

Prepare for Prosperity, Stay Steady in the Storm

By Greg Pasley, Ph.D., PE, Chairman, Metal Building Manufacturers Association
Leadership and advocacy will be engines that drive our own resiliency

During these times of transition and challenge, I want to talk for a moment about leadership and the important role that you and I play as leaders in our businesses, our professional associations and our communities.

Years ago, in a previous position, I was working with a great building erector on a large project. Unfortunately, there were issues that left both my team and his crews looking for direction in a challenging and costly circumstance. He and I worked side by side to find resources and a solution. I was impressed by his calm and deliberate approach to problem solving and I told him so. He said, "My people look to me for how to react. If I am calm and project that we are on the right path, then they will be calm and trust that we will find a solution together." This resonated with me and reinforced what it means to lead by example.

I have thought about that experience many times over the last 12 months—especially when I look back at all we have gone through as individuals and as an industry. I continue to be impressed by the resilience of the metal building manufacturers and suppliers. Like a well-designed structure, our industry seems to withstand the tests of time and turbulent traumas. I'm not saying that our industry is designed to handle any event without consequence; I am saying it's strong enough to stand up to economic blows, and has the foundation and fortitude to bounce back from difficult challenges.

After all, this is our industry and it is fortunate to be able to help it stay strong in the midst of circumstances that are, in part, far beyond our control. While the pandemic rages, we face the challenges of a tightening supply chain leading to volatility in raw material pricing. Yet, somehow, through it all metal building manufacturers and

suppliers are seeing business opportunities on the rise. This exemplifies the stamina of our industry, our buildings and, most importantly, our people.

That fortitude brings me back to the concept of leadership. As the chief operating officer at BlueScope Buildings North America and as chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA), I have felt eyes on me. People look at me for how to react, and people look to me for direction and assurance. My advice to each of them—and to all of you—is to keep calm, make informed decisions and understand the need to lead the way to recovery: to be part of the solution.

Being a part of that solution is why I am excited about my role as chairman of MBMA, because this is what MBMA does so well: it provides leadership. People look to leaders to direct our path to recovery, to lead through innovation and to provide advocacy measures that will pull our industry forward.

We can't fully know what the future holds, but while we work through the uncertainty, we know that people are looking to MBMA to help us all find our way.

MBMA spearheads timely and innovative research, it advocates for our industry and it plans for the future. Most recently, that planning has involved an in-depth perception survey, and the implementation of architectural and membership committees that will expand our industry reach and influence. These actions are each meant to move us forward, no matter what the future holds.

Facing the Future with Hope

As we look to the days ahead, proactive industry leadership and advocacy will be engines that drive our own resiliency. We look forward to reaping many benefits from the forthcoming fruits of the

Build Back Better initiatives launched by President Biden. These are intended to build a strong industrial base and small business-led supply chains in manufacturing and technology across the country. Build Back Better includes robust plans to invest in America's infrastructure.

Throughout the pandemic, the metal building industry has continued to be a force for innovation, playing a crucial role in building facility assets for critical industries like agriculture, food processing, pharmaceuticals, health care, data centers, e-commerce and logistics. We know our role will expand exponentially in these industries as the funding becomes available to reclaim the health of the American economy. We will work through the volatility of steel prices and availability and will be a force in creating a stronger America.

Finally, I hope each of you will claim your space as a leader and as an advocate for our industry and our future. Get involved in MBMA. We have committee activities that will bring you opportunities to be a part of the solution. Contact MBMA general manager, Tony Bouquot, to find out where you can get involved. Contact him at **(216) 241-7333** or **tbouquot@thomasamc.com**.

In the meantime, stay calm and trust that we will find solutions together. 

Greg Pasley, Ph.D., PE, is chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association. More information about the association is available at **www.mbma.com**.

