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Wiss, Janney, Elstner Mourns the Loss of Don Pfeifer, Expert In Concrete Structures and Concrete Materials Research

NORTHBROOK, IL (December 5, 2011) - As a nationally recognized expert in concrete structures, concrete materials, and the investigation and repair of concrete-related problems, Don Pfeifer was a pioneer in the development of solutions for corrosion-related distress in reinforced concrete structures. Mr. Pfeifer passed away on December 4, 2011 at the age of 75.

“Don’s contributions to WJE’s growth, reputation, and success were substantial,” said WJE President William Nugent. “He was known for his infectious enthusiasm and his straightforward approach to problem solving. We are saddened by his passing.”

Born on September 25, 1936, in Aurora, Illinois, Pfeifer’s interest in engineering brought him to the University of Illinois, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1959 and a master’s degree in theoretical and applied mechanics in 1960.

Pfeifer’s professional career started at the Portland Cement Association (PCA) in Skokie, Illinois. From 1960 to 1970, he carried out a wide range of research investigations at PCA. His major work involved structural lightweight aggregate concretes, precast panels, and architectural concrete, as well as laboratory and field instrumentation studies of state-of-the-art tall, reinforced concrete buildings.

After leaving PCA in 1970, Mr. Pfeifer served as the director of the structural precast division of the Prestressed Concrete Institute (PCI) from 1970 to 1972, with responsibility for technical, marketing, and educational efforts. During this time, he visited over eighty prestressed concrete plants to discuss production and engineering problems.

In 1972, Mr. Pfeifer joined the Westinghouse Prestressed Concrete Division. As the manager of strategic engineering for Westinghouse from 1972 to 1976, Pfeifer conducted in-plant studies of production problems associated with precast, prestressed concrete. He performed structural studies that involved fire tests, lateral load-distribution

tests, and prestress losses on AASHTO bridge beams. He also developed a pretensioned concrete crosstie that was tested by the Federal Railroad Administration.

Mr. Pfeifer joined Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE) in 1976, where he founded and managed a Materials group. His consulting activities at WJE involved the investigation and repair of corrosion of reinforcement in concrete structures a; concrete mix designs for nuclear construction and large bridge projects; underwater tremie concreting; architectural concrete; long-term creep and shrinkage studies on concrete; corrosion studies of alternative deicing products for structural steel and reinforced concrete bridge members; facade and laboratory investigations involving glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) panels; elastomeric bearing pads; and numerous projects dealing with concrete materials.

From 1979 to 1994, Pfeifer served as principal investigator on four major corrosion-related studies sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). These studies resulted in the 1981 NCHRP 244 Report, *Concrete Sealers for Protection of Bridge Structures*; the 1987 FHWA Report RD-86/193, *Protective Systems for New Prestressed and Substructure Concrete*; the 1989 NCHRP 313 Report, *Corrosion Protection of Prestressing Systems in Concrete Bridges*; and the 1998 five-year FHWA study, *Corrosion Resistant Reinforcement for Concrete Components*.

Mr. Pfeifer was a member and Fellow of PCI, the American Concrete Institute (ACI), and the honorary fraternities Chi Epsilon and Sigma Tau. He served on technical committees for PCI and ACI, and he published more than fifty technical papers.

About WJE

Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE), is an interdisciplinary firm of architects, structural engineers, and materials scientists that specializes in the investigation, analysis, testing, and design of repairs for historic and contemporary structures. WJE focuses on delivering practical, innovative, and technically sound solutions across all areas of construction technology. Since the firm's founding more than fifty years ago, WJE specialists bring the collective experience gained from conducting more than seventy-five thousand investigations worldwide to every construction challenge. WJE combines state-of-the-art laboratory and testing facilities, nationwide offices, and knowledge sharing systems to provide solutions for the built world. For more information, please visit wje.com.

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