

April 2023 | Issue 5

AS THE DRUM TURNS...

Official newsletter of the SDSU CIM Program



Notes from the Director

Tim Hostettler, SDSU CIM Program Director

The academic year seems to be passing by in a flash, but it has been a terrific couple of semesters. The students have had some incredible experiences, and they are embracing the opportunities as they arise and learning every step of the way. Our student group has grown to twelve with the addition of four freshmen to the major at the beginning of the spring semester. We also have four signed up for fall already, so we are growing, albeit a bit slower than we had hoped and definitely slower than the industry needs. Every day I get emails and calls from people and companies trying to hire our graduates, and I have to tell them it will be some time yet before we have any! On the positive side, all of the students that want to work as interns over the summer have jobs lined up, many with Patron companies.

Summer internships are a critical part of the CIM program experience, as they enable students to take the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom and actually put it in to practice in a real-world setting, which is something that cannot be achieved in the classroom. We require one summer internship as a class, but we highly encourage all of the students to work every summer, trying out different sectors of the industry every summer. Not only does this approach work as a “test drive” for the students to see what they like and do not like, but it also gives them an understanding of the synergies and relationships between the vertically integrated and mutually reliant sectors of the industry.

Going forward, please feel free to reach out to me with any internship opportunities your company may have, and I will be happy to share them with the students. For privacy reasons, I cannot share student contact info, but I can forward postings and openings to the group and let the students reach out to potential employers. *Hint*-most of the students had internships lined up before Christmas, so start early!!



Tony Valland, Emma Roth, Wyatt Hermesen, and Kaiser Croell take a detour to Devil's Tower after attending the Concrete Association of Wyoming convention in Gillette, WY.

Spring Trips

Another integral component of the CIM experience is the opportunity to network with industry folks. Many of these opportunities are the result of the myriad field trips we take, including both day and overnight trips. As a result, it seems like we have been on the go continuously since before Christmas, but it has been worthwhile from the perspective of the students' development. Starting with the Aggregate and Ready-Mix Association of Minnesota (ARM) convention in Minneapolis in the first part of December, (where the students received their Fall scholarship checks,) we have been attending every industry event possible given our academic schedules.



Students with their fall scholarship checks following the ARM convention. From left to right, Tony Valland, Zane Derynck, Josue Mendez, Emma Roth, Brittany DeGroot, Peter Benson, Kaiser Croell, and Jaivyn DeBoer.

Following the ARM convention, 8 students attended World of Concrete in Las Vegas in January, followed by the South Dakota Ready Mix Concrete Association convention in Deadwood, (five students attended,) the Concrete Association of Wyoming convention in Gillette (four students attended,) the Iowa convention in Riverside, IA (five students attended) and finally back to Las Vegas for Con Agg/Con Expo (five students attended.) Each of these trips included educational seminars from industry professionals, as well as the aforementioned networking opportunities. At WOC, the students had a “homework” assignment that consisted of each of them introducing themselves to ten random industry members in attendance and collecting that person’s contact info and information about their organizations’ role in the industry. The goal of this exercise, of course, was to push them outside of their comfort zone and the tendency to wander around together and force them to interact with people they did not know. The variety of contacts they came back with was astounding, even to me—many companies and even a few industry segments I did not even know existed. I may have to do the assignment myself next year---



Students at World of Concrete, Las Vegas, January 2023. From left to right, Jaivyn DeBoer, Tony Valland, Peter Benson, Zane Derynck, Emma Roth, Brittany DeGroot, Josue Mendez, and Kaiser Croell.

At each of the state conventions, I was also given the opportunity to make a presentation giving an overview of the program and encouraging attendees to get involved. At the Wyoming convention, we changed things up a bit. At the suggestion of Tina Silva, the Concrete Association of Wyoming executive director, we added a panel of current and former CIM students to the presentation. After my usual spiel, we then did a question-and-answer session with the panel, which consisted of current students Emma Roth, Tony Valland, Wyatt Hermsen, and Kaiser Croell, as well as CIM alumni Cole Jacobs from Martin Marietta (MTSU grad) and Matt Helton from Master Builders (CSU Chico Grad.) The panel seemed to go over very well, as the attendees were able to see and hear from people who were actually enrolled in the program and people who had gone through it and are now successful members of the industry. I was very happy with the outcome and reactions from the attendees, so much so that we did a similar format a few weeks later at the Iowa convention (minus the alumni) with current students Brittany DeGroot, Jace Kroll, Peter Benson and Kaiser Croell. I believe this format lends credibility and an air of reality to the presentations, as opposed to just having some old guy talking and showing a bunch of pictures of nameless students. I plan on going this route whenever possible in the years to come.



CIM Panel, Wyoming 2023



CIM Panel, Iowa 2023

Con Agg-Con Expo was another exciting opportunity for the students to see different aspects of the industry and interact with industry professionals. A trip to Hoover Dam proved to be more exciting than expected when Lyft stranded us out there, but we eventually made our way back to Las Vegas to see the show. We were fortunate enough to attend the Gomaco dinner courtesy of one of our Patrons (Thanks Curt!!), which was well worth the trip to Vegas in itself.



Emma, Josue, Wyatt, and Tony enjoy the “magic bus” at the Gomaco dinner event.



Con Agg group at the CIM booth

WELCOME TO HOOVER DAM



*Kaiser, Josue, Emma, Tony,
and Wyatt at Hoover Dam*



The usual slate of 101 field trips has been disrupted by the severe weather this semester, but we have still managed to visit the GCC cement terminal and batch plant in Brookings, the Buffalo Ridge batch plant, and Artisan Concrete Concepts in Volga. We are planning to see Gage Brothers precast in Sioux Falls, Cemcast Pipe in Hartford, and a water treatment plant project McCarthy Construction is working on in Sioux Falls before the semester ends. The majority of the group was also able to see the GCC cement plant in Rapid City earlier in the semester following the SDRMCA convention in Deadwood.

Going forward, we may decide to only offer the 101 class in the Fall, as the Spring weather makes scheduling field trips problematic, to say the least. In addition, Spring semester is convention season, which creates excellent networking and educational opportunities for the students, so our time will probably be better served attending as many of these events as possible.



Tony, Jaivyn, Peter and Zane with Gage Brothers Operations Manager Adam Struck



Peter, Wyatt, Emma, Josue and Jace at the GCC Cement plant in Rapid City.



Peter, Jaivyn, Zane, and Kaiser with Plant Manager Jeremy Schoenfelder at the AMCON block plant in Harrisburg.

Other Events

Last spring, I took our first three students, Josue, Brittany, and Emma, to Sioux Falls to take their ACI Field Testing certification tests. Some of you may remember the pictures below from the June 22 newsletter.



This spring, I took them back to the annual certification course to serve in the role of proctors.



It was extremely gratifying to see them being able to contribute back to the industry after only three semesters in the program. This spring, I have five freshmen who will be taking the certification test, so I look forward to involving that group next year as well. The ACI Field Testing certification (along with the Flatwork Finishing Certification) is part of our curriculum, and all students are required to participate. In my time with the Chico program, this became a little cost prohibitive for some of the students, as the tests are fairly expensive. We have been lucky enough at SDSU so far to get our students sponsored by either their summer employers or the South Dakota Ready Mixed Concrete Association, but I have been worried about the prospect of funding for these certifications in the future as the program grows. Fortunately, the SDRMCA has stepped up to help out by agreeing to continue sponsoring our students' ACI certifications for the foreseeable future. Many thanks to SDRMCA for their much-appreciated support.

Guest Lecturers

Our slate of guest lecturers from the start of this program had been incredible, and it just keeps getting better. Not only are these outside presenters invaluable for their expertise and experience, but as I am still basically a one man show, their willingness to fill in on days when I need to be somewhere else is also greatly appreciated. This year, we have had industry icons like Hank Hauge from Strata Corporation and John Lee from Cemstone not only presenting to our individual classes, but to the student ACI chapter as well. Donald Hostettler from Ace Ready Mix/L.G. Everist continues to be my Ace in the hole (pun intended,) filling in whenever and wherever he is needed, sometimes on short notice. Jason Reaves from the South Dakota chapter of the American Concrete Paving Association has also been invaluable, covering classes and even getting roped into helping a couple of the students with homework from one of their CM classes on his last visit. CSU Chico CIM Alum Travis Marman from Vector Construction in Fargo makes the trek to Brookings each semester to talk to the 101 class about concrete repair, which is fortunate since it is a topic completely out of my wheelhouse. Likewise, Michael Hoeft from K&M Construction has always been available to present to the 101 class, talking not only about concrete construction but also about industry expectations, soft skills, and professional etiquette. All of this exposure to industry people, in combination with the networking opportunities afforded by our field trips, are part of what makes the CIM program so unique among academic programs.

In my promotional presentations around the region, I always extend an invitation to industry folks to appear as a guest lecturer, either live or virtually. Everyone in this industry has a unique and interesting story to tell, and the students enjoy the real-world experiences shared by our guests. I would highly encourage you to consider taking the time to make a guest lecturer presentation to one of our classes in the future. Not only is it an opportunity to share your experiences with the next generation of industry leaders, but it is also a terrific opportunity to meet and interact with our students in small groups within an informal setting. Please feel free to reach out to me if you are interested.



This edition's featured Patron is Paul Ozinga of Ozinga Ready Mix. Paul has the unique perspective of being a CIM alumni, a North Central Region Patron, and a member of the CIM National Steering Committee.

Paul says,

“Having grown up working in my family’s ready-mix business, I was enamored with the industry, its people and the lasting legacy of the work being done. My father recognized my interest in the industry and encouraged me to look at the CIM program and what it had to offer, and I enrolled at MTSU and graduated in 2006.

I take great pride in having my CIM degree and the lasting relationships fostered throughout my education. The time and attention the patrons poured into us truly stood out and helped bring the curriculum to life. The CIM program also creates a lasting bond between classmates. Since graduating and working full-time, there typically isn’t a week that goes by without some form of interaction between a classmate, patron, or faculty—many of whom I consider friends. It is truly the definition of community, and I am proud to be a part of it.

In honoring those that laid the groundwork of CIM, it is my joy to give back as a patron and have a positive impact. As a founding member of the SDSU CIM patrons, it has been a blessing to watch the program grow and flourish. Not only does enrollment continue to climb, but patron membership also continues to grow. When I was in school, internship and full-time job placement were at 100%, and it remains the same today, even as the program and enrollment have grown substantially since. This is a testament to this program and our great industry.”

Alumni Profile



**Robert Hostettler – NW Region Aggregate Operations Manager, CalPortland
CSU, Chico CIM Class of 2011**

Robert says,

“I can honestly say that when I walked across the football field to receive my high school diploma in 2006, the last thing on my mind was the thought that someday I’d be a part of this industry. Although Dad had worked in ready-mix operations since before I was born - starting as a groundsman and working his way up to roles as a mixer driver, batchman, plant manager, sales rep and ultimately general manager - the thought of concrete as a potential career path didn’t seem very attractive. Nevertheless, right after graduation Dad convinced me to come work for him for the summer. I spent that summer working on a small construction crew; pouring slabs in and around ready-mix plants, unloading supersacks of cement in a storage warehouse, landscaping, plumbing and performing various other tasks thinking to myself as I sweated in the 100+ degree California heatwave “I can’t wait for school to start”.

It was at the end of that grueling summer when Dad approached me and said there was a new program starting at CSU Chico and he thought I should take a look at it. I remember him saying “Hey, why don’t you just sign up for the CIM 101 class and see what happens”. The two words I remember thinking were “no way”, as memories of long hot days dragging a rod board and pushing a bull float played over and over in my head. But without a plan in place nor career objective to work towards, I signed up for classes that year and cringed when I checked the box next to CIM 101.

For the next four years I had some of the greatest experiences and met some of the greatest people. Classes taught by industry experts, field trips to ready mix, aggregate and cement operations, internships with Vulcan Materials Company and Masterbuilders Admixtures, and a trip to Pointe du Hoc, Normandy to perform non-destructive testing on WWII anti-aircraft bunkers (with program director Dr. Tanya Komar) topped the list of opportunities I was fortunate enough to have during my time in the CIM Program.



Robert and Alex testing WWII concrete bunkers at Normandy Beach, the landing site of the D-Day offensive.



CSU Chico CIM students at Normandy, France- from left to right, Andrew Billingsley, Courtney DePorto, Robert Hostettler, Alex MacAvoy, Chad Golden, and Dr. Tanya Komar.

Some of the greatest takeaways you can expect from your time in the program are the relationships and network you will create. We have an industry full of amazing, hardworking people. This industry is unlike many others in the fact that it's so dynamic. It's a familial industry where it's not uncommon to meet people with the same last name, sometimes at the same operation. It's an industry conducive not only to those seeking careers in sales or operations, but also to those interested in safety, legal, environmental, accounting, management and many others. And if at the end of the day you're just not quite sure which career path you want to go down, maybe just take the 101 class, and see what happens!"

Recruiter Update

Due to our complete failure in the quest to find someone to fill the role of SDSU CIM academic recruiter, the CIM National Steering Committee has come to the table with the pledge of an additional \$100k per year to fund the position. After pursuing several different courses of action, we have decided to make this an internal position with the title "Assistant Program Director," which enables us to increase the salary offered and also gives the new hire the opportunity to teach a class or two in the future. Our search committee is reviewing the applications at this time, and we hope to have someone on board in time for the next National Steering Committee meeting at Texas State, San Marcos in May.



Emma meets Austin Powers, Baybee!! at the Gomaco dinner event at Con Agg/Con Expo

In the meantime, we have been appearing at as many promotional and recruitment events as time allows. In addition to the industry events mentioned earlier, we have set up booths at two high school career day events in Minnesota, four University recruitment events, and one industry open house event. Many thanks to student ambassador Emma Roth and Aubrey Miller of MasterBuilders for their assistance with these events.

Closing Thoughts

We are moving forward slowly but surely on the path to putting the program online for people already in the industry. The administrative process has been slow, but it is looking more and more like we will be able to officially advertise the virtual version in the Fall. Some of the logistics have yet to be worked out, and we will no doubt need to bring on a little extra faculty help to manage the online courses, but exactly half of the required courses are already offered online, so we have a little time to get the CIM courses on a virtual platform. I have been putting out a few feelers to people I believe would be qualified to teach our classes in this format, and the preliminary feedback has been favorable. In addition, our proposed Minor in Concrete Materials Science looks like it will be accepted as well, so hopefully we can advertise that in the Fall also. The goal of the Minor is to attract students who would not otherwise participate in our program and get their feet in the door. As discussed before, students in the Minor will not be eligible for Patron scholarships or allowed to participate in overnight travel, though they will participate in day trips. Also, our Spanish for the Construction Industry class is on course, with plans for the first offering next Spring.



The sophomores learn about the effects of admixtures in the CIM 210 lab.

Patrons ' Challenge - Continued from Issue 1

At present, there are 47 companies and individuals (up from 45 in the last issue) listed on the North Central Region Patron's list. My challenge to each of you is simple--send us one student. Check with your co-workers, vendors, customers, neighbors, and relatives. Discover who has children approaching college age and inform them of the CIM program and the incredible opportunities in the concrete industry. If we get one student per Patron per year, we will be well above our target of 100 students in the major by year 5. I believe it will take this grass-roots effort by all of our industry Patrons to truly grow this program to the level we want and need it to be.

Thanks to all for your continued support. We will plan another newsletter around September in order to keep everyone in the loop with regard to our activities. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any thoughts, suggestions, or ideas that may help us turn out more and better graduates for our industry.

Best Regards,

Tim

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