Making a Case for Research

Rik Kunnath

Executive Chairman of the Board, Pankow Management, Inc.

The presentation by Mr. Kunnath will explore the general state of innovation in the design and construction industry, which most observers view as inadequate. The talk will explore some of the reasons why this has historically been the case and suggest opportunities for changing the current state. The talk will highlight the efforts of the Charles Pankow Foundation as a private, not for profit, entity focused exclusively on advancing innovation in the United States Building industry. Examples of this research and the impact it has had on safety, efficiency and constructability will be provided. The talk will conclude with a road map for increasing industry cooperation to further efforts to advance innovation in a matter fitting one of the economy’s largest employment sectors.

Rik Kunnath is the Executive Chairman of the Board for Pankow Management, Inc. He has had progressively more responsible leadership positions within the Pankow organization since joining in 1979 as a Project Engineer, ascending to the position of Executive Chairman of the Board in 2012. He is the recipient of numerous awards including the Distinguished Alumni Award, University of Detroit Mercy, the BICB Achievement Award, which is bestowed annually to an individual in the Bay Area deemed to have made the year’s most significant contribution to the industry, City of Hope Hospital Spirit of Life Award, and ENR Top 25 Newsmaker Award. He was inducted into the National Academy of Construction in 2012 and is a Member, Lambda Alpha, Honorary Land Economics Society. He is a Founding Member of the Design Build Institute of America, and was the 1995 National President of the leading private foundation dedicated to Building Innovation.