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# The Backbone of This Organization

IN LAST MONTH'S column, I wrote about the first "I" in "IIBEC"—IIBEC's *international* presence. This month, I want to shift perspectives because, of course, IIBEC is not just an international institute; we are also an organization that depends on the service of our *local* chapters.

A few weeks ago, we held the 2024 IIBEC Leadership Development Workshop at our headquarters in Raleigh, North Carolina. This annual event is an opportunity for IIBEC board members, sponsors, and local chapter leaders to gather, exchange ideas, and nurture our leadership skills. It was an honor for me to participate this year, and I was particularly inspired by the many great ideas that the chapter representatives in attendance shared. As I said in my opening remarks at the workshop, "Chapters are the backbone of this organization. IIBEC is successful, in part, due to your efforts at the local level."

These efforts by local chapters are wide ranging and offer something for every IIBEC member. When you join a local chapter, you will find continuing education opportunities, including topics of particular relevance in your local market. You can also enjoy social events, help support charities and the RCI-IIBEC Foundation, *and* participate in your local chapter's critical advocacy work at the municipal, state, and provincial levels of government. Additionally, as the Chicago Area Chapter notes on its web page, an objective for IIBEC chapters is "engendering positive working relations with local trade organizations, construction material manufacturers, and local product representatives." In other words, you won't simply network with other building enclosure consultants in your community (although that in itself is a reason to join)—you'll also have a chance to get to know other local stakeholders who can support you in your pursuit of business success.

One of the things I have enjoyed the most about being a member of the IIBEC Board of Directors and IIBEC's president is the opportunity to visit chapters across the US and Canada, see how they run, attend their educational sessions, and take part in the fun of their golf tournaments, happy hours, dinners, and other outings. The connections I have made through various chapter events have helped me professionally, and they have led to many friendships. It's also been rewarding to witness the next generation of IIBEC leaders improving their leadership skills by volunteering for committees and offices at the chapter level. I can confidently say that, wherever you live, your local chapter needs and wants you to get involved!

The bottom line is that our organization cannot survive or thrive at the national and international levels if we don't tend to our local roots. Therefore, IIBEC is committed to investing in our affiliated chapters and their leaders. IIBEC chapters are organized into regions, and each region director supports local chapters by serving on the IIBEC Board of Directors and providing a conduit to IIBEC staff. I've already mentioned the annual Leadership Development Workshop and the role it plays in fostering leadership skills. Another valuable form of assistance for local chapters is the new Chapter Resource Center (<https://iibec.org/chapter-resource-center>), which is designed to provide immediate support to our volunteer leaders, to assist in facilitating their success, and, in turn, to advance the building enclosure profession across North America and beyond. I hope chapter leaders will log into the IIBEC website and check it out.

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This is my final president's message for 2024, and I want to conclude by wishing you a very happy new year! I look forward to seeing and talking with you in 2025.

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