



# KENTUCKY CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

## 2022 – 2023 William T. Robertson High School Essay Winner



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### **Past, Present, and Future**

As I stroll down the sidewalk of Main Street in my town, I look at my surroundings and see a timeline. The concrete of the past is at my feet, having resided there for dozens of years. The concrete of the present is to my left, being poured to create a local business' parking lot. The concrete of the future is on my phone's news app; reports of going carbon neutral

as the industry booms like never before.

For as long as I have been alive, I've understood the intricacies and significance of concrete. I come from a history of men in the concrete industry; my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather spent their lives in the business. My dad always made sure to emphasize the significance of concrete to me as I grew up, and I still recognize the importance of it to this day. Where most passerby would see a simple house, I picture the fruition of hard-working men and women's labor. While many would disregard the overpass seen on the road, I envision the tactful planning and execution of creating such a work. Instead of disregarding the sidewalk I pace over, I imagine the people who worked to create it.

My father always told me that concrete has been around so long for a good reason, and he's correct in that regard. Not every invention from ancient Rome has sustained mass usage through today's times, so the ones that made it this far must have a good reason to stay. Clearly, concrete did something right –and that something is longevity. Compared to its opposition, concrete lasts longer, is better for the environment, and is likely the most versatile building material used today.

If one thing is abundantly clear about concrete, it's that it has no signs of stopping any time soon. As the industry works to become carbon neutral in a fight against modern difficulties, it also manages to grow at a tremendous rate. With over 3 billion tons being produced every year, concrete gives people livelihoods. It provides jobs. It puts food on the table. It supports families.

The answer to how concrete has shaped me is simple. It's part of my past, it surrounds me in the present, and it'll be around in my future. But with how much concrete has impacted everybody's lives, I think a better question would be "How has the world been shaped by concrete?"