



InFocus

A Charge to Keep

By Jon A. Schmidt, P.E., SECB

As I hope every reader will agree, STRUCTURE magazine is an outstanding benefit of membership in NCSEA, SEI, and CASE. In fact, during a strategic planning session at the NCSEA 13th Annual Conference

in Kansas City, Missouri, three of the four focus groups identified STRUCTURE as one of the top five strengths of NCSEA as an organization.

Much of the credit for this belongs to the volunteers who have served on the magazine's Editorial Board over the years, especially its two previous chairs: Craig Cartwright and Jim DeStefano. I want to extend my personal thanks to these two gentlemen for their tireless efforts to make STRUCTURE the first-rate publication that it is today. I also want to acknowledge Jeanne Vogelzang, the Executive Editor; Marc Barter, the Publication Manager; Christine Sloat and her entire staff at Copper Creek, the Publisher; and Chuck Minor and Dick Railton, the advertising account managers.

Now I find myself facing the challenging task of filling Craig's and Jim's ample shoes — the NCSEA Board of Directors has appointed me to take over as chair of the Editorial Board, effective with this issue.

I am grateful to the NCSEA Directors — especially the past and current presidents, Ron Hamburger and Vicki Arbitrio — for the confidence in me that they have demonstrated by entrusting me with this important responsibility.

One of the things that I like to do when assuming any kind of leadership role is to create a statement of the vision, mission, and objectives of the body that I have agreed to head up. This exercise helps to crystallize why the group exists, what it is doing well, and where it needs to get better. I want to share with you what I have developed for the Editorial Board, in consultation with its current members — not advocating any kind of change in direction, but rather capturing what they have been striving for all along.

Vision

STRUCTURE magazine will be the premier resource for practicing structural engineers.

Mission

The Editorial Board will engage, enlighten, and empower structural engineers by publishing interesting, informative, and inspirational content in STRUCTURE magazine that is professionally relevant, technically reliable, and intellectually refreshing.

Objectives

Through STRUCTURE magazine, the Editorial Board will:

- Disseminate useful tips, tools, and techniques that will help structural engineers increase the quality, productivity, and profitability of their work.
- Introduce new and innovative concepts in structural engineering through project descriptions, case studies, lessons learned, and other approaches.
- Promote structural engineering as a true profession, not merely a technical avocation, and highlight how it is unique from the other design disciplines.

That defines what the Editorial Board is trying to accomplish.

Now I ask you, the reader, to do two things:

- **Submit articles.** A magazine is only as good as its content, so we are always seeking qualified authors who are willing and able to prepare top-notch pieces of the appropriate length, and meet important deadlines for draft and final text and graphics. Note that many jurisdictions will grant continuing education credit — as many as 10 professional development hours — for writing something that gets published. The editorial calendar and author's handbook are available at the magazine's website, www.structuremag.org.
- **Provide feedback.** As the aspirations expressed above should make clear, STRUCTURE exists to serve its readers. We need you to respond to what you encounter in the magazine and supply us with a steady stream of input on ways to improve it. Please share your thoughts and suggestions with me directly: chair@structuremag.org.

A new year for all of us, a new look for the magazine, and a new chair for the Editorial Board — these are exciting times for STRUCTURE! Thanks in advance for being a part of it — I look forward to hearing from you.■

Jon A. Schmidt, P.E., SECB, is a senior structural engineer and the Director of Antiterrorism Services for Burns & McDonnell in Kansas City, Missouri. His experience includes aviation, industrial, commercial, and institutional facility projects for government, military, and private-sector clients. Jon specializes in addressing multidisciplinary security considerations for buildings, including blast effects analysis and design as required. He co-founded the Structural Engineers Association of Kansas & Missouri (SEAKM) in 2001, was its first President in 2002-2003, and continues to serve as its Delegate to NCSEA.

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