

# The Cutting Edge

## Bylaws Change Proposal Impacts Organization of Board of Directors

At the January 2021 board meeting, the board heard a proposal to change the way the board of directors is organized. Currently the board includes thirteen (13) members of which twelve (12) are chosen from geographic areas (7 US, 1 Canada, 4 International) and one (1) by industry segment (the Associate Member category, which includes equipment/tooling/chemical suppliers).

The proposed change would maintain the total number of directors but increase the number of directors elected from key industry segments. It would also abandon the geographic system and adjust the number of international directors. The new system would include the following:

- **Associate Member Segment** – 1 Director
- **North America Industry Segments** – 5 Directors. One Each: Fabricator, Installer, Quarrier, Restoration & Maintenance, and Stone Distributor
- **North America At-Large** – 5 Directors
- **Outside North America At-Large** – 2 Directors

The primary focus of the proposed bylaws change is centered on the fact that several key industry segments are not currently represented on the board. The board also recognized that 12% of our current membership is from outside North America, yet 31% of the board seats are designated for international directors.

Outgoing board president Robert Zavagno commented: “Our goal is to ensure that the major industry segments are represented on the board and we appreciate those members who advocated this change.”

To offset the reduction in international directors, the board authorized the creation of an international advocacy group to work alongside the two international board directors on key industry initiatives.

Herwig Callewier (board director representing Europe) shared: “Having two international directors provides sufficient representation for the needs of the international community. Creating an international advocacy group will also increase the opportunity for more members to get involved, which is especially needed given the ISO standards initiative.”

The membership will be asked to vote on this proposal in April via electronic ballot. If the change is approved, the board nominating committee will be recruiting candidates from the quarrier, installer, and associate member segments later this year. ➦



**2021 Natural Stone Institute President**

**Michael Picco**

PICCO Engineering

With industry trade shows and face-to-face opportunities for meeting in person continuing to be cancelled due to COVID-19 the Natural Stone Institute is preparing for another busy year that will include several virtual events to engage members and ensure we meet members' expectations.

Aaron Dahnke will be continuing his great work with online education and training for both membership and the design community.

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More information will be shared via the Weekly Member Update email.

To ensure that you are receiving these emails, please contact  
[membership@naturalstoneinstitute.org](mailto:membership@naturalstoneinstitute.org).

One of our first initiatives is to introduce a bylaw change that we believe will more clearly represent the membership. We have listened to some of the key stakeholders in our industry and felt that a change from geographic representation to industry sector representation was important. Details will be shared as these proposed changes are rolled out in the coming months.

To complement this, we will be forming focused Advocacy Groups to encourage members to join their appropriate area of interest or sector of the industry you serve. This will allow for small focus groups to discuss and address specific industry sector needs.

The International Standards Organisation (ISO) has embarked on developing a new standard for Natural Stone. With the Natural Stone Institute being a leading authority in this field, we felt it was imperative that we be a significant contributor. With this goal in mind, Jim Hieb took a leading role in ensuring ISO was aware of interest. The executive committee along with a few strategic members lobbied for ANSI (American National Standards Institute) to be the Secretariat for the Standard and for it to be chaired by technical director

Chuck Muehlbauer. This comes with big responsibility and financial obligation. We will be calling on our membership to support us with this very important initiative as we work to lead this effort.

You will also see a big push on Sustainability this year. We have a committee dedicated to bringing more awareness to members and the design community with regards to the benefits of natural stone when it comes to sustainability. This committee will also be looking at PCRs (Product Category Rules) and EPDs (Environmental Product Declaration), both important factors that we will be pursuing to help bring natural stone to the forefront when it comes to sustainable building.

Looking forward to a busy, exciting year.

Stay safe!!



## Session Presented at KBIS Virtual Event

We were thrilled to have the opportunity to present an on-demand educational session as part of the Voices from the Industry Conference at KBIS Virtual, held February 9-11. The session will be available to participants throughout the month of March at [www.kbis.com](http://www.kbis.com).

The following session was presented in conjunction with the National Wood Flooring Association:

### **"Don't Fake It When You Make It": Reasons to Choose Natural Materials**

*Materials like natural stone and real wood have a certain allure, but they also face misconceptions related to maintenance and sustainability. Artificial materials attempt to mimic the beauty of natural materials but can't quite duplicate the authenticity. Join us as we celebrate the benefits of choosing natural materials and dispel the myths surrounding two natural building products that will re-energize your project's connection to nature.*

Dacia Woodworth moderated a discussion between Anna Gibson (AKG Design Studio), Jon Namba (Namba Services), Roy Marcus (Artistic Tile), and Emily Morrow (Emily Morrow Home). Panelists shared which design trends align well with natural materials, gave their opinions on substituting artificial materials for the real thing, and discussed the myth that it is more difficult to care for natural materials than for artificial imitations. The sustainability of both natural and manmade materials was also discussed, including ingredient transparency and carbon footprints. ➔

### **Don't Fake It When You Make It**

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**NKBA**  
**VOICES**  
FROM THE INDUSTRY

Anna Gibson, AKG Design Studio  
Jon Namba, Namba Services  
Roy A. Marcus, Artistic Tile  
Emily Morrow, Emily Morrow Home  
Dacia Woodworth, Natural Stone Institute

[www.nkba.org](http://www.nkba.org)

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### **Today's Panelists**



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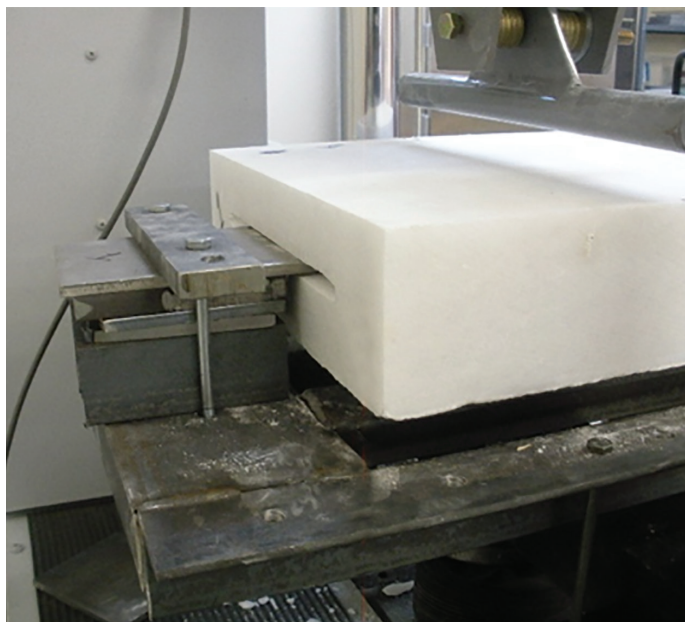
**NKBA**  
**VOICES**  
FROM THE INDUSTRY

[www.nkba.org](http://www.nkba.org)

**We look forward to continuing to work with KBIS and NKBA in the future. Learn more at [www.kbis.com](http://www.kbis.com).**



# PICCO Engineering: Why We Use the Natural Stone Institute Testing Lab



*Afsheen Khan has been working with PICCO Engineering as a Sr. Structural Engineer for the past eight years. Her main areas of practice include natural stone cladding connections and backup system engineering, structural engineering, residential structural engineering, light gauge steel and connections.*

As a Structural Engineer working on stone cladding projects, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of stone testing for a safe and efficient design. When specifying natural stone, it is crucial to understand the material's inherent characteristics to make an appropriate choice for the application. As the specifier, the design professional is responsible for material selection based on aesthetics, but also strict performance criteria. Material properties and expected application performance is best sourced through physical testing and professional analysis.

Most natural stones are anisotropic, which means physical properties like strength, durability, and resistance to natural eroding produce variable values when tested in different directions, or when the material is used in different ways. Hence, it is imperative to get the stone tested for appropriate ASTM standards so that appropriate safety factors can be applied.

The Natural Stone Institute lab has been the preferred testing facility for PICCO Engineering since they opened. With the latest in testing equipment and a highly knowledgeable staff, The NSI lab supports our project needs seamlessly with prompt and high-quality services.

PICCO Engineering recently completed a project using Blanc Absolute marble quarried in Spain. This marble was

used in a large art installation with some pieces weighing over 6,000lbs. The seismic forces govern design when dealing with such heavy weights, and we needed to acquire kerf test results, with specific edge distances for our connection design. We contacted Chuck Muehlbauer to inquire about the required ASTM C1354 (Strength of Individual Stone Anchorages in Dimension Stone) for kerfs, pins, and epoxied threaded rod pull out tests. Chuck provided a detailed list of the NSI lab services available, namely, ANSI A326.3, ASTM C97, ASTM C170, ASTM C99, ASTM C880, ASTM C1354, ASTM C1353, ASTM C666 (and similar) for natural stone.

We contacted our client and requested the required quantity and sizes of stone samples from Spain be shipped to the NSI lab in Oberlin, OH. Testing was expediated due to our schedule needs and a detailed test report was provided. A list of the apparatus used and photos of the samples, before and after the tests, were also included. Based on the test results, we were able to specify an appropriate safety factor and design efficient and robust connections for stone anchorage.

There was constant coordination with the Natural Stone Institute during testing, which made the lab a key contributor to overall project success.

As Natural Stone Institute members, we are lucky to have a professional, high quality testing lab accessible and eager to support our projects. Working with the lab and their team has been a pleasure and we look forward to future collaborations with the Natural Stone Institute. ☘



# New Natural Stone Internship Resource Bundle



Women in Stone is proud to announce a 15-week Internship Resource Bundle for students pursuing a degree in architecture, landscape architecture, or interior design. This set of tools will make it easy for stone companies to open their doors to students to help nurture an appreciation and preference for natural stone in their future projects. Students and professors will appreciate the turn-key templates that will document their assignments and learning outcomes throughout this experiential education program.



The bundle includes a detailed syllabus and templates for assignments, including:

- Weekly Journals
- Online Learning through the Natural Stone University
- One-on-One Informational Interview
- Midterm Evaluation
- Work Samples
- Final Evaluation

These resources are available for companies in the stone industry and will also be promoted to students at high schools, trade schools, and universities.

For more information, visit [www.naturalstoneinstitute.org/internship](http://www.naturalstoneinstitute.org/internship).

The advertisement for Picco Engineering features a large, modern building with a curved, metallic facade, identified as the Bahá'í Temple in Santiago, Chile. The building is illuminated at night, with warm lights glowing from within. The background shows a cityscape at dusk. The Picco logo, an orange stylized 'P' with the word 'PICCO' below it, is in the top left. The text 'Bahá'í Temple' is in the top right, followed by 'A light inspired place of worship' and 'Santiago, Chile'. At the bottom right, the slogan 'SHAPING PROGRESS. DESIGNING LEGACY. SINCE 1992.' is displayed above the website 'picco-engineering.com'.

*Paid Advertisement*

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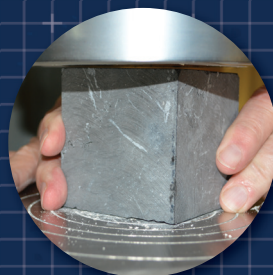
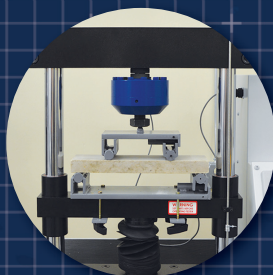
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