

## Starting Fresh - FY2020 Begins



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# Customize Your Volunteer Experience with CSI's Volunteer Portal



## Are you interested in...

[Reaching out to educators](#) to bring CSI principles into the classroom?

[Meeting and greeting](#) with fellow members at Construct 2018?

Guiding others studying for the CSI certification exams – lead an [online study group](#)?

## Sign up for these opportunities and more at CSI's NEW Volunteer Portal:

See all volunteer opportunities in one location

Easily apply for options that interest you and work with your schedule

Opt into the volunteering pool, sit back and have volunteering invitations come directly to you

Join your fellow members... Jump into the [volunteer pool](#) and make a difference!

See how you can volunteer today on the [Volunteer Portal](#).

If you have any questions about volunteering, please email [volunteer@csinet.org](mailto:volunteer@csinet.org).



## President's Thinking

By Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT

Time seems to fly by when you are trying to do things and slow down to a crawl when you are waiting for things. As we gather our thoughts for the upcoming year, we begin to see a decline in some programs and a rise in others. There seems to be a general “backing off” of the LEED Certified Construction efforts, however, the desire to be LEED Certifiable is on the rise. What this tells me is that people are more interested in having buildings and structures that maximize the energy savings and employee/customer comfort without all the entanglements of the certification process. This leads me to think that maybe we should concentrate on saving energy, improving indoor air quality, increasing the amount of natural light in a structure, and taking into consideration the comfort of our employees in new structures. Think outside the normal box. This brings us to where CSI is fitting in this equation.

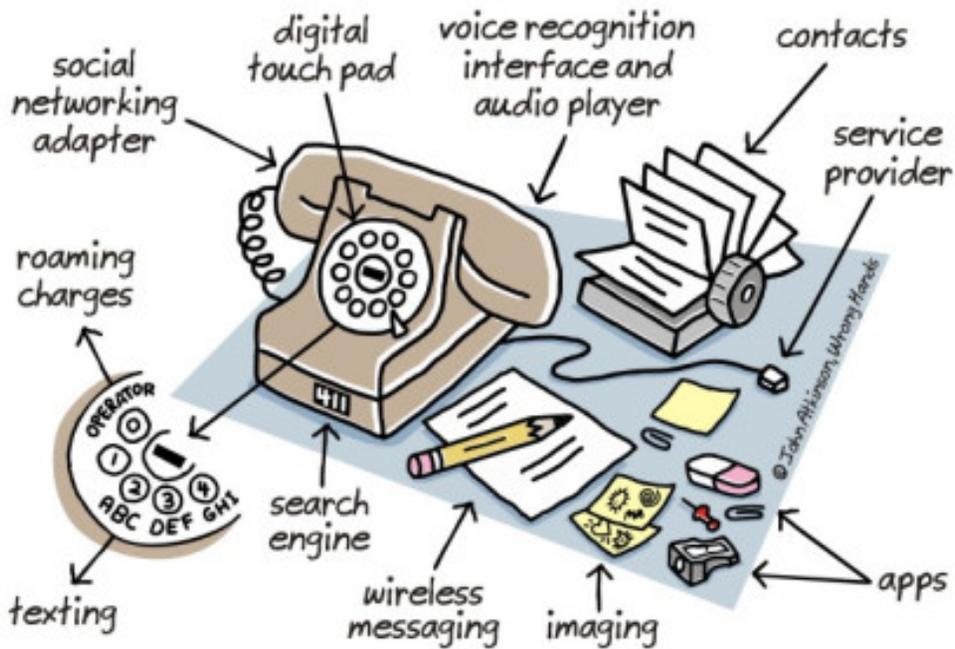
CSI is working hard to bring many advantages and “bang for your buck” items to the table to make your membership valuable to not only you professionally, but personally as well. One key item is leadership development. What does it take to be a leader, a good leader or a great leader. These are questions that must be answered individually and can only be fully explained through training and experience. These two items “Training” and “Experience” are not exclusive of each other but dependent on each other. You truly cannot gain one without the other nor can you concentrate on one without including the other. These are concepts that anyone wanting to be a leader must understand.

Let me leave you with one thought, something that I understood long before I became a leader. This was something that I recognized from listening to the leaders around me and observing the leaders who I followed.

“The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not a bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly.”

Jim Rohn

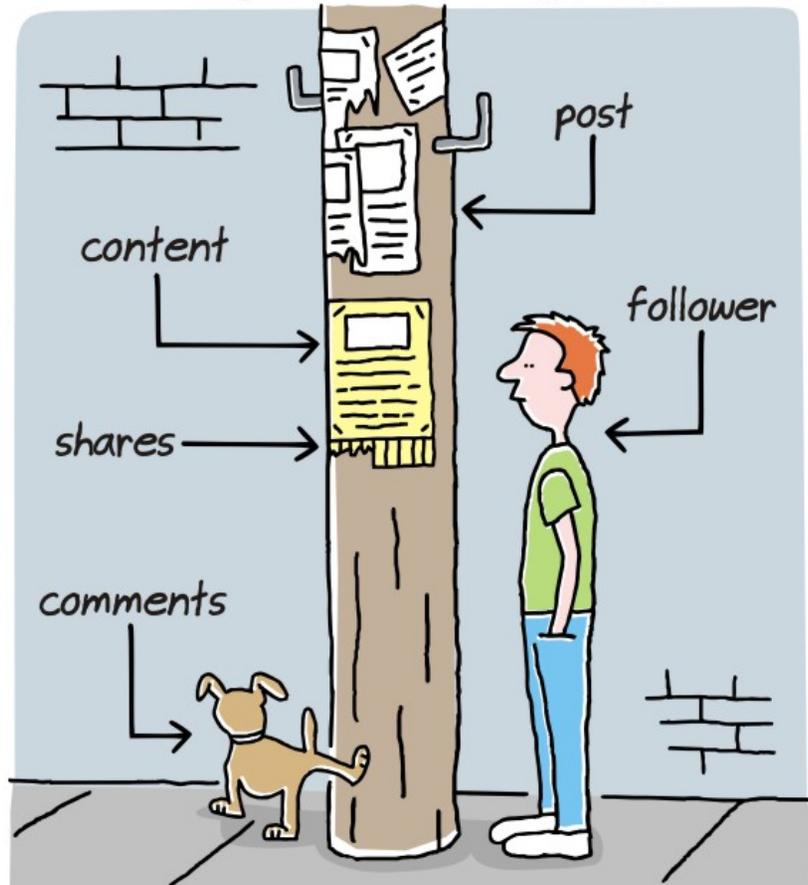
# vintage smartphone



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# simplified blogging

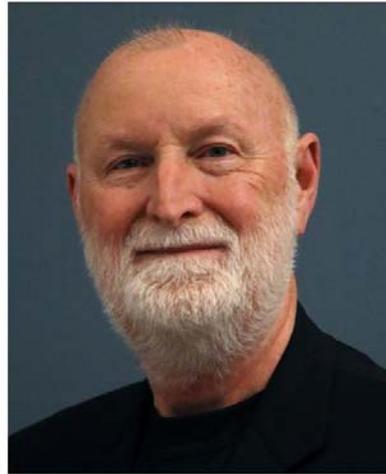


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## **CSI College of Fellows August 2019 Update**



Meet our new Fellows!

**John Dunaway, CSI, CCS, Mississippi Chapter**  
**Kermit Duncan, CSI, CCCA, Minneapolis-St. Paul Chapter**  
**Cherise Lakeside, CSI, CDT, Portland Oregon Chapter**

If you're going to the convention this year, be sure to congratulate our new Fellows at the Honors & Awards Ceremony, 6:00 p.m., 10 October, and join them at the Celebration of Fellows, 7:30 p.m., 10 October. Register for these and other convention activities at [www.constructshow.com](http://www.constructshow.com).

LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS INSTITUTE

**LUNCH AND A SEMINAR—WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2019**

Lunch 11:30 am  
Seminar 11:45 p.m.



Please make reservations by responding to the Email Address below.

Cost of the Meal is being Sponsored by ASSA ABLOY

Questions or Problems should be sent to Billy Mathis - [bjmathis@taggarch.com](mailto:bjmathis@taggarch.com)

**LOCATION:**

Garver USA  
Academy Training Room  
3rd Floor  
4701 Northshore Drive  
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72118

**Reservation Deadline: Please RSVP by Noon, Tuesday, September 10, 2019** (LRCSI must guarantee meal count for the Presentation)

SPEAKER:

**JOSH MGINNIS from ASSA ABLOY**

**PROGRAM: Electronic Access Control - Security Continuum for Openings**

**ASSA ABLOY**

**Program Summary:**

This course provides an overview of electronic access control applications for door openings including, mechanical locking, stand alone keypad, electronic cylinder, hard wired, wireless, and power over Ethernet solutions.

**Learning Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- 1) Review continuum of mechanical and intelligent access control products;
- 2) Understand how converged technologies are driving sophisticated new access control solutions;
- 3) Examine the advantages and disadvantages of intelligent EAC products and applications;
- 4) Learn the correct questions to ask and language to use in writing electronic access control specifications.

**This Course Provides 1 AIA HSW CE Hour.**

# MAKING NEW HEROES

Let's Fix Construction Blog, 3/25/19 / Contributed by Brent Williams



Recently I had the pleasure of networking with a rising leader of one of the largest CSI Chapters in the country. He, like many rising professionals, is trying to juggle the varied elements of a career, family and the responsibilities of leading a group of professionals in an increasingly demanding business world. Just like a lot of the leaders that I speak with, he's suffering a significant amount of burnout. He wants to succeed at everything, he cares and he's trying, but he feels like he's fighting a losing battle. And while he's a member of my professional association, he could be a member of just about any member-based association in today's economy.

This particular leader is burning out for a number of reasons. He's stressed, overworked, and because the team that surrounds him isn't engaged and involved, he's trying to do all the heavy lifting himself. Some of his team are on the way out early - they just can't balance the demands. His team isn't engaged because the previous leaders weren't

engaged and enrolled in the vision, primarily because leaders before them hadn't created or clearly defined the long-term plan. Those leaders were likely failed because of the changes that were brought on by the economic downturn, such as fewer training opportunities, less availability from national staff and less guidance from more experienced members, because they, like many of us, struggle with the very same time demand issues.

In offering him some experience sharing, I explained that the two best tool sets that a Chapter leader can deploy are credit reversal and long-term Strategy. While these two tools are powerful in an association setting, they also are impactful in business and parenting, where the ability to help others learn to lead is paramount.

Let me explain.

We all, know as leaders, that running a chapter is tough, but not the hardest thing that we've ever done. Things can go wrong, but those things are rarely "big and hairy". Experience comes in really handy here, for newer folks are afraid to take initiative and lead out of the fear that "something might go wrong". This isn't just a problem for association groups, businesses are struggling under the weight of younger hires who are terrified to "make a mistake" in the eyes of the boss. There is no single more powerful business leadership technique than the following simple skill.

Who can say no to that? Besides, you know instinctively, how bad can “bad” possibly be? Even if things blow up, you’re an experienced leader. You know that you can step in and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, so help the new kids taste success...they’ll get addicted, really, really quickly and they’ll come back and ask for more, because they like getting the credit.

Once you have folks engaged and enrolled in what you’re working on, then you can start to choose these tasks based on your long-term strategic plan...and you’ve absolutely got to have a long-term plan, because without the big targets in mind, the little decisions are really tough to make. If you don’t have one, corner your leadership team and throw some strategic darts at a dart board, if nothing else, but get something on paper. Decide where the chapter needs to be in 5 years...and be brutal about it. Make big, hairy, audacious guesses. It’s all going to get revised each year, anyway.

Having a strategic plan makes deciding what needs to be done on a daily basis easy. Think of it as your roadmap. Until you know that your final destination is, say, Nashville, you don’t have any idea which way to turn at the end of your own street.

If you’ll take the time to start doing some strategic planning and learn that true leaders give credit freely, but always take what little blame there is, you’ll have an outstanding organization that is consistently winning awards.

Also, once you start to put these strategies into action, share the wealth. Connect with leaders of other chapters and groups in your immediate area. Look for those people that seem to naturally excel at executing these tasks and engage them as higher-level leaders. Record what works and what doesn’t and constantly document your best practices, so that you can pass what you’ve learned on to the next generation of leaders.

While it’s understood that our connected economy is only going to continue accelerating, you’ve got to think strategically, see the long-term picture and act in a way that grow the people around you. If you make a few “heroes”, those folks will eagerly let you guide them to a far better future for your organization. In business, helping others quickly learn problem solving and leadership skills can make the difference between success and failure, so adapting these simple skills to your association, your business and your life will allow you to multiply your leadership skills.

# THE RACE TO THE BOTTOM

Let's Fix Construction Blog 4/9/19 - Contributed by Eric D. Lussier

I'm knee deep in a project right now that I'll call it what it really is: bailing the Owner out. Know what you get when you don't create bidding documents and rely solely on a low price? You get what you get. And if I say that phrase aloud in front of my 5 and 8-year-old, they add "and you don't pitch a fit".

Well, when one doesn't create an RFP, not to mention any sort of construction specification or drawing, how can one hold any level of expectation about their finished product? This Owner bought off a non-descriptive proposal and carried what matters most in the construction industry too much of the time: the lowest price.

I don't have the time, the space, nor the want, to fully go down the road of the low-bid scenario. I will call it as I see it as a subcontractor: it's the short end of the stick. And yet it is still the "solution" for the most popular project delivery method in the construction industry today: design-bid-build.



Let us Cliffs Notes design-bid-build within a tweet's 280-character limit:

Owner has vision. Owner works with architect on design for vision. Architect develops schematics. Fine tunes. Vision formalized. Architect develops formal drawings & specifications for GC. Duration? Years? GC gets days to decipher vision. End result? Be cheapest.

But that's simplifying things, you say. Sure, that may be. But in a nutshell, that's the process.

One of the frustrating things about working with designers and developing specifications is becoming the basis of design, or an approved equal, only to be just breaking the sweat of the marathon race. Once you're named in a spec, you now must win the spec. And how do you ultimately win the spec? Match it and be the cheapest and ultimately, hope. Hope? Sure. Hope your price lands in the lap of the estimator in time. Hope they have time to read it. Hope they pick up what you're putting down. Hope they want to work with you. Hope you meet their qualifications to work together. Hope you can meet your estimate and make goal profit margin. Hope it all goes to plan. Hope you get paid in full in a timely fashion.

So, how can we fix this dilemma? Well first, the construction industry must recognize it as one. But, what are the definitions of a dilemma? One is "a difficult situation or problem". Yes, I'd say we have a dilemma then. But what is definition two? Its "a situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternatives, especially equally undesirable ones." Do we have that widely accepted design-bid-build aka low-cost project delivery alternative at the moment?

After speaking to an industry ally just the other day about our low-bid environment, she forwarded me the requirements for a "Category Weighting" system on a project that she was working on with a customer in Canada. Using this method, pricing is weighted as only one fifth of the overall part of the winning bid. The experience and qualifications of the contractor were worth one tenth, the Superintendent? Almost one third weighted. And an Operational Impact Assessment of the facility was two fifths of the total weight. So, to summarize:

Pricing - 20

Experience & Qualifications – Contractor 10

Experience & Qualifications – Superintendent 30

Facility - Operational Impact Assessment 40

Total Points - 100

While perhaps not adaptable to all projects and circumstances, utilizing a system like this could eliminate the race to the bottom that design-bid-build can become. What's it going to take for a system like this to be used more often? A private Owner with deep pockets is a start. By not having the public funding and taxpayers to answer to will allow the Owner to truly call his own shots. Yes, this project delivery "method" may cost more than the traditional design-bid-build, but who said the true vision of the owner was cheap to begin with anyway?

# THIS ISN'T THE BIRDS AND THE BEES

Let's Fix Construction Blog - 3/12/19 - Contributed by Eric D. Lussier



You can never start a conversation early enough in construction. Why is it that we wait so long to have that difficult talk? This isn't the birds and the bees with a pre-teen. This is real world ramifications that can affect many on a project.

We' are working on a flooring replacement project that we bid in April of 2018. This project has been on the verge of installation since September. We go over and above to ensure that our proposal is very clear at the time of the bid: What we will do, what we won't do and what is the responsibility of others.

It's important to note that any flooring contractor is not the Clark Kent of a renovation project. More importantly, we are not Clark Kent's alter ego, Superman, on a project. Meaning, we don't have x-ray vision. Conditions underneath existing

flooring are unknown to all until the existing flooring and adhesive is removed and the base slab is 100% visible. You could have unexpected layers of flooring or adhesives, hazardous materials such as asbestos, mercury or lead, excessive concrete cracking, delaminating patching or high concrete moisture. Since we've seen each and every one of these unforeseen instances in the past, we exclude any and all subfloor preparation.

If you are preparing construction documents or readying for a flooring project yourself and you have a certain end result in mind and it needs to be included as part of the base bid contract, you need to be very exact and precise with wording. The end result should be so clear in your documents that a layman can understand the proposed scope of work.

On this particular project, the scope of work included flooring removal and to provide the following:

1. Two hundred (200) linear feet of concrete slab repair
2. One hundred and fifty (150) square feet of concrete slab patching
3. Four hundred (400) square feet of concrete slab leveling

What's wrong with that scope? From a flooring contractor's perspective, I offer you the following response on each line item.

1. 200 linear feet of what width and what depth? Linear feet, to me, typically infers cracks. Saw cuts are normally an 1/8" to 3/16" wide and would be treated easily enough. But I've also removed a tile floor and found the slab at a construction joint completely broken apart so that there was a 1" wide joint that was approximately 6" deep. It required backer rod and a polyurea/elastomeric patching compound.
2. 150 square feet of slab patching may be the most clear cut, but it's still open to interpretation. Is that a 1/16" skim coat? 1/8" patching? If the latter, that is twice the material that needs to be utilized and a depth should have been specified.
3. Four hundred feet of leveling. Leveling what? Is it an 1/8" out of spec? 1/4"? Half inch? Turns out on this job the slab was out OVER 3/4" of an inch in some areas. Specify a depth of leveling for intent.

If you're unsure if your scope of work is clear and sufficient, ask for help. Reach out to a trusted advisor for review and response of your specification. Or if you are unsure of what your proposed scope should be, carry an allowance so that all bidders are working with the same exact dollar figure. An allowance may not cover all of the work that needs to occur, but at least it ensures that everyone is on the same playing field and you have money to start working with, should it be necessary.

Fast forward on this project to the flooring and adhesive being removed by the contractor - which took three weeks for 9,000 square feet and not "two days" like they told us it was going to take. The spec noted 'Contractor shall examine existing concrete slab after removal of existing floor surface the concrete subfloor shall have no greater variances than 1/8" within a 10 ft diameter. Any deviations should be noted to Directors Representative and Architect.' We profiled the floor and created an elevation sheet, and have areas that are out over 3/4". Our suggested course correction? An approximate 3/4" cementitious underlayment overpour on the entire surface to bring it to within spec. The response by the architect? The prep was in the spec and the contractor should have made the architect/owner aware 11 months ago that the spec was in error and could not be properly bid as is.

Where does the onus lay on this? From our experience, we personally don't believe the general contractor was experienced enough with flooring replacements to realize that the specification was not properly written. So while the spec also said 'Contractor shall prepare existing concrete slab per ASTM F-710-08 (sic) Standard Practice for Prepping Concrete Floors to Receive Resilient Flooring', to what end is the general contractor liable for circumstances outside the norm?

From the architect's stance, they believe their scope was clear cut and the contractor should have made them aware of errors and omissions earlier in the process.

As we are contracted to the General Contractor, we will always fight for their best interest. If they look good, we look good. But from our stance, we've been clear since day one: our proposed scope WILL include this and that and will NOT include that and this. We've been very transparent in our mind and we will not move forward with an installation on a substandard slab. Nor will we incur extra time or money on this job that has already cost us well over fifty hours in project management time.

Is there a moral to this story? If there is, it would be to be clear - in your proposal, in your bidding documents and in your intent. If you see an error or omission? Declare it - early and often.

## Quote of the Day

***“Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, determines your destiny. “***

Aristotle

# BIDDING AN APPLE AGAINST AN ORANGE

Let's Fix Construction Blog - 8/19/19 - Contributed by Russell Harrison

As product reps, most of us have it pretty easy in our day-to-day lives. Sure, there are long days walking, driving, or even flying from meeting to meeting. And don't forget the many nights in hotels!!! But overall, our jobs aren't too difficult.

Well, except for the one thing that we don't have control over. When the drawings and specifications don't agree on a project. This is always a difficult spot to be in for a product rep. I won't even start to cover what happens at the subcontractor level, as that's a blog post unto itself.

Has anyone ever wondered what happens when a manufacturer's rep is asked to provide a bid in that instance? Many things happen, and not necessarily all of them are good! To give you a background on what products I cover as a rep, I handle aluminum composite materials (ACM), plate, and honeycomb panels in the Pacific Northwest. Our products are specified on a regular basis. A good number of projects we end up working on are handled via substitution request.



Typically, when a subcontractor gets an invite where one of our products are being used (material, not necessarily manufacturer specified), we're forwarded some, or all of the information we need to get started on providing a material bid. As reps, we get to go through the details and specs to make sure they work together and there aren't any issues. In the last month, I've had eight or ten projects come across my desk where the specs and details did not agree, even to the point of ACM rainscreen panels being specified, but the drawings calling out honeycomb barrier panels. That, kids, is an apples and oranges conversation and very difficult to negotiate at the architectural level without ruffling feathers!

The first thing that I do when providing a subcontractor request is to annotate the project spec and note where our proposed substitution is an equal or comparable, but I always include notes where there was a “miss” on the part of the architecture team to either make sure the spec was clean or where the details don’t match the specs. Unfortunately, because my notes are on the spec, it always seems that I’m picking on the specifier, but I’m not. Regrettably, it’s a feature of the substitution request process, since they are typically based around the specifications.

Something interesting that has happened to me in the last few weeks is being invited into a couple of firms to discuss the “misses” on two projects to try and clean them up via addendum. What was really interesting was that both times the design architect was who I met with and the specifier was nowhere to be found. They were either too busy with another project or located in another office. This seemed odd to me, only for the fact that both areas needed to be discussed, not just the drawing details. Either way, I was impressed to be called in to discuss how the next addendum could handle the highlighted issues.

One thing I will say, is hopefully my annotated specs don’t hit the addendum as part of the sub-request package. Mainly, because it would be like a graded paper from high school that everyone gets to see, but no one wants to show to the public. Who wants to have their work out in the ether for everyone to review and see the mistakes? Not me, that’s for sure!

As product reps, the one thing that most of us offer, but most don’t seem to use on a regular basis, is detail and spec review of masters and/or project specific documents. If more design teams were able to rely on their local reps with CDT after their names (prior to construction documents (CDs) being released and hopefully as early as schematic design (SDs)), the bidding phase would be cleaner, there would be less misses, and less “I’m going to throw money at what I don’t understand to cover myself” on the subcontractor level.

Speaking as a product rep to designers: please use us...abuse us...and let us make your projects better. We love getting messy using red pens and markers to help make projects work for everyone involved!

## *IDIGHARDWARE BLOG— WORDLESS WEDNESDAY PHOTO*

*Reprinted from IDIGHARDWARE Blog as  
provided by Lori Greene at Allegion*

Today's Wordless Wednesday photo.

This is the only door leading to a small auditorium located in the children's section of the local library. I don't have a problem with the castle theme, since this is the outside of the door. Anyone see the issue?



# WORD OF THE MONTH

## **Bafflegab** (Ba-fəl-,gab )

Origin: *English, 20th century.*

Definition:

1. Messy, wordy jargon
2. Incomprehensible gibberish
3. Confusing legal or bureaucratic language

Examples of Bafflegab in a sentence

"The contract was full of so much bafflegab that I don't even know what I agreed to."

"Do your words have actual meaning, or is it all just bafflegab?"

If you are interested in following the Little Rock Chapter, our links are as follows (*for Facebook and LinkedIn look for the CSI Little Rock Chapter*):

**Website:** <https://csilittlerock.org>

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

**LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

If you are interested in Joining CSI or if you are just interested in keeping up with the information provided by CSI, follow this link to the Institute Website Membership Pages:

For Membership Information:

<https://www.csiresources.org/communities/membership/individual-membership>

To Join CSI:

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To See what CSI is all about:

[https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/CSIRESOURCES/143a718d-6df6-484a-8a79-76d79635b741/UploadedImages/CSI\\_ResourcesCatalogFinalLowRes.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/CSIRESOURCES/143a718d-6df6-484a-8a79-76d79635b741/UploadedImages/CSI_ResourcesCatalogFinalLowRes.pdf)

# LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER INFORMATION

## Chapter Officers

President:		Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT
President-Elect:		Melissa Aguiar, CSI, CCS, CDT, SCIP
Immediate Past President:		Open
Secretary:	T	Melissa Aguiar, CSI, CCS, CDT, SCIP
Treasurer:		Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT
Directors		
Operations		Rachal Belanger, CSI
Honors		Melissa Aguiar, CSI, CCS, CDT, SCIP
Membership		Carlie Massery, CSI
Education / Certification		Open

## Chapter Info

<b>Chapter Website:</b>	<b><a href="https://csilittlerock.org">https://csilittlerock.org</a></b>
<b>Chapter Newsletter:</b>	<b>SpecWork</b>
<b>Chapter Meeting Day and Time:</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of Each Month unless otherwise specified by the Chapter President</b>
<b>Chapter Board Meeting Day and Time:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each Month unless otherwise specified by Chapter President</b>

If you are interested in Joining CSI or if you are just interested in keeping up with the information provided by CSI, See the slides shown from the "Why CSI" presentation