

## editor's note



**WHEN MY DAUGHTER LEFT TOWN RECENTLY TO STUDY ABROAD IN LONDON, ONE OF THE ATTRACTIONS SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO SEE WAS THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD.**

That phrase seems particularly appropriate to me as I look at AISC today.

When I started here nearly 30 years ago, I was part of a vanguard of fresh employees who helped to reshape the Institute. Cindi Duncan joined AISC a couple of years before me, took a few years off and is now our director of engineering. The year before I started, Bill McEleney (who would eventually become managing director of the National Steel Bridge Alliance) signed on. We had a new legal counsel, David Ratterman. And shortly after I started, a whole series of new hires helped revitalize AISC, including Charlie Carter (who is now president of AISC) and Tom Schlafly (our director of research).

The changes today, though, are perhaps even more dramatic. In addition to Charlie becoming president, we have a new vice president of certification (Mark Trimble, who brings more than four decades of experience in the industry), a new vice president of engineering and research (Larry Kruth, who has more than 40 years of design, fabrication and erection experience), a new vice president of market development (the homegrown Tabitha Stine, who is trying to fill the huge shoes of the legendary John Cross, who is now our vice president of special projects) and a new vice president of finance (Anne-Marie Eischen). In all, nearly a third of AISC's staff is either new to the Institute or new to their roles.

And the changes continue. Just last month, Nancy Gavlin, AISC's director of education, retired. Unless you were an educator, you might not know Nancy, but her impact on AISC was huge. Under her tenure, AISC's educational strategy transitioned from in-person seminars to web-based learning. Before Nancy, we typically held 40 to 60 lectures in cities around the country, reaching nearly 5,000

people annually. Today, we've created a robust online continuing education presence with an annual audience of around 20,000 people. And those 5,000 people we used to see in person at seminars? We now see them at a single unified event (NASCC: The Steel Conference) and at a select number of in-person seminars.

But even more importantly, Nancy was the creator and the driving force behind AISC's Night School program. These web-based programs offer a series of seminars on a single topic (our fall program, for example, focused on the fundamentals of connection design). Each topic typically features seven lectures and provides a much more in-depth continuing education experience than a typical seminar.

But Nancy's contributions weren't just limited to continuing education. She was also instrumental in working with students and faculty to improve the state of steel education. She developed and provided meaningful assistance to professors through new teaching resources, grew the ACSA/AISC Steel Design Student Competition and built a model program for connecting professors and students with working professionals at The Steel Conference.

And she was successful at developing a great staff, so the changing of the guard includes promoting Christina Harber to director of education.

I hope all of you have the opportunity to meet these new leaders. Please stop by AISC's booth at NASCC: The Steel Conference in Baltimore in April and say hello to both the new and the familiar faces.

**SCOTT MELNICK**  
EDITOR

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