



A CATALYST FOR INNOVATION

The Roofing Alliance is strengthening and securing the roofing industry's future

by Alison L. LaValley, CAE

"Coming together is a beginning; staying together is progress; and working together is success."

—Henry Ford

After a quarter century of service to the roofing industry, the Roofing Alliance is growing at a rapid pace to be a driving force for transformation in the roofing industry. With 185 members, including eight new members in 2022, the Roofing Alliance is in a unique position to unite all sectors of the industry.

And since its inception in 1996, this dedicated forum of roofing contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and industry professionals has committed more than \$14 million to fund research, education and scholarships to enhance the success and performance of the roofing industry. With these commitments in place, the Roofing Alliance has funded 53 successful research projects while also providing forward-thinking responses to major economic and technological issues; advancing education and training and community and philanthropic outreach; and honoring workers.

Looking ahead, the Roofing Alliance is even more committed to shaping the roofing industry's future by protecting communities and being a catalyst for innovation.

"The Roofing Alliance allows me to be part of the bigger picture and give back, and once I realized how much impact it had on my roofing business, I had to get more involved," says Peter Horch, president and CEO of Horch Roofing, Warren, Maine. "I am honored to be involved with an organization that collaborates industrywide and has such a positive effect on the roofing industry and its future."

INITIATIVES ABOUND

Eight years ago, Roofing Alliance member Dennis Conway, principal at Commercial Roofers, Las Vegas, asked whether he could have five minutes at the end of a Roofing Alliance meeting to present an opportunity.

A graduate of the school of construction management

at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Conway told Roofing Alliance members he believed they were missing an opportunity to engage with and teach construction management students about roofing and recruit them into the roofing industry.

Roofing Alliance members reacted enthusiastically to the idea, and, subsequently, Conway and former NRCA CEO Bill Good consulted with Mostafa Khattab, the head of CSU's construction management program at the time, to learn more and develop a plan. During that discussion, Khattab outlined what he thought was necessary for the roofing industry to become aligned with schools of construction management.

And now, thanks to Conway's vision and Khattab's advice, the roofing industry is playing a major role in educating construction management students. The Roofing Alliance has learned:

- The relationship between the roofing industry and educational institutions needs to be long-term.
- Engaging faculty members by offering research and other grants is critical.
- Engaging school administrators through scholarships is necessary.
- Involving students, including conducting student competitions, will help draw them to the industry.
- Becoming involved with the American Council for Construction Education, which accredits construction management programs, provides legitimacy.

As the Roofing Alliance approaches its ninth year of engagement with construction management programs, it has achieved the following results:

- The Roofing Alliance will host its ninth annual Construction Management Student Competition in March 2023 in Dallas during the 2023 International Roofing Expo.®
- The Roofing Alliance's Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program has broadened its scope and now awards scholarships to construction management students.
- The second Roofing Alliance Faculty Retreat on Roofing was held in October 2022. Through two retreats held in 2022, 30 faculty members have

been introduced to the roofing industry, and many are integrating materials and classes about roofing into their curricula.

- Thanks to a Roofing Alliance grant, the Nieri Family Department of Construction Science and Management at Clemson University, Clemson, S.C., developed an in-person, nine-hour, three-semester course focused on roofing, leading to a Certificate in Roofing for students who successfully complete it. The course is digital and available to all construction management programs that are accredited by the American Council for Construction Education. And in 2023, Clemson University faculty will complete a manual to accompany the courses.
- Thanks to several Roofing Alliance members in the Phoenix area, the Arizona Roofing Industry Foundation and a matching grant from the Roofing Alliance, the Del E. Webb School of Construction at Arizona State University, Tempe, will offer a fellowship to a student who aspires to have a Ph.D. and a career in academia. The Roofing Alliance Fellow will engage in and conduct innovative research aligned with roofing, sustainability and the building envelope and will emerge as a leader and educator under the guidance of ASU faculty.
- A study addressing heat stress awareness by faculty members at Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, and a study of the application of virtual reality technology in training roofing workers by faculty members at Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, are in progress.

“Participation in the Roofing Alliance’s construction management initiatives are vital to advancing our industry and defining career paths in roofing for today’s construction management students,” says Rob Kornahrens, CEO of Advanced Roofing Inc., Fort Lauderdale, Fla. “I have hired three students from the Department of Construction Science and Management at Clemson University, and their roofing knowledge upon graduation was extraordinary.”

A HALLMARK COMPETITION

With a keen eye on exposing construction management students to roofing as a career choice, the Roofing Alliance’s Construction Management Student Competition exposes students academically and experientially to the industry and fosters meaningful interaction among students, faculty and Roofing Alliance members, who

serve as team mentors. The competition also fosters team spirit as students rise to meet the challenge of demonstrating their roofing knowledge in the areas of estimating, project management, safety and other job-related areas.

The final portion of the project, an oral presentation, is judged each year by a panel of five to seven roofing professionals, and winners are recognized annually during NRCA’s Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception during the IRE. First-place teams have received \$5,000 scholarships for their schools, individual trophies and gift cards.

The 2023 student competition project features the unique roof system on Globe Life Field—also known as the Texas Rangers baseball stadium—located in Arlington, Texas. This challenging project consists of 549,745 square feet of multiple levels of roof area. Oral team presentations and winners will be highlighted Wednesday, March 8 during NRCA’s Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception.

“It’s important we are involved and visible within the university-level construction management programs as an organization, as well as an industry,” Conway says. “Exposure to and interaction with these students is invaluable. We all need good, well-trained people to secure our future.”

ADVANCING EDUCATION

The Roofing Alliance continues to support educational efforts and offers students financial aid through the Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program.

Named for Melvin Kruger, former president of NRCA and the Roofing Alliance and chairman of L.E. Schwartz & Son Inc., Macon, Ga., the Roofing Alliance’s first scholarship was awarded in 1986. The scholarship program is open to employees of roofing industry companies, their spouses and their dependent children; construction management students enrolled in undergraduate level studies; and students enrolled in CTE programs or schools, regardless of industry affiliation, who plan to pursue careers in the roofing or building construction industry.

For the 2022-23 academic year, the Roofing Alliance awarded eight new \$5,000 scholarships and renewed two scholarships totaling \$50,000 for the year. To date, 149 students have received more than \$1 million in scholarship awards.

Applications for the 2023-24 scholarship program are being accepted until Jan. 31, 2023. Recipients will be

selected based on academic record; potential to succeed; leadership and participation in school and community activities; honors; work experience; a statement of career goals and aspirations; and an outside appraisal. Each award is \$5,000 and is renewable for up to three years of undergraduate study or until a bachelor's degree is earned provided recipients renew annually and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

HONORING WORKERS

Each year, the Roofing Alliance sponsors the Most Valuable Player Awards Program, which identifies and honors exceptional roofing workers from roofing contractor, distributor and supplier firms who demonstrate excellence, dedication, enthusiasm and teamwork. Since its inception 20 years ago, 709 employees have been nominated, and 279 have been honored as winners and finalists.

The MVP Awards Program recognizes a maximum of 10 workers, and one winner is chosen to be *Professional Roofing's* Best of the Best, an elite recognition and award co-sponsored by OMG® Roofing Products, Agawam, Mass. The Best of the Best receives an additional prize awarded by OMG Roofing Products and is featured in a cover story in *Professional Roofing*.

"Being recognized as an MVP holds special significance for these dedicated workers," says Reed Gooding, CEO of GSM Roofing, Ephrata, Pa. "After winning this distinguished title, MVP winners understand they

are valued not only for being outstanding performers on the job but also in their communities. It's quite an accomplishment."

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES

In addition to educating students, the Roofing Alliance understands the importance of funding initiatives for charitable causes that change communities and enrich lives, such as Ronald McDonald House Charities.® During the past few years, Roofing Alliance and NRCA members have adopted all 165 standalone Ronald McDonald Houses in the U.S. and donated more than \$1 million in labor, materials and supplies to inspect, maintain, and repair or replace the roof systems on their local Ronald McDonald houses.

The Roofing Alliance also funds its Helping Our Own Program. Through a nomination process, the Roofing Alliance helps create sustainable solutions for individuals or families in need who have experienced life-altering events, such as injury, illness, disability or death. The organization has distributed more than \$75,000 to members in need since the program's inception in 2007.

"Through our Helping Our Own Program, we can give back during times of crisis and make a difference in the lives of families who have been touched by tragedy," says Kelly Van Winkle, president and CEO of King of Texas Roofing Co. LP, Grand Prairie. "We have assisted several individuals, including one of our worker's wives who

To make the Roofing Alliance work, member participation is vital, and the Roofing Alliance is

seeking new members. The Roofing Alliance offers different levels of membership to encourage small-, medium- and large-sized firms to join and have a voice in determining the roofing industry's future.

Commitments to the Roofing Alliance can be pledged for five- to 10-year periods. Public recognition is given in accordance with donors' wishes and levels of commitment and includes national public acknowledgement during NRCA's annual convention and other special events and programs. Roofing Alliance members also are invited to participate on task forces established to guide the Roofing Alliance's agenda and attend semiannual meetings and networking events of the full Roofing Alliance.

In addition, roofing professionals are encouraged to support the Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program, which provides financial support for students pursuing careers in the roofing or building

GET INVOLVED; GIVE BACK

construction industries. Gifts to the scholarship program are tax-deductible to the extent

allowed by law and can be paid during a period of up to and including five years.

The Roofing Alliance also provides roofing professionals the opportunity to fulfill their philanthropic goals through a variety of planned giving opportunities, including bequests, gifts of real estate or appreciate stock, life insurance policies and retirement plan assets, and charitable trusts.

The roofing industry has a wonderful history of generosity, and for roofing professionals who would like to be involved with giving back to the industry that has given so much to them, the Roofing Alliance provides the perfect opportunity to do so.

For more information about the Roofing Alliance, contact Alison L. LaValley, CAE, the Roofing Alliance's executive director, at (847) 493-7573 or alavalley@nrca.net, or visit roofingalliance.net.

was in desperate need of a rare medical treatment, and it saved her life. Today, she is flourishing, and it's been a beautiful thing to witness."

THE ROLE OF RESEARCH

To broaden the industry's understanding of current challenges, trends and emerging issues, the Roofing Alliance has taken a steadfast approach to investing in several research projects—the most recent of which is a heat stress conditions and awareness research project led by Kenneth S. Sands II, assistant professor in the Department of Construction Management at Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers.

The heat stress observation protocol includes oversee-

ing roofing workers on the job, asking predetermined questions about working in hot environments, and collecting data about their core body temperatures as they work and the environmental conditions in which they work. The final report will identify how workers perceive operating in hot environments and provide supervisors with better training approaches and best practices via training modules.

Funded by several North American roofing industry organizations, including the Roofing Alliance and NRCA, a study conducted by SRI Consultants Inc., Middleton, Wis., is evaluating moisture in structural concrete roof decks so contractors and manufacturers can better understand roof failures.

Additionally, to better address the magnitude of labor challenges facing the roofing industry and

lack of comprehensive workforce data available in the market, the Roofing Alliance commissioned Arizona State University to study current U.S. roofing workforce demographics, including contracting, manufacturing,

distribution and design communities. "A Study of the U.S. Roofing Industry and its Workforce" examines types of work, skilled and unskilled labor shortages, and the effects of those shortages at national and regional scales.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the Roofing Alliance continues to advance education, invest in technology and research, and expand its initiatives to include more community and social outreach, it's also steadfast in its commitment to secure the future excellence of the roofing industry.

In 2023, the Roofing Alliance will review requests for funding from industry partners, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, research and consulting firms, and related industry organizations to develop in-depth research, programs and products on a wide range of industry topics to advance knowledge within the roofing community.

The Roofing Alliance also hopes to fulfill its roofing fellowship at ASU's Del E. Webb School of Construction. The Roofing Alliance fellow will work under the supervision of a faculty adviser to conduct research; interface with roofing industry leaders to identify and conduct useful, effective and innovative research; attend and present research updates at Roofing Alliance and Arizona Roofing Industry Foundation meetings; learn about roof systems, materials and installation; and teach a roofing course at least once during the Ph.D. candidacy period.

And to expand member engagement and philanthropic outreach, the Roofing Alliance will be forming a Community and Social Impact Committee. Roofing Alliance members strongly believe they have the opportunity and responsibility to give back to the industry and communities in which they live. This new committee will allow members with a shared passion for creating positive social change to increase that outreach on a larger scale.

"I'm proud to be a part of the Roofing Alliance and its future; this organization provides an opportunity to work with like-minded leaders in our industry to innovate and drive positive social change," says Piers Dormeyer, president of commercial group at Eagleview, Bellevue, Wash. "Through our work in the Roofing Alliance, we can make a real difference and leave our industry in a better place than we found it. And that is what really matters." 🌱🌟

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WHO WE ARE



The Roofing Alliance was established within the National

Roofing Foundation in 1996 to create an endowment fund to serve as a resource for the roofing industry and its customers. Currently, the Alliance has 185 active members—132 contractors; 44 manufacturers, distributors and suppliers; seven individuals; and two supporting members who have pledged significant amounts of money to fund projects that help improve the roofing industry.

The Roofing Alliance is managed by a 16-member board of trustees that oversees existing projects and considers funding for projects addressing critical industry issues.

Kelly Van Winkle, president and CEO of King of Texas Roofing Co. LP, Grand Prairie, is the Roofing Alliance's 2022-23 president; Greg Bloom, vice president national and strategic accounts, Beacon Building Products, Herndon, Pa., is vice president; and Jason Dark, vice president of sales, Duro-Last Roofing Inc., Saginaw, Mich., is secretary/treasurer.

A list of all Roofing Alliance members can be found at roofingalliance.net.