

# Education, Innovation, Resilience: Keys to a Profitable Future

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## New initiatives from MBMA will help the industry grow

**Our industry is at an interesting point in history as we navigate our continued recovery from the global pandemic and what feels like new supply chain challenges at every turn.** These hurdles and a shrinking workforce have led to long lead times and have highlighted the importance of our personal and professional networks. The economic recovery has created consistent and continuing optimism, generating growth and a demand for our engineered building systems.

Now more than ever, I particularly value the camaraderie and connections that are part of Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) membership. Our Building Systems Members (manufacturers) and Associate Members (suppliers) have close connections and benefit from learning from and with each other. I can say with confidence that the metal building industry has become stronger and more resilient in part due to the way that the members share ideas, get energized through group meetings, engage in peer-to-peer learning and conversations, and honestly show care and concern for each other's businesses.

As an association, MBMA has been working hard to educate architects and to build wider and deeper relationships with design teams. This recent focus has proved fruitful, and we are excited to expand our outreach even more in the days ahead. If you work with architects who need to have a better understanding of the attributes of metal building systems, do share their contact information with MBMA's General Manager, Tony Bouquot ([tbouquot@mbma.com](mailto:tbouquot@mbma.com)). He will reach out to them or connect them with MBMA's Architect Committee to expose them to the many architectural resources the association offers.

Another educational initiative that is exciting for MBMA is our effort to engage with more

college and university faculty and students. In early August, we held an architecture faculty workshop, inviting participation from educators across the nation and around the world. Topics included: "Changing Paradigms in Educational Space," "Metal Building Designs—In and Out of the Classroom" and "Introducing Metal Building Concepts into Architecture Curriculum." We took them on a virtual tour of a metal building manufacturing facility and provided an overview of the role of metal buildings in the construction marketplace.

A key element of our educational outreach is designed to directly impact architecture students. Earlier this year, we announced MBMA's inaugural collegiate Student Design Competition where we will award \$15,000 in prizes. If you know of student groups who would be candidates for this competition, please point them to [www.mbmaeducation.com](http://www.mbmaeducation.com) where they can access all program details and forms. Registration is open until Oct. 1 with submissions due Dec. 1. I am excited to report that we currently have commitments from over 50 participants.

### The Beef Behind the Sizzle

I would be remiss if I did not take a few minutes here to underscore the importance of our industry's internal education and the need to fully embrace sustainable engineering, manufacturing and production practices. To address energy and environmental issues, we must work toward greater carbon neutrality and assure that sustainable practices become the norm.


In 2016, MBMA developed environmental product declarations (EPDs) for three metal building product categories: primary rigid framing, secondary framing, and metal cladding for roofs and walls. The EPDs are valid for five years, and we just published updated versions on our website at [www.mbma.com/Environmental\\_Product\\_](http://www.mbma.com/Environmental_Product_)

### Declarations.html.

MBMA partnered with UL Environment and the Athena Institute to develop and certify these EPDs, which summarize the cradle-to-gate environmental impacts of metal building system components. We created these documents to provide specifiers, designers and other industry professionals with transparent, third-party explanations of the environmental impacts of products used in metal building systems as well as to demonstrate compliance with LEED and other high-performance energy programs. I believe this issue will continue to become more relevant and value the groundwork that is being laid by the MBMA.

### California in December?

MBMA members are excited to finally make plans for a face-to-face annual meeting Dec. 6-9, 2021, and what better place to meet than the golfing mecca of Indian Wells, Calif.? We encourage all members to get vaccinated and come join in the educational sessions and networking that help us all expand our horizons. If your firm is eligible for membership in the association, you are welcome to come to the annual meeting to see what we're all about. You can view information about membership opportunities by clicking on the membership tab on our website, [www.mbma.com](http://www.mbma.com).

We are anxious to get back to business and to be connected through the camaraderie of in-person meetings. To that end, we will be hosting six in-person meetings before the year ends. As we move forward and learn to operate in a new normal, it has been abundantly clear that the value of relationships is now more important than ever. 

**Greg Pasley, Ph.D., PE**, is chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association. More information about the association is available at [www.mbma.com](http://www.mbma.com).