

Fellowship Recipient Spotlight: Ann Albright

A journey through civil engineering and the ACI Foundation Fellowship

As the 2024-2025 recipient of the ACI Presidents' Fellowship, Ann Albright's journey in civil engineering highlights her passion for public infrastructure and sustainable practices. Her interest in civil engineering started early, sparked by a fascination with the profession and its impact.

At Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, VA, USA, Albright pursued civil and environmental engineering, drawn to its focus on public infrastructure and sustainability. "The idea of building things that everyone can use—bridges, sidewalks, community spaces—was incredibly motivating to me," she explained. Albright's passion for sustainable infrastructure led her to specialize in concrete, combining her technical expertise with environmental consciousness to make a tangible impact.

Discovering ACI and the ACI Foundation

Albright learned about ACI during her undergraduate studies, where ACI CODE-318 was an essential part of her coursework in reinforced concrete design. Later, at Virginia Tech, her professors and peers encouraged her to apply for an ACI Foundation fellowship. "Doctor Carin Roberts-Wollmann

was pivotal in introducing me to ACI," Albright shared. "And Zachary Coleman, a previous recipient, really inspired me to apply. They both recommended being genuine throughout the application process."

Receiving the fellowship was a turning point in her academic and professional career. Among the many benefits of the fellowship, Albright highlighted the impactful opportunity to attend ACI Concrete Conventions. "The conventions are easily the best part of the experience. They're filled with knowledge, energy, and opportunities to meet people from diverse niches of civil engineering," she said. "I've been part of other professional societies before, but ACI is unique—it's a code-driven society. They're not just advancing research and collaboration; they're also the keepers of the concrete codes that guide public infrastructure projects globally. It's astounding to see the level of rigor and collaboration that goes into the code development process."

While attending conventions, she was able to present her own research during the ACI Committee 123, Research and Current Developments, Research in Progress session, an invaluable opportunity to hone her public speaking skills while receiving feedback from professionals in the field.



From left: Benjamin "Bo" Rider, Ann Albright, Thomas Carnes, and Austin Mizen at the ACI Foundation Donor and Volunteer Recognition Reception at the ACI Concrete Convention – Spring 2025 in Toronto, ON, Canada



Ann Albright presenting at the Research in Progress session during the ACI Concrete Convention – Fall 2023 in Boston, MA, USA

Beyond the research and technical aspects, Albright treasures the personal contacts and mentorship she has cultivated through ACI. “The network I’ve built through ACI has been absolutely critical for my career,” she reflected. These connections continue to open doors for research collaborations and career development.

An Exciting Future in Academia

Albright’s dedication to civil engineering and her involvement with ACI have positioned her to achieve her career aspirations. Starting fall 2025, she will join the California Polytechnic Institute (Cal Poly) in San Luis Obispo, CA, USA, as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Structural Engineering. “This is the culmination of everything I have worked toward over the last 5 years,” she said. “I’m excited to develop my own research program, mentor students, and continue contributing to ACI committees, where I believe I can make a significant impact on society.”

One aspect of academia that excites Albright is the continuous opportunities for growth and discovery. “As researchers, we are constantly pushing the boundaries of knowledge, and this not only benefits society but also allows us to expand our own expertise,” she explained. She is equally passionate about teaching and looks forward to inspiring the

next generation of engineers by sharing her knowledge and experiences.

Albright encourages other students to seize the opportunities provided by the ACI Foundation. “The fellowship is life-changing,” she stated. “The financial support was invaluable and allowed me to focus on my research, but more importantly, the exposure to industry leaders and the conventions gave me a head start on building a meaningful career. I would absolutely recommend it to anyone considering it.”

Continuing the Legacy

With her sights set on advancing sustainable concrete practices, teaching future engineers, and continuing her work with ACI, Albright’s contributions to both the academic and professional realms of civil engineering promise to be profound and lasting.

The ACI Foundation relies on funding from ACI members, partners, and friends. Supporting upcoming leaders like Albright is an investment in the future of the concrete industry. To learn more about ACI Foundation fellowship and scholarship opportunities, visit www.ACIFoundation.org/scholarships. To donate, visit www.acifoundation.org/giving.



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