



Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association



The **Emerging Leaders Academy** is changing the face of leadership by fostering a new generation of leaders.

## TACA is working to ensure that Texas has a highly trained and professional industry leadership base to meet the demands of one of the fastest-growing states in the nation

Top Right: The 2019 graduating class of TACA's Emerging Leaders Academy.

Top Left: Collaboration among peers is a top priority of the Emerging Leaders Academy.

The Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association (TACA) member companies work hard to supply the state with the aggregates, concrete and cement it needs to build our homes, businesses, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure.

But how will it ensure that Texas is able to meet its growing demand for the materials that build and maintain our infrastructure as the population grows by roughly 1,000 people a day?

By nurturing that other 'natural resource': leadership.

In 2014, TACA developed the Emerging Leaders Academy, which fosters professionalism and leadership within the industry to ensure that a new generation of leaders will have the training and education to tackle the many issues that come with unprecedented population growth.

### TACA's Emerging Leaders Academy identifies and nurtures leadership talent

A rigorous three-year program that offers accredited industry leader certification, TACA's Emerging Leaders Academy first identifies those within the aggregate, concrete and cement industries who possess natural leadership qualities.

The Academy then provides participants with the foundation that will help them become effective leaders, which includes a dynamic curriculum of leadership concepts, a better understanding of TACA's importance to the industry and the tools to construct a charitable project that benefits the local community. The Academy, which is facilitated by leadership and development professional and Academy Dean Rick Kolster of Peak Performance Group, is open to TACA Allied or Producer Members.

"The Emerging Leaders Academy is changing the face of leadership in the concrete and aggregate industry by fostering a new generation of leaders," said Kolster, who founded the Academy.

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“As an association that represents the best interests of the aggregates, concrete and cement industries, we have an obligation to help educate and foster the next generation of industry leaders,” said Josh Leftwich, President & CEO of TACA. “The Emerging Leaders Academy has been very successful in doing just that, graduating an annual class of dynamic and highly motivated professionals.”

“I decided to do it to grow myself and to help grow CEMEX as well. Highlights have been the personal value- and goal-setting that I had no idea how to do before the Emerging Leaders Academy. Also, the friendships I have made will last a lifetime. I would recommend that all young leaders dedicate themselves to the class. It has helped me grow very quickly in my career and as a person.”

Adam Slusser, Aggregates Plant Manager, CEMEX  
Emerging Leaders Academy Graduate, Class of 2019



ELA charitable programs work to better the community.

“It was good to get new tools in leadership and then confirm some of the old tools I had before. Highlights include the interactive camaraderie and spirit that is promoted in this learning environment.”

Dean Kittel, Plant Operations Manager, US Concrete  
Emerging Leaders Academy, Class of 2018

“I was ready to take on more work and initiative but I didn’t know how. The Emerging Leaders Academy gave me the tools and confidence to step up and show I could be more of a leader within my company and the industry.”

Kristel Perry, Marketing Manager, Capitol Aggregates  
Emerging Leaders Academy Graduate, Class of 2019

“The value of Emerging Leaders for me had to come from humbling myself to figure out what you need to work on to become the best leader you possibly can.”

Jeremiah Crespo, Performance Engineer, Lattimore Materials  
Emerging Leaders Academy, Class of 2022

“The value of the ELA is the lessons learned that I will take with me throughout every step of my career and even in my personal life.”

Kellie Smotherman, Controller, 37 Building Products  
Emerging Leaders Academy, Class of 2022

## ELA Benefits:

- Providing engaging coursework dedicated to developing leadership skills within the aggregate, concrete, and cement industries that are independent of and complementary to in-house corporate training programs;
- Fostering relationships among peers;
- Helping improve retention of industry professionals;
- Stressing the importance of TACA involvement in shaping the industry within Texas; and
- Promoting the importance of community involvement in the industry.



TACA Emerging Leaders constructed and gifted more than 300 bicycles to those in need in Dallas and San Antonio.

## Community initiatives are integral to the program

Community service is one of the cornerstones of the Academy. Participants identify, fundraise for and coordinate a donation to a charity they believe will have the biggest community impact. Through charitable giving, participants are given a better understanding of the communities in which they live and work. Over the past three years, community service contributions have totaled more than \$100,000, including in-kind donations of materials and labor.

## About the Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association

The Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association (TACA) is the main resource for the aggregate, concrete, cement and other associated industries in Texas. The association represents its member companies by providing industry information to the public, media, policymakers and regulators; advocating for industry issues; ensuring member companies commit to conducting business with integrity, respect, transparency and honest communication; and creating industry training courses and materials that help members effectively manage their businesses.