



# SPECIGRAM

Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Chapter, Construction Specifications Institute

May, 2013

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### CSI Pittsburgh Chapter Mission Statement

1. To support and promote the mission and core values of the Institute.
2. To help its members perform their jobs better by providing education and promoting certification programs.
3. To provide an opportunity for networking to facilitate project team building.

## May 14 Program

### Tour of Parran Hall Addition Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) University of Pittsburgh, Oakland Campus

The project consists of 58,000 sf of work under contract that is a combination of new construction and interior renovation. The work includes demolishing the single story portion of the existing Parran Hall building ( auditorium, loading dock area and mechanical spaces) to allow for the addition of a new research laboratory tower. This addition includes 3 lab floors, a new double story lobby space along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, an auditorium, new loading dock and a ground floor mechanical room. The building will be topped off with a full mechanical penthouse with enclosure. The project is currently pursuing LEED Certified.

The GSPH buildings are home to multiple research departments. The departments that will be moving into the New Research Tower are Epidemiology, Human Genetics and Infectious Diseases and Microbiology (IDM). Established in 1948 to address the environmental and occupational health needs of our industrial region, the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health builds on its long and storied history of educating public health leaders, engaging in public health service and research, and translating research into public health practices and policies to improve the health of populations regionally, nationally, and globally.

#### **Please meet at the construction trailer at or before 5:00pm.**

Dinner following tour will be at Joe Mama's, 3716 Forbes Ave, 15213, (corner of Forbes and Oakland ave), one block from the tour. School will be out and there is free parking after 6pm. We will have a private room with appetizers, entrees and dessert, coffee and soft drinks.

**Cost is \$35/person.**

Reservations by **Friday May 10** to [MAZell@NationalGypsum.com](mailto:MAZell@NationalGypsum.com)



## President's Message

May 2013

Miki Vargo, Chapter President



### "It's not what you do, it's how you participate."

I heard this recently by Barry Svigals, FAIA, principal of Connecticut's Svigals + Partners and coauthor of the book **Collaboration** during the keynote address at this year's AIA's Build Pittsburgh. Barry's presentation focused on collaboration of the design team, however, as I listened to him speak, it got me thinking about CSI and our chapter.

As an organization, CSI is the ultimate collaborator. We are the only professional organization that brings together all members of the project team; Architects/Designers, Building Owners, Contractors, Project Managers, Sub-contractors, Engineers, Facility Managers, Manufacturers, Product Representatives, Specifiers, Estimators, Students, Attorneys and other professions affected by construction documentation and project management. It is our diversity that makes us a unique and extremely valuable organization. CSI also offers a wide variety of educational opportunities both at the local and national levels. Locally, we have our monthly programs and tours, conversations with fellow members, technical seminars, members blogs, and the specifier's roundtable to name a few. The Institute offers free webinars, the monthly Construction Specifier, CSI Academies, Master Specifier's Retreat, CDT, CCS, CCCA, & CCPR Certifications, CONSTRUCT and regional MARC conferences, Practice Groups, CSI Forums, and Linked-in discussion groups.

With all that CSI has to offer, how many of us take full advantage of our CSI memberships? Have you been to an institute convention? How about a region conference? Have you attended a monthly program recently? How many of us have their CDT or higher certifications? Currently, our chapter has about 140 members, yet only about 33% of our membership regularly attends our programs and meetings. I encourage all of you reading this post to come and "participate." Participate by attending a monthly meeting. Participate by joining a committee. Participate by attending the Middle Atlantic Region Conference in Gettysburg this month. Participate by joining a discussion group or forum. Participate by studying for the CDT. Participate whatever way you like, but know that by your participation, you help to contribute to the CSI experience; you become another piece of knowledge, another resource available to our members.

*It's not what you do, it's how you participate.*



# Member Profile: Lynn Fulton

May 2013

***Tell us about your spouse/family:***

I am married to a wonderful guy, Rob. We will be celebrating our one year anniversary this May.

***Tell us about your job:***

I am a project architect at CDM Smith, a global Engineering (Big E /Little A) firm. Our core business is Water/Waste Water, but our local Pittsburgh office focuses on Transportation facilities.

***What part of your job do you enjoy the most?***

Even though we are a large global company, I often feel like I work for a small architectural firm. Because of our local office, I have had some great career opportunities that I otherwise may not of had at this stage of my career.

***What year did you join CSI?***

2010

***What is your role in CSI Pittsburgh?***

I am the Programs Director and a Board Member.

***Why did you join CSI?***

Our current president, Miki, who has been a longtime colleague and friend of mine was involved and told me great things about the Pittsburgh Chapter. After one meeting, I knew she was right.

***Did you have a CSI recruiter/mentor?***

Miki Vargo, Our current Chapter President

***What do you see as the value of CSI membership?***

As an architect (who also has to write her own specifications), I love being able to go to the monthly meetings and seeing the many faces that make up the construction world. But, the most valuable part is the monthly program. Not that I am biased, but it really opens you up to learning about something new in the industry, or seeing a project in construction that you probably wouldn't get to see otherwise.

***Tell us a memorable CSI experience:***

Summer Board Meetings in Amish Country

***What would you want somebody considering CSI membership to know?***

That joining CSI is not just another professional membership, but a community of professionals and friends that provide a wide range of valuable resources for the industry.

***What would people be surprised to know about you?***

I am a huge Dave Matthews Band fan and have been to 40+ concerts, including Charlottesville, VA, Seattle WA, Alpine Valley, WI, and of course, Pittsburgh.

Lynn M. Fulton





## *Student Outreach: Talking with Mike Moyta, CSI Pittsburgh's Student Liason*

May 2013

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### ***What has been your biggest challenge?***

Creating opportunities for students to interface with Chapter members, that are convenient and of interest to students has been challenging, as well as finding local school administrators of construction industry programs (other than at CMU) who are amenable to assisting with getting the message about our outreach efforts out to their students.

On the other hand, Carnegie-Mellon's School of Architecture has been *very* receptive to our efforts. Their Department Head, Steve Lee, facilitated our getting in contact with Alexis McCune, their Coordinator of Student Programs, who has been very much on board with our mission.

### ***How did you make contact with the various schools?***

Most of our communications have been through e-mail. Some of our contacts have only been gleaned from schools' web sites, in an attempt to identify an appropriate or receptive contact, such as a department head or career director. Some contacts have been suggested by Chapter members. Our Student Outreach Committee should find some time to try to talk to those contacts that we've identified, but have not been responsive.

Hopefully, our latest initiative will improve that situation. Having tapped into the Construction Specifications Institute's MasterFormat 2011 Academic Distribution Program, for just the cost of shipping, we procured ten of their leftover stockpile of MF2011 books they had, and are distributing them as gifts to the schools we have been contacting, as a way to promote our Chapter and part of our mission, which is educating our industry. A few Chapter members have volunteered to personally take these books to our contacts and put a CSI Pittsburgh face to our internet invitations and emails, and make an opportunity to explain our mission.

Our hope is that if there is a copy of at least some version of Master Format in their school library or department resource shelf, some of these students will pick up a small modicum of exposure to our industry's organizational structure. The MasterFormat 2011 books include a Chapter ID sticker with the gift date & our web address on the title page, a cover letter from our Chapter President, and one of our 3-fold Chapter brochures in each book.

### ***What was the impetus for beginning the Pittsburgh Chapter's student outreach?***

*Bob twisted my arm. ....*

*But then* I came to understand the need to let students in our industry know that there's a another aspect of the profession awaiting them to be learned, for which they are likely getting very little exposure nor appreciation in their current education. Since CSI has some programs to meet the needs of emerging professionals to understand the basics of how the design/construction industry operates and the basics of contract documents (CDT), and programs for understanding the principles of specifications (CCS) and construction contract administration (CCCA), students should be also be informed about these resources and the industry standards CSI has developed. So, I've embraced this as a worthwhile mission in which to assist our Chapter.

*... or, so I keep telling myself.*



## *Student Outreach (cont'd)*

May 2013

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### ***What has the outreach effort accomplished so far?***

We have invited local students to several monthly Chapter meetings over the past 2 years, with meager response. Hopefully the word will spread each time we extend an invitation to students in the local construction industry-related education programs to get together with the Chapter's construction industry professionals.

In October of 2012, we invited students from several local schools and local emerging professionals to a presentation graciously hosted by CMU. This was a reprise of the "Specifications for Non-Specwriters" presentation developed and presented by two of our Chapter members, Denny Buirge and Scott Keener, at the AIA Pittsburgh Chapter's continuing education conference, (re)Design Pittsburgh in 2011. Specifically created as student outreach event, we tweaked and re-presented this hour-long seminar with PowerPoint graphics. AIA-registered continuing education credits were also made available for students who have started their IDP file with NCARB. In addition to a handful of Chapter members in attendance, we were very pleased that 29 students and emerging professionals came out, 20 of which were CMU students, 6 from the local AIA Young Architect's Forum, & 3 from other schools. We also funded a pizza & soda mixer in the lecture hall afterwards, and gave the students an opportunity to chat with our Chapter members.

Though not initially planned as a student outreach event, we tweaked our April Chapter meeting program to create an opportunity to dole out the funds set aside in our Chapter budget this year for some sort of "scholarship". One of our Chapter members, Bob Schrock, who also belongs to a chapter in Ohio, introduced a fun program to us that he developed that was very well received there. Modeled after the similarly-named TV show, the "Are You Smarter Than A Specifier?" program was very much enjoyed here in Pittsburgh as well. We had six postgraduate students join us from CMU's Architectural-Engineering-Construction-Management Program (a joint program between the School of Architecture and the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering) who played along, "won" some notable "prize" money, and gained an appreciation for the myriad of tidbits that need to be stashed away in a typical specifier's knowledge "bank". The opportunity to network with our Chapter professionals and have dinner on us was also much appreciated.

### ***What are your short term and long-term goals for the outreach?***

In the short term we will continue to invite students to some of our Chapter meetings when we have programs that may be of interest to them. Long-term, we want to develop some sort of regular scholarship program. Discussions are getting under way on what this may be, and will include forecasts on the amount of funds that can be identified for this in our yearly budgets.

Whether to repeat some of the special outreach events from this past year may also be discussed. Since it is difficult for students to get to our meetings and afford even the reduced dinner cost we offer, it may be that we find our efforts are better placed on a couple special events throughout the year, targeted to the local students and emerging professionals.



## Student Outreach (cont'd)

May 2013

### *How can chapter members help?*

Our Student Outreach Committee could use input on getting good contacts within the local construction industry-related schools, and help in fostering those contacts. When we are producing programs there's always a variety of tasks for which it would be helpful to have some extra hands on board. Assistance with creating and managing our internet-based invitation system (currently the free version of Eventbrite) is also needed.

As a group, our Chapter also needs to welcome the students that do participate in the programs we create for them, and that visit our Chapter meetings on occasion. As a networking resource, we should talk to these young folks, and help nurture their interest in our industry.

-Mike Moyta



**Mike Moyta (far left) with CMU Students who participated in April program "Are You Smarter Than A Specifier?"**

Students included Eylul Engin, Boyang Wang, Alejandra Munoz, Xinjun Bi, Dan Fu, Jingmao Chen.



May 2013

## Pittsburgh Chapter Officers

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### *Treasurer*

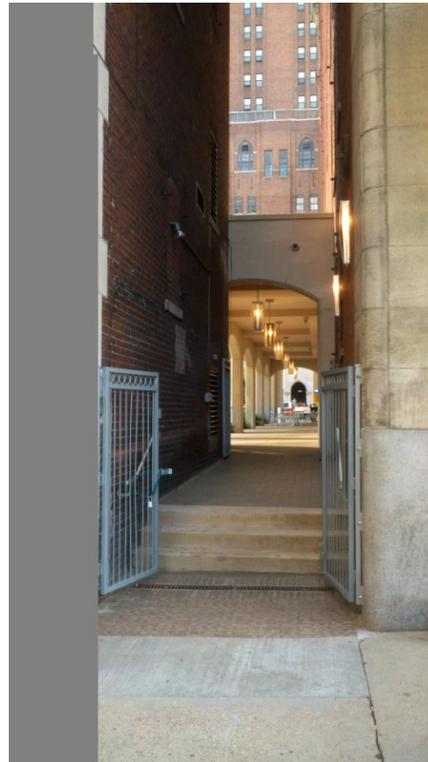
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## BUILDING BRAIN-TEASER

Can you identify what we're looking at in this photo? Do you know where this is? It's somewhere in the City of Pittsburgh.



Send your guess to [bbailey@ikminc.com](mailto:bbailey@ikminc.com) The first five correct guesses win a CSI Pittsburgh mug!