

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Chicago Committee on High Rise Buildings
2026 CCHRB Scholarship Seminar
Chicago, Illinois

What: *High Rise Facade Design and Performance Testing: Past Lessons, Current Practice, Future Innovations*

Put your facades to the test. The 2026 **CCHRB Scholarship Seminar** will focus on the past, present, and future of facade design and performance testing. Using the CCHRB's 1989 symposium "Exterior Cladding on High Rise Buildings" as a starting reference, this seminar will review the continuing evolution of facade testing on the state-of-the-art facade design and will focus on the current challenges being resolved today, including what is being discovered about the differences in outcomes from digital modeling and physical testing.

Designing for bird safety will address current findings and recommendations for glass facades and the methods and challenges in testing for actionable outcomes. The seminar will also discuss current challenges and what is next for facade performance in tall buildings, reflecting on past accomplishments, current limitations, and challenges from future climate conditions for the exterior cladding.

Continuing Education: Four hours of Continuing Education HSW Credits are available for members of AIA, pending AIA review and approval of the program

Presentations:

- *Curtain Wall Systems Through the Test of Time: Key Innovations and Lessons*
- *Facade Torture - A 2-Way Street*
- *A Flight of Fancy - Designing for the Birds*
- *Designing for Future Climate: Rethinking Curtain Wall Performance and Testing for the Next Generation of Tall Buildings*

Who Should Attend: Architects, engineers, designers, contractors, subcontractors, developers, building owners, property managers, building officials, fire officials, and those involved in the planning, design, construction, and operation of buildings of all types and heights, especially "high rise" buildings.

Date and Time: Thursday, June 18, 2026
8:30 AM – 1:00 PM (Central)

Location: **The Auditorium at AON Center**
200 East Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Sponsor: **Chicago Committee on High Rise Buildings:** <https://www.cchrb.org/>
Proceeds from this seminar go towards the annual CCHRB Scholarship Fund.

Cost: \$150.00 Members of CCHRB or Co-sponsoring organization
\$175.00 Non-members
\$50.00 Students [Student identification will be required at check-in].

Group Discounts of 5 tickets for the price of 4 are available.

Direct link to registration: <https://www.cchrb.org/2026-annual-seminar-2/>

SCHEDULE

8:30 Call to Order and Welcoming Remarks

Lucas Tryggestad, Chair: Chicago Committee on High Rise Buildings

8:35 Introduction

Erik Harris, Chair of the Seminar Task Force

8:45 - 9:30am

Curtain Wall Systems Through the Test of Time – Jim Zorn

- REVISITING THE 1989 CCHRB SYMPOSIUM: KEY INNOVATIONS AND LESSONS

9:30 - 10:30am

Facade Torture - A 2-Way Street – Mark Meshulam, REWC

- WE TORTURE-TEST FACADES TO LEARN HOW THEY WILL ENDURE, AND LEARN PAINFUL LESSONS WHEN WE DON'T

10:30 Refreshment Break

10:45 - 12:00pm

A Flight of Fancy - Designing for the Birds – David Swain, AIA, LEED AP, Ken DeMuth, AIA, Annette Prince, Heidi Treudell

- INTEGRATING MATERIALS AND TESTING FOR BIRD-FRIENDLY DESIGN

12:00pm - 1:00pm

Designing for Future Climate – Luke Leung, ASHRAE FELLOW, LEED FELLOW, BEMP, P.E.

- RETHINKING CURTAIN WALL PERFORMANCE AND TESTING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALL BUILDINGS

1:00 Closing Remarks

Lucas Tryggestad

Additional Information: Erik Harris, Seminar Task Force Chair:
eharris@gpchicago.com

Continuing Education: Four hours of Continuing Education HSW Credits are available for members of AIA, pending AIA review and approval of the program. Sign-in sheets will be provided at the end of the seminar for automatic registration. Information for self-reporting of CEU credits will also be available. A certificate for the continuing education learning units may be provided upon request.

Presentation 1 **Curtain Wall Systems Through the Test of Time**
Key Innovations and Lessons

Jim Zorn
President
Zorn Façade Solutions, LTD

Learning Objectives

1. Identify how innovative enclosure designs were developed and validated through testing, third-party evaluation, and calculations—advances that later enabled improved computer simulation and modeling.
2. Explain how project-specific conditions in exterior wall design address fundamental engineering challenges related to loads, building movement, and thermal expansion.
3. Describe how façade fabricators' means and methods influence wall design while meeting required performance criteria.
4. Summarize the historical evolution of curtain wall systems and their integration with local context and applications.

Presentation 2 **Façade Torture - A 2-Way Street**
We Torture-Test Facades To Learn How They Will Endure, And Learn
Painful Lessons When We Don't

Mark Meshulam, REWC
President
Façade Consultants

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the reasons for testing of façade and façade components.
2. Gain an overview of the situations in which testing is needed (product certification, PMU, specialized such as wind tunnel and glass durability)
3. Gain an overview of the types of tests that are used in the situations listed above.
4. Understand the difference between calculated results and tested results.

Presentation 3 **A Flight of Fancy - Designing for the Birds**
Integrating Materials and Testing for Bird-Friendly Design

David Swain, AIA, LEED AP
Technical Design Director
Studio Gang

Ken DeMuth, AIA
Director
Pappageorge Haymes Partners

Annette Prince
Director, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors
Chair, Bird Friendly Chicago

Heidi Trudell
Bird Friendly Specialist, Regional Technical Advisor
Guardian Glass

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize the basic behavioral patterns of birds and why it is relevant for the Chicago built environment to address the significant number of birds killed every year due to collisions.
2. What is the American Bird Conservancy Threat Factor and the testing procedures to evaluate glass make-up for Threat Factor determination?
3. Case studies for implementation and sourcing of bird-friendly glazing solutions.
4. Where in the US are bird-friendly design ordinances and policies being adopted and what is the current City of Chicago approach to addressing this issue?

Presentation 4

Designing for Future Climate:

Rethinking Curtain Wall Performance and Testing for the Next Generation of Tall Buildings

Luke Leung, ASHRAE Fellow, LEED Fellow, BEMP, P Eng
Principal
SOM

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will be able to evaluate the limitations of current building envelope standards and testing criteria in the context of future climate conditions affecting tall buildings.
2. Participants will identify and apply forward-looking design strategies and performance approaches to improve façade resilience against projected climate stressors such as increased temperature, wind, and extreme weather events.

About the CCHRB:

The **Chicago Committee on High Rise Buildings (CCHRB)** is a not-for-profit organization founded to investigate problems or enhancements; support research and disseminate information for the economic design, construction, operation, and rehabilitation of high-rise buildings. Its members are experienced and skilled in the design, construction and operation of high-rise buildings. CCHRB was formally established in 1969, making it the first organization in the world established to specifically advance knowledge of high rise buildings.

For over a decade the proceeds from the annual Seminar help fund the Chicago Committee on High Rise Buildings (CCHRB) Scholarship program. This \$5,000 yearly scholarship supports graduate students, and highly qualified senior and junior-level undergraduates at any college or university with an alumnus who serves as a member of the CCHRB, provided the student's area of study is directly related to some aspect of the design, construction, operation and/or rehabilitation of high-rise buildings. Applicants must submit an essay or a proposal; and must demonstrate academic achievement, community service, extracurricular activities and financial need. Additional information is available on the CCHRB website: www.cchr.org.
