

# Editorial | Professional Involvement

Service and Reward

By Andrew Rauch, P.E., S.E., LEED AP, CASE Chair



It is hard to believe, but this will be my last editorial as chair of CASE. This spring, I will turn the gavel over to the capable hands of Dave Mykins from Stroud Pence and Associates of Virginia Beach, Virginia. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve both the structural engineering firms who are members of CASE and the structural engineering profession as a whole. I am pleased with what CASE has been able to accomplish these last two years, producing guidelines, contract forms, tools and programs that can be used to enhance the business practices and risk management efforts of structural engineering firms. For that, I must give credit to the hard-working members of CASE's guidelines, contracts, toolkit, programs and membership committees, and to the extra efforts put forth by the chairs of those committees.

CASE is one of six coalitions within ACEC. The other coalitions represent mechanical/electrical engineers, land surveyors, land development consultants, small firms and large firms. I have enjoyed being a part of the growth and collaboration among all of these coalitions as we share resources to enhance and improve business practices among the greater engineering community. That could not have been done without the capable assistance of Heather Talbert and Katie Goodman at ACEC, and I thank them for all that they do.

I would like to highlight some of the more recent activity within the CASE committees. John DalPino, chair of the Guidelines Committee, recently authored a white paper on the engineering standard of care. It does not try to define the standard of care (to the disappointment of lawyers, and the relief of engineers and their insurers) but rather discusses how the standard of care evolved over the years, and how it differs from other forms of liability. It also offers insight on how the standard of care might evolve in the coming years. This white paper is available at: [www.acec.org/case/news/publications/](http://www.acec.org/case/news/publications/).

The Contracts Committee is hard at work updating all of the CASE contract forms. This is a major undertaking, and is almost complete. Look for the updated versions of these contract forms to be available soon. Our surveys have consistently shown that these forms are some of our more heavily used products. These contract forms will be available

at: [www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/contracts-committee/](http://www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/contracts-committee/).

The Toolkit Committee has recently published a tool to help assess the risks associated with pursuing a given project. It takes you through the questions you should ask yourself about the client, the project, and your own capabilities before deciding to pursue and accept the project. This document is available at [www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/toolkit-committee/](http://www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/toolkit-committee/).

The Programs Committee has been busy putting together the

spring CASE Risk Management Convocation for the 2015 Structures Congress. It will kick off with the CASE Breakfast featuring an address by Sue Yoakmun on how our liabilities and responsibilities will change with changes in technology and project delivery methods. The convocation will feature four sessions.

- In the first session, Brian Stewart will talk about how additional risks are creeping into our design contracts and we may not be aware of them.
- The second session will feature a panel discussion on some of the non-technical risks faced by today's structural engineering project managers and provide tools for addressing them. This will be a great session for those project managers, who are interested in learning more about the "softer" side of the profession.
- Jeff Coleman, an attorney, structural engineer, and probably the only lawyer who is a Fellow of the American Concrete Institute will present at the third session. This session will feature case studies from actual litigation. From there, it will highlight the lessons learned from those projects and how you can use those lessons to protect your practice.
- The fourth session will be a roundtable discussion which should be very valuable to practicing engineers, especially project managers. We are often forced to balance between the amount of effort to expend on a project and the amount of fee available to complete the work. This session will look at several situations encountered regularly, and offer guidance on how to strike that balance.

The National Guidelines Committee has just published a commentary on the *Code of Standard Practice for Steel Joists* from the Steel Joist Institute. How many of you have taken the time to read this document that governs the design and procurement of structural elements we all use so often? The new publication from SJI contains some significant changes to how joists are designed. This commentary helps to understand those changes and highlights provisions in the *Code of Standard Practice* of which you may not be aware, but you should be. This document is available at [www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/guidelines-committee/](http://www.acec.org/case/getting-involved/guidelines-committee/).

In the first of these articles, almost two years ago, I urged you to get involved in a structural engineering organization for your own benefit and as a service to your profession. To close out my last article, I will repeat that encouragement. I continue to be amazed at the expertise, abilities, insights and commitment that I have seen from my structural engineering colleagues. You truly receive much more from involvement in your profession than it ever asks of you. ■



*Andrew Rauch, P.E., S.E., LEED AP, is a principal with BKBM Engineers in Minneapolis, MN. He is the current chair of the CASE Executive Committee. He can be reached at [arauch@bkbm.com](mailto:arauch@bkbm.com).*

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