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## President's message: Preparing for better times

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The latest surveys show that business confidence is improving in this area - a hopeful sign, indeed, as that is the first step in the long road to economic recovery. As we talk with our members this spring, we hear some who share the growing optimism, while others still fear the worst is yet to come, at least for the construction industry. In short, it's still a case of mixed messages for the building side of the industry, with private work still scarce and competition for public work fierce. For members in the windows, weatherization or energy-related trades, business is good; for steel, drywall, flooring and other trades, it's still very tough. Regardless of trade, though, they are survivors, staying in business, and staying members of ASM.

We have noticed that companies are using the downtime wisely, remaking their businesses to be more lean and productive, and taking advantage of opportunities to improve their business through education. Attendance at our seminars has been at record levels this spring, for sessions on the construction economy, Building Information Modeling (BIM), the new data security law, compliance with public construction regulations, navigating c.149A CM at Risk, and safety procedures for aerial lifts. We're looking forward to a great attendance, too, as we end the season on a lighter note, with our Laugh and Learn program on June 10.

While education has always been a core service for our members, it is clearly more important today, which is why we recently formed a partnership with Lorman Education Services, offering members a 30% discount on all Lorman construction and management courses. At the same time, we have been working on a variety of new business services for members - including the Business Practices Interchange. And we look forward to announcing a new cost-saving fleet management program for members in the very near future.

In short, while our members stay focused on getting work, ASM will stay focused on providing the education, services and savings that will help members remain sharp and ready to go when the economy bounces back.

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