

Local 416: Reinforcing the Wilshire Grand skyscraper

Before a new world record could be established for the largest continuous concrete pour, members of Reinforcing Ironworkers Local Union 416 had to set the stage.

Nearly 7 million pounds of reinforcing steel needed to be placed and tied by Ironworkers before any records could be broken. It would take 45 to 50 Local 416 ironworkers six weeks to ready the site of the new Wilshire Grand Center in downtown Los Angeles. Then, on a Saturday afternoon in mid-February, a record-setting 21,200 cubic yards of cement could be poured, setting the foundation for a high-rise like no other.

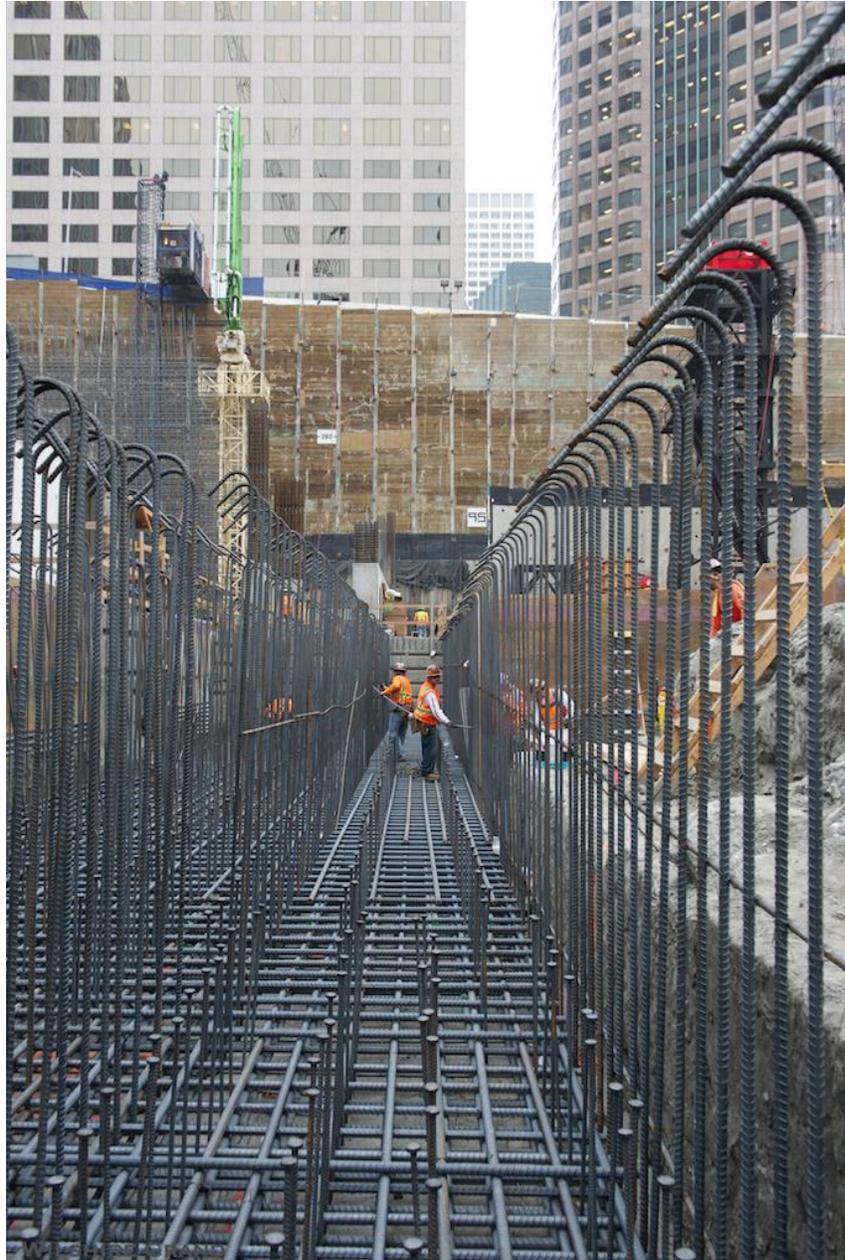


Photo credit: Wilshire Grand/Gary Leonard

Starting at 4:45p.m. on Feb.15, more than 200 trucks made up to 14 trips each to deliver the 82 million pounds of concrete for the foundation of a 73-story tower being built on the site of the old 16-story Wilshire Grand Hotel. The effort lasted 18 ½ hours. Guinness World Records judges on the site verified the pour would indeed break the old record set in February 2006 for the foundation pour of the Federation Tower in Moscow.

“A typical sequenced pour on a similar project would occur over weeks,” said Scott Borland, vice president and construction executive with Turner Construction Company. “With a continuous pour, we saved time. And because we poured at once rather than in segments, we were able to create an incredibly strong foundation for this iconic tower.”



Photo credit: Wilshire Grand/Gary Leonard

The \$1 billion Wilshire Grand will be the tallest building west of the Mississippi, soaring 1,100 feet when completed in 2017. The mixed-use tower will feature 900 guest rooms, conference areas, 400,000-square-foot of Class A office space and more than 45,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space.

Before the record-setting pour, crews spent months excavating a pit 18 feet deep and nearly two-thirds the size of a football field, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Ironworkers lined the pit with nearly 7 million pounds of reinforcing steel to ready the foundation.

“It was an incredible challenge, but we did it. Our Ironworkers helped make history,” said Hart Keeble, Financial Secretary-Treasurer and Business Manager of Local 416. “Setting a world record meant extra challenges. It’s complicated, but our guys know what it takes to get the job done.”

And the job didn’t stop with the record-setting pour. Gerdau, a multi-national steel company, will supply another 20,000 tons of reinforcing steel to the project site over the next two years, providing many more man-hours for the Local 416 crew.

“It’s exciting that we are able to showcase our skills on this project, as well as keep many of our members working,” said Marco Frausto, business agent and president of Local 416. “This will be a point of pride for our members, and they will be sharing stories with their families for



Photo credit: Wilshire Grand/Gary Leonard

years about how Ironworkers helped build this incredible skyscraper in Los Angeles.”

The steel used on the project is manufactured at the Gerdau steel mill in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., and fabricated at the company’s reinforcing steel facility in San Bernardino, Calif.

The Wilshire Grand – which is being developed by the Hanjin Group that owns Korean Air – will be the first skyscraper constructed in the area in more than two decades. The project, which is being built under an all-union project labor agreement, is expected to create more than 11,000 construction jobs.