12.ny.us/taftceiling.htm).

