I’m always blown away when people in the precast industry ask me what value they get from being PCI certified. I could give the stock answer that PCI is the gold standard in prestressed-precast certification.

I could say that over 30 DOT’s, the Federal Highway Administration, the Army Corp of Engineers and numerous other agencies recognize and use PCI’s standards for their projects or that PCI certification assures an owner or contractor that the prestress plant produces products that are of high quality and assures a sustainable product. Another response might be that PCI maintains a Body of Knowledge on prestressed products second to none.

But in my opinion, the greatest reason to be PCI certified and a member of PCI is what’s behind the standard answers. How do you measure the interaction between producers or the relationships that are developed and maintained over the years? The access to knowledge, not written in books or research papers, is priceless. How do you quantify the experience of a long-time producer and the lessons they share? It’s the people in an organization that are the true measure of the value. In my book, PCI has some of the best people in the construction industry who share your mission to grow the industry and provide top level products.

PCI Gulf South Names New Officers:

Congratulations to the following:

Jimmy Stewart - President
Jody Singletary - Vice-President
Chris Ard - Secretary/Treasurer
Dave Parker - voting representative to the Board of Directors for the associate members.

PCI Gulf South Transportation Meeting with ALDOT: In our continuing effort to expand our engagement with the DOT’s, the PCI Gulf South Transportation Committee recently held a meeting in Montgomery where the discussion centered on various products, fabrication issues such as skewed beams ends, reinforcement options and the use of SCC. In attendance was Dr. Barnes, Auburn University professor who shared research relative to bridge beam camber and Dave Tomley, P.E., Thompson Engineering who shared a cost benefit analysis for using high performance, high strength concrete for bridge girders. Forty producers, DOT design engineers and university professors gathered at this meeting with the common goal of improving communication and problem solving.

ASCE/APWA Summer Meeting: The annual meeting of the ASCE/APWA was held in Perdido Bay, AL in mid-July. PCI Gulf South had the honor of being an exhibitor/sponsor/presenter at the event. After a spring trip to CA to view the concrete replacement slab process firsthand, Dan brought his knowledge and experience to share with the attendees. The interest in concrete replacement slabs as an alternative to roadway repair is not new, but it has recently been gaining some momentum as a viable and cost effective way to create longer wearing roadway surfaces. Jason Hewatt, Forterra Specialty Products was also on hand to present on the NEXT beam, another up and coming bridge technology solution. The NEXT beam is currently being utilized on several bridge projects in Alabama.
2018 PCI Gulf South Summer Convention: PCI Gulf South held the annual Summer Convention at Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort in Miramar Beach, FL. As always, the resort and weather were beautiful. The large crowd gathered for an outdoor Welcome Reception to kick-off the festivities for the three day event. Greeted by DJ the Entertainer and an amazing caricature artist, PCI Gulf South members and their families shared a fun-filled evening with scrumptious food, laughter and fellowship. Gathering together as a “family” each summer has built some lifelong friendships, as well as professional relationships. Morning meetings were highlighted by keynote speakers such as Bob Risser, President of PCI, Adam Lancaster, DOTD Manager of Standards and Details, William Nickas, Manager of Transportation Services PCI, Ken Kruse, Industry Director BASF and Justin Walker, MDOT Director of Structures State Bridge Engineer who talked about everything from industry outlook to upcoming projects to girder shapes to new technology. This year also marked the “changing of the guard” with the induction of new Board of Director officers. We sincerely thank Ben Spruill, our outgoing President for his dedication and insight in leading the organization for the past two years. Taking the reins is newly seated Jimmy Stewart, F–S Prestress. Jimmy has been a fixture in the organization for many years and we welcome his vision. The final evening of the Summer Convention was capped off with an amazing sunset dinner cruise aboard the Solaris. To the sounds of live jazz music, PCI Gulf South members celebrated the accomplishments of their fellow precasters with the awarding of regional Design Awards. Bringing home the hardware this year is Gate Precast with 1st and 2nd Place and Forterra with Honorable Mention. Recognizing the continued efforts of producers to push forward with new and creative projects is always worth celebrating. Lastly, our platinum level sponsors (JVI, Sika & GCP Applied Technology) were awarded with plaques for their continued generosity toward the summer event. It was a Mississippi/Alabama Engineering Society Meeting: One of my favorite society meetings, the MS/AL Engineering Society meeting, was held this year in Biloxi, MS at the beautiful Beau Rivage. Always a well run event, presentation topics ran from Mississippi’s 811 service to how to speak in public to precast building components. Topping off the event was a dinner cruise on the Betsy Ann Riverboat. We would like to extend congratulations to Gabe Faggard for becoming the new Mississippi Engineering Society President. Arkansas DOT Meeting: On May 15th Dave Tomley, PCI Gulf South Transportation Committee Chair and I traveled to Little Rock, AR to meet with the bridge design division. Arkansas, a primarily steel bridge state had expressed interest in learning more about precast-prestressed products. I would like to thank Jeff Covay and all of the bridge engineers for the warm reception. PCI Gulf South, in conjunction with producers from other regions, will be holding a workshop with the DOT design group in August. We are hopeful this is the beginning of a long relationship with precast-prestressed products.
Precast-Prestressed Replacement Slabs: On May 29th I traveled to Los Angeles, CA with FPCA Executive Director Diep Tu to explore firsthand the precast pavement replacement slab operation by Oldcastle Precast and Atkinson Construction. The replacement operation was just north of Los Angeles on the I-5 corridor. Even at 2:30 am, the I-5 corridor was extremely busy, which is what prompted the use of precast replacement slabs. As part of our trip, we visited the Oldcastle precast plant in Fontana, CA for the plant production side of this project. At 9:00 pm, we headed to the job trailer for our “safety orientation” with the general contractor before heading out to the jobsite. There is a short video on our Facebook page that illustrates the setting operation for these panels. As you will see in the video (filmed at 2:30 in the morning), the traffic traveling northbound was still quite heavy. To maintain safety, the crews stationed their equipment between the traveling public and the setting operations. Although primarily used as a repair product, the prestressed concrete replacement slabs can and do have other applications which are of interest to local municipalities, as well as states dealing with areas of heavy congestion and heavy loaded traffic. Along with 20 other states, Alabama and Louisiana have joined the growing number of agencies witnessing the benefit of this technology.

Workshop Arkansas DOT
August 13, 2018
Little Rock, AR

Pile Driving Contractors Association Meeting
August 16, 2018
Biloxi, MS

ASCE MS Section Annual Meeting
September 5th-7th, 2018
Vicksburg, MS

PCI Gulf South Fall Board Meeting
September 18, 2018
Hattiesburg, MS

PCI Committee Days
October , 2018
Rosemont, IL

PCI Gulf South Golf Classic
November 7, 2018
Gulfport, MS

PCI Gulf South Winter Meeting
November 7-8, 2018
Biloxi, MS

DBIA Annual Convention
November 7th-9th, 2018
New Orleans, LA

PCI Executive Directors Workshop
December 5, 2018
Orlando, FL

Marketing Council Meeting
December 6th-7th, 2018
Orlando, FL

Thank you Summer Convention Sponsors

DID YOU KNOW?

Prestressing is the introduction of a compressive force to the concrete to counteract the stresses that will result from an applied load. ... Pre-tensioning happens before the casting of the concrete. This is done by placing of high tensile steel tendons in a desired profile in which the concrete is to be cast.

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PCI Gulf South Learn@Lunch: PCI Gulf South offers a variety of ways to reach the existing design community. The Learn@Lunch program was developed to allow professionals the opportunity to learn about precast products and systems without leaving the office. Call or email today to schedule your Learn@Lunch.