

editor's note



WHEN I STARTED AT AISC NEARLY A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO, the most respected name in the industry was Robert P. Stupp.

It wasn't just his reputation as one of the top fabricators in the country—though that was impressive on its own. It was his work on the AISC Board of Directors, including his stint as Chair. Bob joined the board in 1968 and stayed until the fall of 2012. How much influence did he have on AISC? He's widely credited with inspiring our move from New York to Chicago in the late 1970s (an effort that helped us look beyond the myopic world view made famous by the March 29, 1976 *New Yorker* map of the world cover). He's also considered the father of the National Steel Bridge Alliance. Frankly, there wasn't a major decision made by the AISC Board of Directors during the past four decades that wasn't strongly influenced by Bob. Bob was so influential that in 1998 the Institute named him the first recipient of its highest honor: The Robert P. Stupp Award for Leadership Excellence.

It is with much sadness that we mark his passing on March 3 at the age of 83.

When I first met Bob, I was confused. He didn't look the part. He often wore sneakers with dress pants. In a room full of ties, his shirt collar was open. He sounded more like an ironworker than the president of a leading

fabrication company. But then you spoke with him and the depth of his intellect shined through. It wasn't just that he could quote the Great Books; it was that he was insightful, bold and willing to take chances. His was the first company to become AISC Certified and now more than 1,000 facilities have joined Stupp Bros.

As a young editor at a nationally renowned trade association and technical institute, I was more than a bit intimidated by Bob's powerful demeanor and formidable reputation. But over the years I saw another side of him. It wasn't too many years after I started that I received my first note from Bob. With trepidation I opened the envelope and discovered, to much relief, that he had written a brief note of praise for an article. He sent many of these over the years, and each meant a lot to me.

I'll miss Bob. His death marks the end of an era.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Scott Melnick".

SCOTT MELNICK
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