

**Celebrating NAC's  
Silver Jubilee:  
A Milestone of  
Excellence and  
Innovation  
The First 25 Years:  
1999 to 2024**



**NATIONAL ACADEMY  
OF CONSTRUCTION  
25<sup>TH</sup> SILVER JUBILEE**

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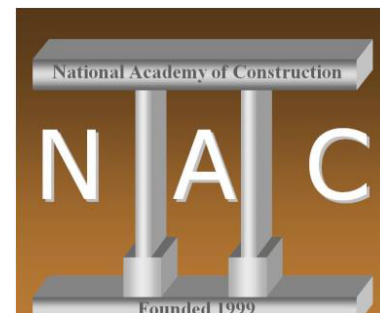
## **Celebrating NAC's Silver Jubilee: A Milestone of Excellence and Innovation The First 25 Years: 1999 to 2024**

### ***Wow, what a 25-year journey!***

NAC held its first organizational meeting in San Antonio, TX, with its 24 original charter members in August 1999, and was officially established as an entity on August 13 of that year. The meeting was convened by Richard Tucker at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel as a follow-on to the Construction Industry Institute's Annual Meeting that year. Most of the initial charter members had held prominent roles in the Construction Industry Cost Effectiveness (CICE) Project effort sponsored by The Business Roundtable and/or had been leaders in establishing the Construction Industry Institute. Charter members included:

- Richard Tucker, UT Austin, Founder
- Jack J. Agresti, Guy F. Atkinson
- Collin Aikman, Union Carbide Corp
- Dan Bennet, NCCER
- Jim Braus, Shell (Dec.)
- Charlie Brown, DuPont
- Dick Bryan, H.B. Zachry Company (Dec.)
- Doy Cole, The M.W. Kellogg Co.
- Keith Dodson, McKinsey and Comp (Dec.)
- Carroll Dunn, U.S. Army Corps of Engrs (Dec.)
- George Eichleay, Eichleay Engineering
- Gerry Greene, Proctor & Gamble
- Don Gunther, Bechtel
- Joe Haegelin, Texaco (Dec.)
- Gary Jones, BE&K, Inc.
- Bob Jortberg, U.S. Naval Civil Engr Corps (Dec.)
- Ted Kennedy, BE&K, Inc. (Dec.)
- Joe Martinelli, Chevron
- Chuck McGinnis, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Ed Merrow, Independent Project Analysis
- Jack Morris, U.S. Army Corps of Engrs (Dec.)
- John Nobles, Burns & McDonnell
- Don Rasmussen, Union Carbide (Dec.)
- Jack Turner, Dow Chemical (Dec.)

NAC was established to focus on an identified need within the construction industry. First, its mission is honorary and membership in the Academy recognizes and honors design and construction industry leaders for their extraordinary contributions to our industry and nation; its members include the entire array of design and construction industry stakeholders—owners, designers, construction managers, general and specialty contractors, attorneys, financial managers, labor leaders, suppliers, academics and researchers, editors and reporters, and distinguished members of professional and trade associations. NAC stands out with this unique mission of honoring industry leaders for their extraordinary contributions. Secondly, its operational purpose is to share this reservoir of diverse expertise and proven leadership as a service to the nation, all while positively influencing future generations of leaders in our industry.



The NAC Membership Committee employs a rigorous annual process to identify and recommend a slate of new members for election by all NAC members. Members of NAC are elected and restricted in number to sustain a current growth rate of 35 to 50 new members per year. Election of new members is further restricted by selection criteria that emphasize extraordinary leadership, exceptional achievements, and lasting improvements to the industry over many years, many projects, and the many components of our diverse enterprise. It would be an exception to elect a member whose resumé includes an outstanding accomplishment on a single project or achievements of significance within a single company, agency, or university. Being elected to the Academy is, for most members, not their first highly esteemed honor.

Notwithstanding the credentials and prominence of the members, NAC has developed a culture of collegiality. Titles are dropped in deference to having a “first name” relationship with one another. In addition, attention is given to members’ spouses/significant others through a collection of personally written perspectives authored by members themselves and shared with the membership at large. Also, we recognize individual leadership accomplishments by publishing accreditations that note such achievements.

### ***NAC’s First Year***

During NAC’s first year of existence, Jim Braus served as the NAC Chair (the position was called President in those days), with Jack Turner serving as Vice Chair, Doy Cole as Secretary, and Don Rasmussen serving as the Membership Committee Chair. Our founding father, Richard Tucker, served as the General Secretary (the equivalent of the President and CEO today).

That first year was spent organizing, developing a new member selection and induction process, and planning for the first Annual Meeting. The NAC convened its first Annual Meeting on Friday, August 11, 2000, in Nashville, TN. The meeting was again held immediately after the CII Annual Conference, which was conducted earlier that week in the same venue. Five new members were inducted during that first Black Tie/Formal Induction Ceremony:

- Bill Badger, Arizona State University
- Dick Kibben (dec.), The Business Roundtable
- Emmitt Nelson, Shell
- Jimmy Slaughter, S&B Engineers and Constructors, Ltd.
- Mike Vorster, Virginia Tech

These members were very active in NAC in its early years, with some even engaged up until the present. For several years following that initial year, time was spent establishing the focus of the organization and inducting new members.

### ***Inflection Points: 2004 and 2007***

With a desire for action, several NAC (and future NAC) members worked with the National Research Council's Federal Facilities Council in September 2004 to host a workshop in Washington, D.C., which focused on alternative dispute resolution. The workshop was co-hosted and supported by NAC with funds from interested members. NAC members who participated included Jim Groton, Bob Rubin, Jimmy Slaughter, Bru Brubaker, Les Edelman, Hans Van Winkle, George Heery, Edd Gibson, Ted Kennedy, Gerry Greene, Mike Vorster, and Jim Porter. Proceedings from this event were published as Report 149 in the National Academies Press in 2004.

Subsequently, several NAC members gathered for a meeting in the lobby of the Brown Palace Hotel in 2007 at NAC's meeting in Denver to discuss their desire to engage with the industry on behalf of NAC to help solve problems. Members present included Dave Nash, John Mihm, Hans Van Winkle, Jimmy Slaughter, and Edd Gibson. That group decided NAC, with the objective to improve the industry, could convene and engage industry members and associations across the country as a neutral party (the 2004 event had proven this concept). This thought process led to the development of the NAC Forum concept. Jim Porter, Jimmy Slaughter, and Edd Gibson co-chaired this effort with NAC hosting a total of five Forums in the Washington, D.C. area from 2009 to 2015. Other NAC members active in these Forum meetings included John Dalton, John Mihm, JJ Suarez, Don Whyte, Bruce D'Agostino, Pat Natale, Jorge Vanegas, and Wayne Crew among others. Over the course of five Forums, many ideas were discussed and vetted, with the entire effort focused on coordination among the many associations and organizations present. The effort identified four key areas that needed cross-organizational coordination and focus: 1) The need to promote industry best practices; 2) Workforce development practices; 3) Industry image; and 4) safety improvement. It is worth noting that the ideas and activities that NAC is pursuing in 2024 came from these meetings and the momentum gathered from these sessions.

These efforts collectively began to refocus NAC from an organization that identified itself as chiefly an honorary organization to one that was preparing to embrace a desire for action.

### ***2011, Honoring Excellence: The Legacy of NAC's Ted C. Kennedy Award***



Theodore (Ted) Clifford Kennedy, co-founder of BE&K, Inc., was one of 24 charter members of NAC in 1999. Ted served in many capacities in NAC, most notably as its Chairperson in 2005 among many leadership roles. In 2011, The Academy established the Ted C. Kennedy Award as part of its strategic planning activity to honor the best. The award is unique in that it was designed around the contributions and qualities of a single individual. Members of the Academy recognized Ted's character and the qualities of excellence he represented in his life, work, and interactions with others. Ted was named the initial recipient of the award in 2011 just before he passed away in the spring of 2012.

Ted was an extraordinary individual. He graduated from high school in Front Royal, VA, and continued his studies at Duke University in Durham, NC, where in 1952 he was a Tau Beta Phi graduate in civil engineering. Following graduation, he joined Rust Engineering Company, interrupting his career to serve

two years in the U.S. Navy Seabees. Ted resigned from Rust in 1972 as vice president of operations to form BE&K, Inc. along with the late C. Peter Bolvig and the late William F. Edmonds. BE&K was to become one of the nation's largest privately held engineering and construction firms. On the national construction stage, Ted earned a reputation as an industry innovator and campaigned for modern, flexible craftworker training and safe, worker-friendly construction work sites. He was a proponent of merit shop construction, which employs and trains union and independent construction craftworkers together, intending to increase opportunities for employment and make construction projects more efficient and open to innovation. In 1999, *Engineering News-Record* magazine named him one of the top 125 leaders in the past 125 years. Ted and BE&K became known as one of America's most "family-friendly" companies because of innovations such as placing the first childcare facilities on construction sites, thus making it easier for women to enter the construction trades and gain skills. *Fortune* magazine listed BE&K as the first construction company to be named one of the "100 Best Places to Work in America."

Ted was a civic leader in his adopted hometown of Birmingham, AL. His impact was widely felt, and he was a champion of diversity and education. In community affairs, he was known for his work with the Children's Hospital of Alabama and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. He was presented the Crystal Vision Award and was recognized as Employer of the Year by the National Association of Women in Construction for furthering the roles of women in the construction industry. He served on the Alabama Commission on School Performance and Accountability and as CEO of the State Department of Education's 21st Century Project. He served on the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham Board and as board chair of the Housing Enterprise of Central Alabama. He was also a commissioner with the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District.

In 2005, he helped establish the Theodore C. Kennedy Professorship to support engineering faculty in the Pratt School of Engineering at his alma mater, Duke. In addition to NAC, Ted also was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1999 and was very active in its mission.

### ***2011, Thanking a Legend for a Legacy***

When NAC Member John Lamberson first proposed hosting a silent auction at the 2012 NAC Member Annual Meeting in Puerto Rico, he couldn't have imagined the incredible impact it would have on NAC and others. His vision was simple yet profound: to foster camaraderie among Academy members and support NAC. That inaugural year, John's idea propelled the Academy to raise over \$20,000 to support its core mission. Since then, the NAC Annual Auction has evolved into an inspiration for philanthropy, raising over \$1M and extending its reach far beyond our borders. From building bridges in Rwanda, to supporting water projects on a Native American reservation, to nurturing the next generation of industry leaders through educational support with scholarships, John's legacy continues to inspire us to make a difference, one auction at a time.

### ***2014, Transformative Strategic Plan***

In 2014, the Academy embarked on a transformative journey under the leadership of Jimmy Slaughter, Jim Porter, Dave Nash, Dominick Servedio, and Hugh Rice. Tasked with reviewing the Academy's strategic direction, mission elements, and member selection criteria, the NAC Strategic Planning and Membership Committees affirmed the Academy's path, focusing on selecting exceptional industry leaders committed to action and service and facilitating the sharing of our collective knowledge and leadership to improve our industry and the nation. At that time, the Academy also set a target of increasing our membership to 1,000.

Since that pivotal year, the NAC has experienced remarkable growth in both size and diversity. The Academy has tripled in size, rebranded its image, and launched several significant initiatives, including the Executive Insights program (2017), the Ask Me Anything Webinar series (2018), the NAC Scholarship Program (2019), and the Get the kNACK podcast series (2022).

The NAC Safety Committee is a prominent force, actively planning and pursuing goals aligned with achieving zero injury outcomes on construction projects. Current efforts focus on safety culture, the Helmets to Hardhats program, and mental health, with a broader aim of improving industry-wide safety and integrating these concepts into undergraduate education. Other member-driven initiatives continue to address critical industry issues. Publishing its first safety “white paper” in 2005, the effort has evolved to a safety culture series and a series of Safety Culture Symposia. Among those prominently involved in its work over the years are Emmitt Nelson, Ken Arnold, Maggi Walker, Deb Grubbe, Tony Leketa, David O’Connor, and others.

NAC members are influential across various professions, disciplines, and sectors, extending their impact into political, economic, social, technological, and national security programs. Including our new class of 2024, the Academy currently boasts 479 professionals who have made significant contributions to technology, contracting, project delivery, safety, industry image, workforce development, labor relations, communications, construction law, higher education, and cost and schedule management. NAC members represent the many professions, disciplines, businesses, workforce developers, and other elements in the construction industry that come together as the primary stakeholders of the built environment. Collectively, they are remarkable forces for good. Today’s members have made significant contributions in the areas of technology, alternative contracting and project delivery procedures, work processes, safety, industry image, workforce development, labor relations, tools, communications, construction law, higher education, and cost and schedule management effectiveness. A total of 47 NAC members have also held membership in the National Academy of Engineering. Twenty-seven NAC members are also Distinguished Members of ASCE.

## **2020, A New Chapter**

Many national and federal entities seek out expertise such as that found in NAC to work on issues of importance. NAC members currently are serving with such groups as the National Academy of Engineers, the Federal Facilities Council, the National Transportation Board, the National Academies Board on Infrastructure and the Constructed Environment (BICE), the boards and advisory councils of professional societies, and others. Many Academy members also serve on corporate boards or as consultants to private and public agencies.



## **NATIONAL ACADEMY OF CONSTRUCTION**

In 2021, NAC established an ad hoc Liaison Committee, headed by Dave Nash, to consider the future direction of the Academy. A major reason for forming this committee was to lead the way in providing opportunities to the NAC members to apply our collective wisdom and experience to help solve the nation's challenges. Several options were explored, including developing a research arm similar to the National Research Council, trying to merge with NAE, and setting up a separate foundation. After much deliberation and discussion with members, the committee concluded that the current organizational structure was best at this point, but that a new standing committee should be formed to develop formal collaborative relationships with existing entities in areas of mutual importance. The ability to neutrally convene parties and share our collective expertise will allow us to establish strong collaborative relationships.

Formal collaborations have been established with esteemed organizations such as the Board on Infrastructure and the Constructed Environment (BICE) of NAE, the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American College of Construction Lawyers (ACCL), the Construction Industry Institute (CII), and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). This effort is led by the NAC Collaboration Committee, which was initially chaired by Sarah Slaughter in 2022. As we learn from our success in the first seven formal collaboration efforts that have been established, future relationships will be formed where NAC members will be able to contribute on matters of national importance.

## ***The Next 25 years***

As we celebrate our Silver Jubilee, we acknowledge NAC's young yet promising status in the design and construction industry. With significant organizational development and impactful operational initiatives, the future remains bright. The three pillars of NAC's future are extraordinary leadership, diverse membership representing the industry, and dedicated service.



Here's to a future filled with continued growth, collaboration, and impactful contributions to our industry and nation.

— *Edd Gibson, 2024*

## NACTimeline

- 1999 NAC established August 13, 1999, in San Antonio; 24 Charter Members
- 1999 NAC is established as an IRS 501(c)(3) not for profit Texas Corporation
- 2000 First NAC Annual Meeting held in Nashville; five new members inducted
- 2004 First female member elected, Patricia Lancaster-Brown
- 2004 NAC Sponsored Forum on Dispute Prevention and Resolution Best Practices at the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
- 2005 NAC publishes its first of 48 position papers on safety authored by Emmitt Nelson
- 2006 Initial NAC Communication bulletin sent out, authored by Vince Kontny
- 2007 NAC Forum Concept begins with meeting in Denver
- 2007 Initial endowment fund set up
- 2008 Membership grows to 100
- 2009 Tenth Annual Meeting held in Wilmington, DE
- 2011 Ted C. Kennedy Award established; Ted Kennedy is its initial recipient
- 2012 NAC fundraising auction established
- 2014 Membership grows to 200
- 2014 Decision to grow the NAC membership to 1,000 members
- 2015 Last of five NAC Forums held in Washington, D.C.
- 2015 Richard Tucker retires as General Secretary
- 2015 Wayne Crew hired as part time General Secretary; position title later changed to President/CEO
- 2017 *Executive Insights* publications begin
- 2018 NAC reorganizes its annual auction with a professional auctioneer, and supported Bridges to Prosperity as outreach for the first time
- 2018 Ask Me Anything Webinar Series begins
- 2019 Bridges to Prosperity builds a foot bridge in Kivomo, Rwanda, totally supported by NAC funding
- 2019 NAC Scholarship Program established
- 2019 Twentieth Annual Meeting held in Nashville, TN
- 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, Virtual Annual Meeting held via Zoom
- 2020 First NAC Scholarships awarded
- 2020 NAC Richard L. Tucker Outstanding Service Award established
- 2021 Maggi Walker becomes first female Chairperson of NAC
- 2022 Membership grows to 400
- 2022 Get the kNACk podcast series began
- 2022 NAC Award of Special Achievement established
- 2022 Wayne Crew retires as President/CEO
- 2022 Three Safety Culture Symposia focused on undergraduate education held
- 2023 Two Safety Culture Symposia focused on undergraduate education held
- 2023 Edd Gibson hired as first full-time President/CEO



2023 New Strategic Plan adopted  
 2024 Construction Legends, oral history program begins  
 2024 NAC celebrates its Silver Jubilee in San Antonio, TX

### Annual Meetings Over the Years

August	1999	San Antonio	Preliminary Organizational Meeting	24 Charter Members
August	2000	Nashville	First Annual Meeting	5 New Members
August	2001	San Francisco	Second Annual Meeting	10 New Members
August	2002	Denver	Third Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2003	Santa Fe	Fourth Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2004	Chicago	Fifth Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2005	Washington DC	Sixth Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2006	Santa Fe	Seventh Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2007	Denver	Eighth Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2008	Bartlesville	Ninth Annual Meeting	10 New Members
October	2009	Wilmington	Tenth Annual Meeting	9 New Members
October	2010	New York City	Eleventh Annual Meeting	11 New Members
October	2011	Atlanta	Twelfth Annual Meeting	13 New Members
October	2012	Puerto Rico	Thirteenth Annual Meeting	14 New Members
October	2013	Scottsdale	Fourteenth Annual Meeting	25 New Members
October	2014	Austin	Fifteenth Annual Meeting	28 New Members
October	2015	Charleston	Sixteenth Annual Meeting	26 New Members
October	2016	Napa	Seventeenth Annual Meeting	30 New Members
October	2017	Washington DC	Eighteenth Annual Meeting	29 New Members
October	2018	San Diego	Nineteenth Annual Meeting	37 New Members
October	2019	Nashville	Twentieth Annual Meeting	39 New Members
October	2020	Virtual	Twenty-First Annual Meeting	36 New Members
October	2021	Colorado Springs	Twenty-Second Annual Meeting	38 New Members
October	2022	Scottsdale	Twenty-Third Annual Meeting	34 New Members
October	2023	Boston	Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting	34 New Members
October	2024	San Antonio	Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting	43 New Members

### **NAC Chairpersons, First 25 Years**

2000	Jim Braus
2001	Jack Turner
2002	Doy Cole
2003	Gary Jones
2004	Jimmy Slaughter
2005	Ted Kennedy
2006	Jack Buffington
2007	Vince Kontny
2008	John Mihm
2009	Jim Porter
2010	Bru Brubaker
2011	J.J. Suarez
2012	Dave Nash
2013 - 2014	Bud Ahearn
2015 - 2016	Dominick Servedio
2017 - 2018	Hugh Rice
2019 - 2020	Tom Sorley
2021 - 2022	Maggi Walker
2023 - 2024	Milo Rivero



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