

HONORING DR. KEN HOVER



Chris Tull, BS CE1987



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Awards

- Tau Beta Professor of the Year 1994
- Stephen Weiss Presidential Fellowship Award 2000
- Cornell Council (Senior Class) Award 2015
- CEE Professor of the year... too many times to count.
- Past President of the American Concrete Institute

Awards

The teacher: Kenneth C. Hover Cornell University

Concrete can be fun



Ken Hover uses unusual props to teach concrete technology.

Few people have explained as much about concrete to so many people with as much clarity as Dr. Kenneth Hover, who recently completed his second decade at Cornell University where he is professor of structural engineering. If you've never participated in one of Ken's presentations, you're really missing something. From a guy with a PhD in engineering, it's surprising how much fun it can be to learn why concrete behaves the way it does.

A series of fortunate occurrences led to Hover's becoming the effective and influential educator he is today, beginning with a construction project at his high school the summer before his senior year, in the late 1960s. Up until that point he had been "absolutely certain" that he was going to become a high-school Spanish teacher.

After completing his freshman year at the University of Cincinnati, Hover entered the university's co-op program, alternating quarters of being a full-time student with quarters spent working for Dugan and Meyers, a local construction company. He joined them full time the year before graduation. As chief estimator for heavy and highway construction, he brought in the low bid for the concrete work on the I-471 bridges over the Ohio River, and he then ran the field office for construction of the bridge while he finished his degree.

Curious by nature, Hover began studying why so many concrete structures were deteriorating. As a result of several coincidences, he received an ACI scholarship and the Exxon fellowship to pursue a doctorate at Cornell. Hover joined the Cornell faculty when he completed his PhD in 1984.

Today he is in great demand and is widely acknowledged as one of the top speakers on the technical aspects of concrete. He also spends a great deal of time on concrete-related construction problems in the field, and his research and teaching are directed toward understanding and solving those kinds of problems. Hover credits his early work in the construction industry with helping him keep engineering education alive and relevant, and it is where his roots remain. "A university position is a great opportunity when you take teaching seriously," he says. "You get immediate feedback by looking at the students. You know whether you're coming across. To see their eyes light up when they get it—that charges my battery!"

My Story



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