

THE VALUE OF PARTICIPATION

By: Mitch Bloomquist, Tilt-Up Concrete Association

A common suggestion of many non-profit organizations such as trade associations is that the association belongs to and is shaped by its members. When it comes to the TCA, this is absolutely the case. Oftentimes, this fact is overlooked by existing and potential members.

The mission of the Tilt-Up Concrete Association is to expand and improve the use of Tilt-Up as the preferred construction method by providing education and resources that enhance quality and performance. In order to fulfill the goals of this mission, the TCA works with a specific set of guidelines or charges. From these charges, committees are formed, publications are proposed, events are planned, and programs are established. While the TCA guidelines exist as a list of 20 items, they could be organized under two fundamental charges: to develop and expand Tilt-Up concrete markets and to maintain a professional stature as the best-informed organization on the subject of Tilt-Up concrete.

1. Develop and expand Tilt-Up concrete markets
 - a. Create an image that inspires consumer confidence in our industry
 - b. Encourage high standards for quality in design and construction
 - c. Encourage, recognize and reward excellence in the use of Tilt-Up concrete
 - d. Secure efficient cooperation between the Tilt-Up industry and architects, engineers, contractors, real estate developers, government officials and allied or related associations and institutes
 - e. Communicate business opportunities to TCA members
2. Maintain a professional stature as the best-informed organization on the subject of Tilt-Up concrete
 - a. Provide training and educational programs for the industry, its users and specifiers
 - b. Develop standards, code provisions and specification to meet industry needs
 - c. Achieve a large contractor, associate and professional membership
 - d. Issue publications to disseminate information of value to its members, the public and government.
 - e. Represent the Tilt-Up concrete industry to users, designers and specifiers

These two ambitions encompass the core responsibilities of the TCA and represent the most valuable long-term benefits to member companies. A force that is advocating for increased demand of your product, and the resources to help you improve it that are second to none.

While there are numerous benefits to joining the association without further involvement, the greatest return on that investment, the fulfillment of the aforementioned TCA guidelines is accomplished only through the work of those members actively involved in the association.

The TCA has been fortunate to have an incredibly productive core group of members. Their dedication and investment in this Association has benefited the entire industry. One of the constants in the growth and development of this Association has been the presence of an architect with new ideas, incredible energy and dedication to the Association.

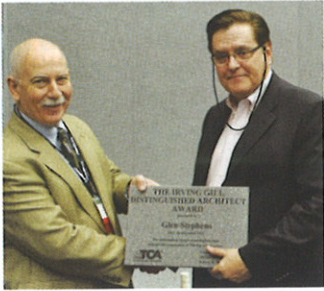
Alan Wilson, Glen Stephens, and now Jeffrey Brown have made significant contributions to the Association and have each made their mark on the TCA and the Tilt-Up industry.

Alan Wilson, AIA, who serves as Chief Architect at Haskell, headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla., has long advocated for the potential of Tilt-Up in architectural design and unleashing the creative flexibility inherent in the Tilt-Up method. He was the inaugural recipient of the Irving Gill Distinguished Architect Award in 2004, which stemmed from his creative project work, including the Seawalk Pavilion, a 2002 TCA Achievement Award winner. His contributions as association president, board member, awards committee member, convention speaker and contributor to "The Architecture of Tilt-Up" publication have all focused upon creating awareness of both Tilt-Up's potential and the great work already being accomplished in the industry. Promoting awareness has contributed to "raising the bar" on the quality of design expected within the industry, as evidenced in each successive year of TCA Achievement award-winning projects. Along with Executive Director, Ed Sauter, Alan studied the Tilt-Up industry and developed a "Top Ten List" of Tilt-Up buildings, the most interesting part of which may be the constant need to update

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due to the ever-increasing quality of projects and designers. Perhaps most enjoyable to Alan of all his TCA involvement has been his work involving the four TCA international student design competitions, helping shape the future of our industry through introduction of Tilt-Up to a new generation of designers. With the creative design work done by Alan and his colleagues at Haskell, the collective work of many talented designers worldwide, and a new generation of designers incorporating Tilt-Up into their design education, Alan sees even greater heights for Tilt-Up in the future.



For 35 years, Stephens has had a vision for how a successful architect should guide himself and his practice – by creating a “client centered firm dedicated to designing buildings that are functional, striking, and innovative.” Stephens has been a devoted advocate for Tilt-Up and has been instrumental in several key TCA projects and programs. These include *The Architecture of Tilt-Up*, now in its 2nd edition; the globally-expanded TCA Achievement Awards; and a Design Charette forum for architects. His participation and leadership has been present on several TCA committees as well as on the TCA Board where he was the first architect elected to the TCA Board of Directors and served as president of the TCA Board 2003. His knowledge and background have been inspiring to many members of the TCA and he has been a true leader in the industry by constantly learning how to apply Tilt-Up construction in new and innovative ways.

Jeffrey Brown, AIA, is Principal-in-Charge of Design for Powers Brown Architecture, which he co-founded. Practicing architecture for more than 20 years, Brown has an array of experience working on multiple building types for both public and private entities; he is an accomplished designer

with unique graphic communication and strategic planning skills. His ability to design utilizing an interactive process of project definition and interpretation has resulted in distinguished design awards and published works.

Brown has been instrumental in leading the firm to numerous awards including recognition from the Tilt-Up Concrete Association as the 2008 recipient of the Irving Gill Distinguished Architect Award for the firm's contribution to the design and advancement of Tilt-Up wall construction. Additional accolades have come from the Texas Society of Architects, American Institute of Architects Houston, AIA DC | Washington, Design Excellence Awards and the Urban Land Institute. The firm's work has been widely covered in magazines and books including a book published by Images Publishing, *NeoArchitecture Powers Brown Architecture* which he helped to write. The firm was also included in an exhibition at the Modern Museum of Art for the collaboration with artist Reginald Adams on the Fannin South Light Rail Station.

In addition, Brown has a passion for shaping the architects of tomorrow. He has taught as an assistant at his alma mater, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and as an adjunct professor at both The University of Houston Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and Prairie View A&M. He has been a guest critic at the above-mentioned institutions, Rice University, Roger Williams University and University of Texas at Arlington. He is also active in numerous professional organizations including the Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and serves on the Board of Directors for the Tilt-Up Concrete Association and the Gulf Coast Chapter of the USGBC. Brown is at work on a new book, *The Architectural Potential of Tilt Wall*.

Q AND A WITH TCA BOARD MEMBER JEFFREY BROWN



TCA: What drove your decision to join the TCA Board of Directors?

Brown: Our firm had maintained a membership with the TCA for a number of years – but it was really an arm's length attitude in so far as we participated in the awards program and consumed the outflow of trade information. We participate in our professional organization, our community and organizations affiliated with our profession. What was missing was supporting an organization that we took more from than we contributed to, so we decided to get more involved.

TCA: Often individuals and organizations question the return on investment when making the decision to join or to serve on a committee or board. What do you get out of your involvement?

Brown: It is paradoxical that as an architecture firm with a deep commitment to integrating Tilt-Up as a vehicle for critical design investigation internally that we had not really ever looked externally to gauge what our resources were, who our peers may be and importantly who our competitors may be. Having "discovered" the TCA and committed to participating at the board level, I have been exposed to some of the most professional and deeply committed professional colleagues any organization could hope for on this board. My sense is that the organization and thus the board are undergoing a self-conscious evolution and that alone is impressive – proactively strategizing the future of Tilt-Up. This is due to the hard work some of the long timers put in. I feel it is up to the newcomers to help deliver on that effort.

TCA: How has the value of membership in the TCA changed with your increased involvement?

Brown: The value has increased. I made it my goal to increase membership in the TCA by reaching out to the consultants, contractors and advisors who have been a part of our involvement with Tilt-Up for the last 12 years. They weren't members, indeed in some cases they hadn't heard of us. Believe me, when you are touting the value of something you want someone to participate in you have to believe in it. To believe it, you have to delve into it and understand it at a level of principle – for me that's where the increased value resides – the purpose of the TCA, the work that goes on behind the scenes all too often to support the advancement of the technology and the common purpose of a trade organization with a unique and timely product to support define value.

TCA: How have you utilized and integrated your firm's membership and your position on the board into your company's mission and marketing plan.

Brown: Well, simply put, it has normalized many of our everyday anecdotal exchanges at the firm – we regularly say "well, check the TCA website and see what has been done along these lines before."

TCA: What feedback have you received from colleagues and clients regarding your position on the TCA Board of Directors? How has your position impacted the perception of you

and your firm personally and professionally?

Brown: Answering the latter first, I sense that participating on the board bolsters our standing with colleagues – perhaps that is a generalization that is hard to refute. You are perceived to have inside information or to have the ability to carry the local message directly to the source of change, etc.

Regarding feedback, it is too soon to assess. I have attended just a handful of Board Meetings. I send a report of sorts to the new members I have recruited and a bunch I am courting that details some of the big picture issues and actions of the board. The general response has been positive thus far. My perception is that many qualitative issues are being marginalized by the current historic economic shift. Questions like "What is the TCA doing about these new panel inserts?" are being supplanted by "What are you guys doing to get us more work?"

TCA: Besides the TCA what organizations are you involved in? Does your work on the Board of Directors for the TCA ever influence or inform your work on other boards and vice versa?

Brown: As a past president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Houston chapter, I remain active in that professional organization. I currently sit on the Gulf Coast Chapter of the USGC as well. There is a bit of cross-pollination particularly on sustainable topics as you might imagine, as there is with matters of organization and best practices.

TCA: You have made a commitment to generate 20 new members for the TCA through your professional project relationships with engineers and contractors. Can you explain the benefit from a professional perspective to this goal?

Brown: Really very much the same benefit in any democracy you join, I will do my best to represent your interests and contribute to the whole mission. It puts us all in it together in no uncertain terms – my contractor colleagues, structural engineers and many subcontractors all have common ground in this organization. That cannot be said for any other group we individually belong to and that is where the future power of the TCA's voice will be found – the diversity of professions that have Tilt-Up in common.

TCA: In the short time you have been on the board, you have made a large impact, writing for TILT-UP TODAY and providing frequent and constructive feedback on TCA programs. What goals do you have for the TCA during your term on the board and as chair for the membership committee?

Brown: I see the TCA as a vehicle for manufacturing prestige for this construction technology, moving it from the mundane to the germane as it were. There is a great deal of inertia in this area already – the building types accessible to Tilt-Up, the complexity of programs undertaken, etc. Increased membership is the first priority of this goal – diverse and widespread membership will overcome the implied barriers to Tilt-Up as a "second order" or low budget methodology. Already I have tried to reach out to the General Services Administration (GSA), as of yet without success but I am encouraged to continue, with the purpose of getting Tilt-Up listed in SFO's as a preferred or acceptable construction type. It is a little thing that has a big impact.