CIB STUDENT CHAPTERS

by
Richard S. Coble

The CIB Board was highly impressed at its 74th Meeting in Gainesville, USA on 17th March 1999 with the presentations by the Officers of the University of Florida CIB Student Chapter. So much so that the decision was taken officially to endorse the concept of student chapters and to discuss ways for its appropriate development in the future. In this Article Rick Coble gives his thoughts on Student Chapters and CIB and tells us more about the University of Florida Chapter. Marcus Ormerod complements this with an account of what is happening at the University of Salford and Rick Coble himself reports on the Student Chapter at Tsingua University.

Lay the Foundations Early

CIB Student Chapters are the foundations on which CIB will build in the future. They are growing both in the number of Chapters and also the activities that link them together. Membership in CIB is more than an event, it is a dynamic growth process. This growth is best started when students are engaged in learning their profession.

CIB is not just an organisation, but rather it stands for a culture or excellence in construction research and documentation. Students need to be part of this culture as soon as possible in their professional lives. To be successful in life takes not only hardwork, but also proper leadership. This leadership is available through CIB.

It is no accident that construction professionals are developed. It is through exposure to professionals and professional activities that students are nurtured to the next level of excellence.

The future of the CIB Student Chapters is bright. Foreign students find in CIB an organisation to which they can readily relate and contribute. The response from foreign and American students alike has been great to the opportunities that come with CIB membership.

The students that are members of CIB also visit construction sites, where they have the valuable chance to talk face to face with the job site construction teams. Ideally the visitations are to sites where international contractors are at work. In the case of the University of Florida, Bovis has been the international contractor that has provided the forum for CIB student growth.

The students at the University of Florida also have the desire to help in the growth of other student chapters. With the acceptance of e-mail, fax machines and other I.T. systems, communication and dialogue is both cost effective and wonderfully interactive for the CIB students.

The attitude of the CIB leadership towards the CIB Student Chapters has been tremendous. From the CIB President, the Secretary General, and other Coordinators, the support for the CIB Student Chapters has been continually solid and growing.

The University of Florida looks to the future with excitement. It is people that make any organisation work properly. At the University of Florida, we make it very clear that the CIB students need to be active, not just on paper, but more importantly by their deeds.
The first CIB Student Chapter was started at the University of Florida in 1998. It began as a small group, but that has since changed, with over 50 members now enjoying the affiliation with CIB.

The University of Florida not only has a CIB Chapter, but also a CIB W099 Student Chapter. This W099 Chapter is tied in with the American Society of Safety Engineers, which gives students a broad exposure to safety and professionalism.

These CIB student groups have been very dynamic, not only in growth but also in excellence. Each year they use video conferencing sessions to communicate with other student chapters like the ones at Tsinghua University in China and Salford University in the UK. At these sessions professionals and students exchange their experiences. In this regard, the University Student Chapters have also had two video conferencing sessions with CSIRO in Australia. The format was to have the researchers at both institutions overview their research and then to have the students introduce themselves and question these experts. This required the students to get up to speed on the research being done and provided for a very interesting exchange. Being able to communicate with researchers of the excellence of CSIRO provides students with a wonderful opportunity for them to dialogue with the best of the best. We keep video recordings of these sessions, which is good for documentation and moreover allows students to review their performance.

The leadership of the Student Chapter at Florida is without exception composed of people who have a desire to be involved with the global community. Most of this leadership desires to work abroad.
Issue of Funding

The issue of funding was brought up early on in the development of the University of Florida Student Chapter. What we have discovered is that if we plan our activities well, then we can find contractor or engineering company sponsorship. This follows the old foreman slogan of "Plan Your Work And Work Your Plan".

At the University of Salford, UK by Marcus Ormerod

Marcus Ormerod is the Director for Postgraduate Research within the Built and Human Environment, and looks after the CIB Student Chapter there. Rick Coble observes that along with Marcus Ormerod the Salford Student Chapter has the benefit of the influence of the dynamic Peter Barrett, thus ensuring the involvement of top quality construction management and cutting edge information technology.

Marcus now takes up the story..
The CIB Student Chapter at Salford is holding a postgraduate conference on 17th and 18th November 1999 which is a development of something we have done for the past two years. This year we will be linking up with the University of Florida CIB Student Chapter using video conferencing and discussion list technology. There will be about 30 to 40 postgraduates and staff attending at Salford both from our Institution and others in the area. There is also talk about a Finnish institute taking part as well. Anyone else is of course welcome to participate either in person, or virtually.

The title of the Conference is "The Bizarre Fruit T(h)ree Postgraduate Conference". The origin of the title is a bit of a long story, but we have held 2 successful events in the past and this is the third. The full story can be found at our website:

http://www.surveying.salford.ac.uk/buhu/bizfruit/intro.htm

We will have a new image for this Conference which will be a play on the idea of a Bizarre Fruit Tree and this being number three in the series.

There will be a call for papers and instructions on submission procedures. We do offer prizes for the best papers, but we are still determining how this will work with postgraduates who are not part of our institution.

At Tsingua University, China by Richard Coble

Reports Rick Coble:

The third CIB Student Chapter is at Tsinghua University, where Silas Liu and Fang Dongping have done a great job of getting students involved. The Student President of the Tsinghua Chapter is a very dynamic graduate student by the name Han. Already on their agenda are two international video conferences. One with the University of Florida and the other with the CIB Chapter at Salford (see above). Plans are under way to visit the some of the sites where the international contractors are occupied with the expert international consultants that work in and around Beijing.

With these three Universities leading the way there are still plenty of opportunities for others to join in. There are few requirements, but many benefits in having a CIB Student Chapter at the University you are affiliated with. We have just begun, but the results are very exciting. If we can give you more information in this regard, please contact Rick Coble at: rcoble@grove.ufl.edu