

ACI Houston Chapter Funds New ACI Foundation Fellowship

The ACI Foundation partnered with the ACI Houston Chapter to create a new student academic award. Through the Chapter's generous donation, the ACI Foundation can offer an additional fellowship to benefit students studying in concrete-related degree programs: the ACI Houston Chapter Fellowship.

The ACI Foundation thanks the ACI Houston Chapter, which has been a continued supporter of students studying in the concrete industry. The Chapter has financially supported students to attend the ACI Concrete Convention for student competitions, and Chapter members have also assisted students with materials and mentoring. Since 2020, the ACI Houston Chapter has been recognized as an Excellent Chapter by ACI. Creating this fellowship is one more way that the ACI Houston Chapter has given back to the industry. The ACI Houston Chapter Fellowship will be awarded to a student pursuing a master's or doctorate degree program for construction, design, education, or materials. Preferred candidates are those who are currently active members of the ACI Student Chapters at the University of Houston Downtown or Texas A&M University—which are affiliated with the Houston Chapter.

"The ACI Houston Chapter has several endowed scholarships. When considering this Fellowship, the Board was impressed that this program leads to a high number of



Since 2020, the ACI Houston Chapter has been recognized consistently as an Excellent Chapter, represented here by Past President Rachele Faires (right)

awardees who stay in the concrete industry," said James Taylor, 2023 ACI Houston Chapter President.

The award includes a 10,000 USD educational stipend that will cover tuition, books, and supplies. Besides the monetary support for schooling, the Fellowship recipients are also supported to attend three ACI Concrete Conventions, one of which includes an in-person interview with the ACI Foundation's Scholarship Council. At the convention, they can connect with industry mentors, get to know technical committees and their work product, give presentations, fill leadership roles in the Student and Young Professional Activities Committee, and develop their own peer network. An important part of the ACI Foundation's program is pairing students with industry mentors, where mentors offer guidance and coaching and act as sounding boards for mentees. Providing students with a mentor also facilitates networking and helps expand career opportunities.

ACI Foundation Fellowship and Scholarship awards are made possible through generous contributions by donors from the concrete community; 100% of donations go directly to benefit students. Together, the Foundation and its supporters are strengthening the concrete industry by supporting students entering a professional career in the field of concrete. The ACI Foundation is leading the way to ensure a sustainable, successful future for the concrete industry through intentional and focused investments in ideas, research, and people.

To learn more about the 46 available fellowships and scholarships, visit www.acifoundation.org/scholarships. If you are interested in funding an award, contact Kari Martin, ACI Foundation Fundraising Manager, at kari.martin@acifoundation.org.

Plan Your Legacy

Have you thought about the advancement of the concrete industry in the years to come? The ACI Foundation programs focus on building the future of the concrete industry and rely on organizations and individuals like you who want to pay it forward and give back to the industry that you helped advance and for which you have a passion.

- A gift to the ACI Foundation is an opportunity to invest in the next generation of leaders, new technical knowledge, and innovation.
- A gift to the ACI Foundation as part of your financial plan, whether through your estate, will, Donor Advised Fund, cash, stocks, bonds, insurance, or other retirement assets, will carry your technical legacy into the future of the concrete industry.

It's never too early to plan your legacy. Contact Kari Martin, ACI Foundation Fundraising Manager, at +1.248.848.3757 or kari.martin@acifoundation.org, to start the conversation.

Donor Spotlight: Randall Poston and Pivot Engineers



Poston

ACI Past President and Founder of Pivot Engineers, Randall (Randy) Poston knew where the ACI Foundation could go, even before its inception.

“I know a bit of the history of the ACI Foundation, its predecessor group being CONREF, and I recall that there was a point where ACI was wondering whether CONREF should even continue. But there were some important people at the time

that understood where that group could go and what it could do—and so it became the ACI Foundation.”

Poston cites those working within the ACI Foundation and retired ACI Executive Vice President Ron Burg as believing in the organization enough to help it evolve into the success it is today. “I saw the value in [Ron’s] vision and contributed. The rest is history at this point,” Poston said.

Poston has been a consistent ACI Foundation donor since 2018, and feels it’s important to advance the future of the concrete industry through the support of students, research, and technology. “I’m always just amazed at the quality of students receiving the scholarships and fellowships,” he said. Additionally, he encourages recognition of the technical achievements of individuals, whether they are from lifetime accomplishments and contributions or from students just starting to build their technical abilities. As the founding Senior Principal of Pivot Engineers, Poston has been able to translate these principles to Pivot.

“[Pivot] was one of the sponsors to the [ACI] Michael Thomas [Concrete Durability] Award. We worked with Dr. Thomas on a number of projects over the years, and when he passed away, we felt we wanted to do something, as did others. We want to help spotlight the contributions that Professor Thomas made to the industry,” Poston explained. The Michael Thomas Award was newly created in 2023 to honor Thomas’s exceptional technical input and influence on the concrete industry, and which will recognize others in that capacity.

Pivot Engineers also funds the ACI 123 Research in Progress Student Poster Awards—a program that provides a monetary prize to the top three students presenting their research in a poster format at each ACI Concrete Convention.

“Much of Pivot’s staff is younger, highly involved with ACI, and knows what it means to attend the 123 Research in Progress meetings,” Poston stated. “Aaron Larosche, in particular, advocated for Pivot to fund the awards. It was a company-wide effort and really, is a no-brainer to donate.”

Amid significant technical and leadership contributions to

ACI, such as overseeing the complete reorganization of the concrete structural code while serving as Chair of ACI Committee 318, Structural Concrete Building Code, Poston has established himself as one of the most trusted and lauded structural consultants in the United States. He has authored and contributed to countless papers regarding structural engineering, received multiple structural engineering and design excellence awards, and has advocated for the refurbishment and repair of existing concrete structures throughout his long career.

“Everything the Foundation is doing is phenomenal”

—Randy Poston

Poston’s legacy of success and contributions to the industry and ACI are immense and continue with his support of ACI Foundation programs.

“It’s been hugely impactful in my career to be involved in ACI. It’s afforded me numerous opportunities in the development of my career, and being able to give back through the Foundation is incredibly important. I saw the recent study from the ACI Foundation about the high percentage [93%] of individuals who stay in the industry after receiving a fellowship or scholarship—that’s a very high return on investment. We didn’t have these kinds of opportunities when I joined and, given the environment we’re in and how hard it is for students to get funding, this is the way to nurture and cultivate new leaders for the industry.”

The ACI Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports a wide range of research and educational initiatives that contribute to keeping the concrete industry at the forefront of technological advances in material composition, design, and construction. We engage with industry partners, invest in students and research, share knowledge, and provide programs to encourage innovation and new technology. ACI established the ACI Foundation in 1989 to promote progress, innovation, and collaboration in the industry.

