

# AN INDUSTRY TREASURE

The Roofing Alliance  
launches more initiatives

by Heidi J. Ellsworth



Seldom does an industry have a group whose whole purpose is to give. Since 1996, a group of leaders has actively been working to give on behalf of the roofing industry. The Roofing Alliance, the foundation of NRCA (formerly The Roofing Industry Alliance for Progress), is a stellar example of the roofing industry's benevolence.

The organization works to raise funding to give back to not just the roofing industry but also to society overall. In addition to ongoing scholarships and awards programs, the Roofing Alliance has been busy implementing new initiatives. The following programs not only positively affect the roofing industry, they make a difference in our communities.

## Ronald McDonald House Charities

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) helps families with critically ill children stay together and close to the medical care and resources their children need when they need them most. Ronald McDonald Houses offer much more than a place to stay; the Houses provide meals, support and resources to families while their children are hospitalized, allowing families to focus solely on their children's health and treatment.

The partnership between the Roofing Alliance and RMHC started with a roofing contractor who wanted to give back in a grand way. Charles Antis, CEO and founder of Antis Roofing & Waterproofing LLC, Irvine, Calif., is known for his dedication to social corporate responsibility and was deeply involved with his local RMHC. When he joined the Roofing Alliance in 2016, he soon realized it was the perfect platform for the roofing industry.

Antis reached out to Bill Good, NRCA's former CEO, about exploring the opportunity of having roofing professionals adopt all 165 standalone Ronald McDonald Houses in the U.S. with the goal of donating roofing work and materials when needed. With a proposal to Roofing Alliance members and a strong relationship with Fred and Fran Hill, founders of the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House, the partnership became official at the Roofing Alliance's April 2017 annual member meeting.

"The Hills started the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House after their five-year-old daughter was diagnosed with leukemia," says Bennett Judson, executive director for the Roofing Alliance. "After their daughter was treated successfully, they realized how important it is for families to stay together while their children are being treated. They are passionate about RMHC and all they do and are excited about our partnership."

One of the first Roofing Alliance-RMHC partner projects involved Roofing Alliance President Rod Petrick, president and owner of Ridgeworth Roofing Co. Inc., Frankfort, Ill. In May, Ridgeworth Roofing partnered with Bennett & Brosseau Roofing Inc., Romeoville, Ill., to help the Ronald McDonald House near Loyola University Medical Center in Hines, Ill. Bennett & Brosseau Roofing's team completed repairs on the steep-slope asphalt shingle roof system, and Ridgeworth Roofing installed a new .060-mil-thick TPO membrane roof system on the House's four-story low-slope roof area and restored a skylight.

"Working on the Ronald McDonald House was a good opportunity to do something that will help families for many years," Petrick says. "They will be able to use this facility and not have to worry about lodging. When our crew worked on this project, I found out one of my guys, before working for us, stayed at a Ronald McDonald House when his child was sick."

Kelly Evans, director of the Ronald McDonald House near Loyola, is thankful for the donated work on the roof systems and skylight.

"We are so appreciative of the work Ridgeworth Roofing did for our House," she says. "Thank you for keeping our families warm and dry throughout their stay!"

The Roofing Alliance currently is collecting data to assist with more RMHC roof system replacements.

"We're asking members to inspect the Ronald McDonald House roofs in their areas and report back to us about the conditions of the roof systems currently in place, the estimated life expectancies, any anticipated work that needs to be done, actual work expected to be done, and the dollar value of all in-kind labor and materials to be provided," Judson says.

Once the information is



The team at Kalkreuth Roofing and Sheet Metal Inc., Wheeling, W.Va., worked on a Ronald McDonald House in Morgantown, W.Va.



The Ronald McDonald House in Hershey, Pa., received repairs courtesy of the crew at Houck Services Inc., Harrisburg, Pa.



The team from Auburn University's McWhorter School of Building Science, Auburn, Ala., won first place during the fourth annual competition.

The Roofing Alliance's fifth annual Construction Management School Competition has expanded to 12 participating schools. The following are competing during the 2018-19 program:

Auburn University's McWhorter School of Building Science, Auburn, Ala.

\*Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.

Colorado State University's Department of Construction Management, Fort Collins

\*Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Louisiana State University's Bert S. Turner Department of Construction Management, Baton Rouge

Minnesota State University's Mankato's Department of Construction Management, Mankato

\*Mississippi State University's Department of Building Construction Science, Mississippi State

\*Oregon State University's School of Civil and Construction Engineering, Corvallis

Tuskegee University's Robert R. Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science, Tuskegee, Ala.

University of Cincinnati's College of Engineering and Applied Science, Construction Management, Cincinnati

University of Florida's M.E. Rinker, Sr. School of Building Construction, Gainesville

University of Louisiana at Monroe's School of Construction Management, Monroe

\*Newly participating school for the 2018-19 competition

reported, it is entered into the Roofing Alliance database donated by DataForma Inc., York, Pa. Bluefin LLC, Greenwood Village, Colo., has donated its time to establish a baseline of roof system conditions for all Ronald McDonald Houses and help RMHC develop its roof system maintenance and replacement plans. And thanks to Bothell, Wash.-based EagleView® Technologies Inc.'s assistance, aerial imagery is being captured for all the Houses to see the original conditions of the roof systems, along with full measurements.

"One or more Roofing Alliance and/or NRCA members will be identified to partner with local RMHC chapters to provide needed roof system services at each location," Petrick says. "Roof system replacements will be managed as individual projects, and, if necessary, several roofing contractors and manufacturers may be asked to contribute."

Antis is thrilled with the Roofing Alliance's response to the endeavor.

"Rod is a strong leader plus he has a big heart," Antis says. "I am so proud this is a Roofing Alliance initiative. It shows the strength and power of the roofing industry when we all come together."

At press time, 134 Ronald McDonald Houses have been adopted.

"Be sure to look for our red and white striped socks," Petrick shares. "Everyone who is donating his or her time and talents gets a pair of socks to wear with pride. We hope to see a lot of striped socks at our upcoming events. I encourage everyone to get involved with this amazing initiative."

## Construction management schools

Another growing Roofing Alliance initiative is partnering with construction management schools. Similar to Antis, Dennis Conway, former NRCA chairman of the board and owner of Commercial Roofers Inc., Las Vegas, also started with a grand idea to have the roofing industry become involved with construction management schools because he knew the schools would be a valuable resource for future talent in the roofing industry.

Accordingly, in 2013, the Roofing Alliance began building relationships with construction management schools to provide the next generation of potential roofing professionals with real-life experiences in roofing project management. And in 2014, the first Roofing Alliance Construction Management Student Competition was held with three participating schools. Five years later, the competition has expanded to 12 schools.

The competition features four-person teams of college and university students who are tested for their roofing, project management, estimating, safety, quality control and presentation skills. Judges review written proposals and select four finalist teams to give their oral presentations during the International Roofing Expo® (IRE) and NRCA's annual convention. The winning teams are announced during NRCA's Industry Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception and receive scholarship prizes of \$5,000 and \$2,500.

Hannah Redifer, a recent graduate from Auburn University's McWhorter School of Building Science, Auburn, Ala., and winner of the 2018 Best Individual Presenter



Award, believes her experience with the competition exposed her to the inner workings of the roofing industry while presenting her with many networking opportunities, positively affecting her new construction career.

"I definitely left the competition and IRE with a huge sense of respect for the industry," Redifer says. "It is a tough job, and the industry's ability to complete these jobs while keeping people safe and happy is really amazing."

Kyle Thomas, a team mentor and co-chair of the Roofing Alliance Construction Management Schools Initiative Committee and vice president of Thomas Roofing Co. Inc., Mobile, Ala., has seen the competition open doors to student careers.

"The program provides an opportunity for students to learn a lot about the many facets of the roofing business," he says. "We certainly hope some students become interested enough to pursue careers in the roofing industry. But even those who take a more traditional route and work for a general contractor will have a much better understanding of the roofing portion of the projects they will be working on."

In addition to student scholarships, the Roofing Alliance provides faculty scholarships to develop recommendations about how best to incorporate roofing-related materials into current school curricula.

"Our relationships with faculty advisers have made all the difference in growing the recognition of roofing in construction management programs," Judson says. "As a result of their recommendation, we asked Bill Good to represent the Roofing Alliance with the American Council for Construction Education (ACCE), where he shares information about our construction management initiatives with department heads from construction management schools across the U.S."

This year, Good joined ACCE's board of directors. In his role, he attends semiannual meetings where he has numerous opportunities to share information about the Roofing Alliance's student competition and other opportunities in the roofing industry.

"I completed a half-day training session for ACCE accrediting this year," Good says. "I am now a part of ACCE's accrediting teams that visit schools throughout the year, either for new accreditation or to renew existing accreditation. This will provide a tremendous opportunity for the Roofing Alliance's message to be delivered to construction management department heads across the U.S."

Roofing Alliance members also are connecting with construction management students by teaching roofing-related classes, providing hands-on job-site

opportunities, offering internships and hiring graduating students.

"Student outreach is an ongoing effort as we strive to connect more members with schools in their areas," Thomas says.

The 2018-19 Construction Management Student Competition now is underway. Judges will review written proposals and select four finalist teams to travel to the 2019 IRE and NRCA's 132nd Annual Convention in Nashville, Tenn., where the student teams' oral presentations will take place Tuesday, Feb. 12. The project for this year's competition is the Hilton Franklin Cool Springs hotel in Franklin, Tenn., which has a Carlisle TPO membrane roof system originally installed by NRCA member Rackley Roofing Co. Inc., Carthage, Tenn. The winning teams will be announced during NRCA's Industry Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception that evening.

## Research and funding

Every spring, the Roofing Alliance considers funding requests. Proposals are vetted and presented to the board of trustees and then to the full membership during the Roofing Alliance's annual meeting in April.

The Roofing Alliance focuses on programs that can significantly and positively affect the roofing industry

### MELVIN KRUGER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Roofing Alliance has invested time and funding not only to educate the roofing industry but also to educate the industry's youth through the Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program.

Named for Melvin Kruger, a Roofing Alliance founder, former Roofing Alliance president, former NRCA president and founder and CEO of L.E. Schwartz & Son Inc., Macon, Ga., the program has contributed \$790,000 in scholarship awards to 125 students.

The Roofing Alliance Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program is open to employees of NRCA contractor and supplier members and their families who plan to pursue post-secondary education in college or vocational programs in the roofing or building construction industries. The deadline for applications is Jan. 31, 2019.

Roofing professionals are encouraged to support the Melvin Kruger Endowed Scholarship Program. Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law and can be paid during a period of up to and including five years. For complete details or to download an application, visit [www.roofingindustryalliance.net](http://www.roofingindustryalliance.net).



## GIVING BACK

Member participation is vital within the Roofing Alliance, and much of the organization's strength comes

from its broad base of supportive contributors. 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. The Roofing Alliance offers varying levels of membership to encourage small-, medium- and large-sized firms to join and help determine the roofing industry's future.

The Roofing Alliance also provides roofing professionals the opportunity to fulfill their philanthropic goals through its Planned Giving Program. For more information about how you can make a commitment to the Roofing Alliance and leave a legacy to help secure the future of the roofing industry, contact Alison LaValley, NRCA's vice president of strategic partnership and development, at (800) 323-9545, ext. 7573 or [alavalley@nrca.net](mailto:alavalley@nrca.net), or visit the Roofing Alliance's website, [www.roofingindustryalliance.net](http://www.roofingindustryalliance.net).



at the national level. The Roofing Alliance's role in these programs is to provide funding and enough oversight to ensure they are being carried out in a manner consistent with the Roofing Alliance's goals and mission.

In addition to providing funding for the RMHC initiative and construction management school competition, the Roofing Alliance is one of the first founding sponsors of National Women in Roofing and is providing funding for a silica research study and lightweight concrete moisture testing.

In addition, Reid Ribble, NRCA's CEO, recently presented to the Roofing Alliance the need for an industry-wide demographics survey. The Roofing Alliance membership agreed with Ribble and approved funding for a faculty research project, "A Study of the U.S. Roofing Industry and its Workforce" with Kenneth Sullivan, Ph.D., associate professor in the School of Sustainable Engineering and the Built Environment at Arizona State University, Tempe.

"We need to understand our demographics," Ribble says. "How can we provide appropriate advocacy and training if we do not understand the scope of our industry. We need to strengthen NRCA's voice and role in Washington D.C., and we can only do that by gathering statistical data."

"A Study of the U.S. Roofing Industry and its Workforce" will include capturing a detailed description of the roofing industry workforce, its stakeholders and the work that they do; gathering employment and demographic information about the roofing workforce, including an understanding of its challenges, trends and emerging issues; and gathering important statistical data that can be shared with regulatory and federal

agencies. The project is slated for completion in November 2019.

"We know the resulting data from this report will not only be important to NRCA and the Roofing Alliance but also to the industry as a whole," Ribble says. "Manufacturers, distributors and service providers are looking for this important data for forecasting and trending. It is these types of funding initiatives, along with the philanthropical and educational initiatives, that makes the Roofing Alliance so unique."

## Sending the message

There are many new and upcoming initiatives, including work with vocational and technical schools, support for NRCA ProCertification™ and a planned giving program. In addition, the Roofing Alliance is working to better brand and message the good work the organization has done and continues to do.

"We are working with a task force of industry experts with branding and communications experience to refresh the Roofing Alliance look and message," says Geoff Craft, chairman of the Roofing Alliance Branding Task Force and vice president of National Roofing Partners, Coppell, Texas. "The task force concluded the Roofing Alliance brand is strong but needs refreshing. We are working with leading marketing and public relations firms to bring a fresh look and a defined plan for sharing the Roofing Alliance's success stories with the roofing and construction industries."

According to Petrick, the Roofing Alliance wants to be sure every roofing professional understands its mission and accomplishments.

"Membership in this organization is all about giving back, and we are doing it every day," he says. "Not only do we want to continue to grow the Roofing Alliance, but we also want to keep our members actively involved, especially with RMHC and construction management initiatives. We ask everyone in the industry to stay engaged, and we plan to facilitate that with strong, consistent information exchanges that will inspire the industry and help promote our professional image."

To learn more about Roofing Alliance programs and initiatives, including adopting the roof of an RMHC House, contact Judson at (800) 323-9545, ext. 7513 or [bjudson@roofingindustryalliance.net](mailto:bjudson@roofingindustryalliance.net). 🌐📞

---

**HEIDI J. ELLSWORTH** is owner of HJE Consulting Group, Camp Sherman, Ore.