

SECOND EDITION | 2019

# THE METAL PRESS

## 2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION



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**2019 OKTOBERFEST  
INDUSTRY NIGHT**

# SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO





WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

# WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT



SMACNA Greater Chicago members came away from this year's Annual Conference in May with a renewed energy and commitment to our association. We learned from SMACNA President Nathan Dills that the unionized sheet metal industry as a whole is positioned for success as we step into the summer months and beyond. Hours are up across the board, and the economy has experienced steady growth. We're optimistic that these trends will continue throughout the year.

Recruiting and retaining young talent to the construction industry is a topic of national interest, especially as we're seeing an entire generation on the verge of retirement. At SMACNA Greater Chicago, we're fortunate to have an active Young Executives of SMACNA (YES) group, and regularly encourage our younger members to get involved in our membership meetings, committees and events. As a result, I feel our association is steadily working toward a rejuvenation that is laying a foundation for other local chapters to learn by our example! As we continue to look for ways to maintain our edge in the industry, developing our young leaders will certainly help in the long run.

As one of the largest and most influential sheet metal contracting organizations, SMACNA Greater Chicago continues to focus on giving our members access to the best educational programs and resources available. With safety among our top priorities, we aim to maintain the safest workforce through continual training and strategic messaging. To align with these goals, member companies are invited to enroll in the 2019 Safety Stuffer Program. This year's theme: Game of Groans! Check out the article on page 12 for details.

Our social events are something we all look forward to. These events allow us the opportunity to socialize in a more relaxed setting and get to know one another outside the workplace. The association provides these outings to help keep our membership strong and fun. Have a great summer everyone!

**JOSEPH PASSANNANTE**  
President, SMACNA Greater Chicago



2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION | Join us at the JW Marriott in Austin, Texas

## JOIN US FOR SMACNA'S 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION

Sophistication meets quirky charm during the 2019 SMACNA Annual Convention right in the heart of downtown Austin, at the upscale JW Marriott Austin! You won't want to miss the wealth of networking and educational opportunities, plus local experiences in the Live Music Capital of the World!

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
75 <sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION	OCTOBER 20-23, 2019	JW MARRIOTT AUSTIN, TEXAS

Educational sessions begin on October 21, and include business development sessions, along with forums targeted to labor and HVACR, industrial, residential and architectural sheet metal contractors. During the annual Product Show, construction leaders will be linked with SMACNA Associate Members and trusted vendors to gain valuable knowledge and hands-on experience with some of the most innovative products, technologies and services available in our industry.

**SPEAKERS AND ENTERTAINMENT:**

Speakers and entertainment include corporate event entertainer Gordie Brown, motivational speaker Kevin Brown and comedian Heather Land. Legendary rock band Foreigner will have you seeing "Double Vision" as they close out the convention with some of their most popular songs.

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG/ANNUALCONVENTION**  
Reserve your spot for the premier educational and networking event of the year!



RETIRED

## BEST WISHES, JACK BAER

Join us in congratulating Jack Baer, Air Comfort's vice president of construction, on his retirement! Jack has made many contributions to the sheet metal industry throughout his career, including a term as president of the Chicagoland Sheet Metal Contractors Association in 2007. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!







CLICKSAFETY

## FREE ONLINE SAFETY

SMACNA Greater Chicago is always working to provide value to our member companies. That's why we've partnered with ClickSafety to offer a convenient, FREE-of-charge online safety solution that will help our members build industry-leading safety cultures within their organizations.

Because every business approaches safety training differently, ClickSafety offers a customizable online training portal designed to enhance members' existing safety programs with more training options. Available courses include:

**OSHA 10-HOUR CONSTRUCTION COURSE**

**OSHA 30-HOUR CONSTRUCTION COURSE**

**CONFINED SPACES IN CONSTRUCTION**

**INTRODUCTION: FALL PROTECTION IN CONSTRUCTION**

SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG



LEADERSHIP PROGRAM RECAP | Leading Through Change

## LEADERSHIP SERIES GROWS IN ATTENDANCE

We're pleased to announce that our 2019 "Leading Through Change" leadership series grew in attendance! This follow-up to last year's popular "Leadership Without Limits" was designed to help both emerging and seasoned leaders develop their leadership and communication skills.

This year's series was once again presented by Darryl Harris, whose common sense approach effectively helps attendees learn to successfully navigate and develop their leadership style and overcome challenges. The four-part series included sessions on creating high performance, leading and managing through change, influencing without authority, and effective presentation skills. Members who took part in this year's educational program came away with new ideas to incorporate into their own businesses.

"These leadership classes were invaluable. Darryl has a great way of capturing your attention and making you want to engage in the class, so I was always looking forward to the sessions," said Andrew Yonkus, vice president of State Mechanical Services. "Additionally, we have applied many strategies from the sessions to our business every day. We very much look forward to the next set of classes."

For personnel in the field or in the office, SMACNA Greater Chicago is committed to offering programs that keep everyone at the top of their game, and we continue to keep member education a high priority.

So, what's coming up next? We are excited to expand our educational selection in 2020 to include BOTH of our leadership series! We are also bringing some of national's chapter education to SMACNA Greater Chicago members, which will include programs for foremen, supervisors and project managers. National's popular Technical University will also be offered. Look for registration materials this summer!

We encourage you to take advantage of the excellent educational programs that the national offers. As an incentive, scholarships are available to members for the national's popular Supervisor Training Academy and Project Managers Institute. For full details, visit [www.smacna.org/events-education](http://www.smacna.org/events-education).

**WANT A NEW CLASS BROUGHT TO OUR MEMBERSHIP?**

Email suggestions to: [LAURIE@SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG](mailto:LAURIE@SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG)



MARKETING | Improve your bidding strategy

## FOR A BETTER BIDDING STRATEGY, INCLUDE MARKETING AND PR

Traditionally, contractors who deliver the lowest bid win the project. But as today's construction environment becomes increasingly competitive, contractors need more than just a low-bid strategy. It's time to focus less on selling "price," and more on selling "value."

A great way to promote your value as a company is through a thoughtful public relations (PR) strategy.

"Whether you are highlighting a promising new hire, working on a high-profile project or volunteering as a company in your community, PR opportunities are endless," said Nancy Nehlsen, president of Nehlsen Communications. "The more people hear your name, the more credibility you have during the bidding process. Include positive PR in your bid packet. It's not just the low bid — awareness and trust play important roles in choosing a sheet metal contractor."

While it's true that customers are looking for the lowest price on their projects, they're also looking for quality contractors to do the job right. Companies with a well-defined brand are better positioned to differentiate themselves from the rest of their competitors, and personal branding of your company's key leaders or team members can help even more.

Personal branding is a way to market the top individuals in your company, and is a great way to start cultivating personal connections. When your company leaders are given opportunities to showcase their expertise, they help build your company's credibility and reputation, which can lead to new and repeat business. Promote your experts further by highlighting them on your company website using things like bios and relevant blogs. Then, personalize your bid proposals with information on your experts.

In addition to personal branding, modern PR also includes a strong online presence. Most companies know that a sleek, optimized website is just one piece of the online puzzle. Digital storytelling through social media is another — and with more than 2.32 billion monthly active users across the globe on Facebook, is a route certainly worth considering. By actively participating in social media, your company can interact with current and prospective clients in real time, engage in industry-specific conversations, network and more — all while simultaneously building your company's reputation and increasing your Google ranking so more people can find your business!

Traditional PR avenues are tried-and-true when working to promote your company's value. A well-crafted news release can lead to targeted media, which helps position your company as an expert in your field, raises awareness of your brand and helps your company become more visible to potential clients.

SMACNA Greater Chicago recognizes the role PR can play in business. Our most recent news release used information from our March membership meeting and detailed the critical importance of keeping up with the industry's evolving technology, including ways data can help firms thrive. The release was recently featured in Contractor Magazine and on PHCPro.com — and SMACNA National linked to the article in their Executive News Brief!

Good PR includes everything from your company's brand, to its website, to news about products, personnel, services, training and more. For the best bidding strategy, be sure to incorporate a comprehensive marketing and PR plan that will give your customers the confidence to choose your company.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | Jameson Sheet Metal

# JAMESON SHEET METAL: FILLING A NICHE IN FOOD GRADE FABRICATION

According to industry reports, the percentage of women employed in the construction industry overall has remained fairly consistent since 1996 — hovering between 9-10 percent. But the number of women classified as construction managers has jumped from 5.9 percent in 2003 to 7.7 percent in 2018.

Jameson Sheet Metal is a proud women's business enterprise, certified with the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and the State of Illinois. For 26 years, the Plainfield-based company has become a leader in commercial HVAC, industrial ventilation systems and metal fabrication.

Specializing in retrofits and commercial construction, Jameson Sheet Metal's capabilities include custom design, fabrication and turnkey installation of a wide range of specialty products — with significant experience in stainless steel food-grade items. In fact, the contractor is one of few local manufacturers with the expertise required to serve industrial food processing plants in Illinois and Indiana.

"We work with a number of customers in the food industry who

rely on our expertise to design and deliver superior products that meet or exceed the safety and building code requirements of their industry," said Sondra Joyce, owner. "We are proud to work with each client to tailor products to their specific applications."

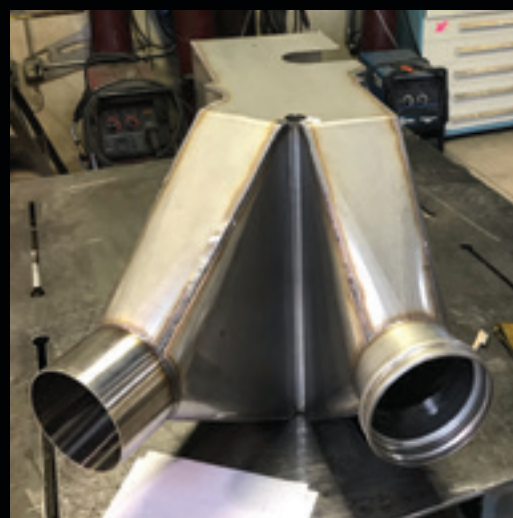
Hoppers, bins, chutes, pneumatic conveyers, tables and more are among the nonstandard configurations that Jameson Sheet Metal can fabricate for food service-specific clients. Recently, the company worked with a local customer to design, fabricate and install eight stainless steel spiral chutes inside product bins.

"The spiral chute is a very difficult fabrication, and the project required substantial preparation from a logistics and safety standpoint, due to working in a confined space," Joyce said.

No matter the customer, all projects are completed using the latest industry technology. Both office and field personnel collaborate on everything from design through the project lifecycle via 3D CAD, resulting in fast and accurate project turnaround.

"Staying current on the technology available within our industry really helps us improve our design quality and streamlines the communication process, not just internally, but with clients as well," Joyce said. "With CAD, we're able to better visualize and produce some complex designs for clients easily and efficiently."

Safety is also among the top priorities for the Jameson team. The company is committed to preserving its excellent safety record by hiring the best-trained workforce and offering opportunities for continuing education.



WELCOME

## NEW MEMBERS

SMACNA Greater Chicago continues to expand by adding valuable associate members to our association.



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THE POWER OF DATA | Josh Bone of DeWalt

# MEMBERS LEARN THE POWER OF DATA DURING MARCH MEETING

Construction and building data exists for almost every project that has ever been built, but harnessing the power of that data through digital avenues is becoming more commonplace in the industry.

“Data is the new oil — it’s going to be very important in moving your business forward,” said Josh Bone, a construction technology specialist at DeWalt. “With data, you can increase your margins and reduce your risk.”

We invited Bone, a SMACNA Greater Chicago Associate Member, to speak during our March membership meeting and show members how technology and data work together in today’s increasingly digital landscape. Here are five ways data can help your business thrive!

## HELPS RECRUIT A NEW GENERATION OF EMPLOYEES.



Millennials are tech-savvy. They grew up with the Internet, and are used to information at their fingertips.

“The last thing millennials want to do is fill out paper-based reports,” Bone said. “Companies are digitizing workflows and taking the laborious task out of the process, and it’s definitely helping them recruit and retain much younger talent. I can say I’ve seen SMACNA members across the country who’ve increased their use of prefabrication, increased their use of BIM and are leveraging big data, and they’ve done a really good job of retaining top talent.”

For an industry on the verge of a crippling labor shortage — both in the office and the field — utilizing new technologies and data solutions can be key to onboarding new talent.

## ENCOURAGES COLLABORATION.



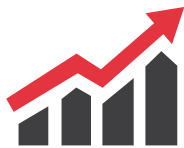
There’s still a place for paper blueprints in the field, but the rise of technology allows teams to visualize entire projects from the design phase all the way through construction, gaining valuable insights from compiled data. Data can now be collected throughout the lifecycle of any given project and shared in real time, improving field and office communications. Compiled data can easily be used to streamline your bidding process, standardize your workflows and track and predict future outcomes on projects.

## REDUCES RISK TO DELIVER BETTER OUTCOMES.



When projects are delayed — whether by human error, weather or other factors — money is lost. By using data analytics, stakeholders can view real-time status reports and project information to determine things like potential risk factors and profitability. The more data that is collected over a project’s lifetime, the more actionable intelligence is gained that can be applied to future projects.

## INCREASES EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY.



Construction companies often juggle many complex projects at once. Information collection, management and analysis for so many moving parts can cause delays and create headaches — but new software solutions designed specifically for our data-rich industry make it possible for companies to process and use large amounts of data.

Construction professionals have used building information modeling (BIM) for a number of years, but it is only recently taking hold and beginning to transform the industry because of its data collection and storage capabilities.

“‘We’ll figure it out in the field’ is changing to ‘we’ll figure it out on the computer,’” Bone said. BIM and CAD programs save time by detecting errors that could cause changes and rework down the road, allowing companies to focus their energy on successful project delivery.

## IMPROVES WORKSITE SAFETY.



Data can help predict risks on the jobsite, and can easily integrate with and make existing safety programs better.

With today’s widespread use of mobile technology, it’s as easy as installing an app that make sense for your project or firm. StriveZero, Safesite and iAuditor are just a few of the apps available to help raise safety standards within your organization. Conduct inspections, log incident reports and perform risk assessments all from your phone or tablet.

“I’ve seen data play a critical role in reducing safety incidents,” Bone said. “The great thing now is there is so much you can do on your mobile devices. Take advantage of these tools that are already available to you.”

Whether you’re a small firm or a large industry leader, embracing today’s technology has never been easier, or more important. The vast amounts of data collected from BIM, apps, wearable devices and more can help streamline every process — from design, to construction, to service — keeping your organization competitive and increasing your profits.







ASSOCIATE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | Thermosystems

# THERMOSYSTEMS: CUSTOMIZING THE CLIENT EXPERIENCE SINCE 2000

Since February 2000, Thermosystems has worked with contractors, engineers, architects and business owners to offer heating and cooling equipment, systems and solutions for a variety of unique applications. The company represents 25 HVAC manufacturers, and serves customers across Chicago, northwest Indiana and central Illinois.

According to Peter Strittmatter, senior sales engineer, roughly 80 percent of SMACNA Greater Chicago members are served by Thermosystems in some capacity. Because of these successful client relationships, Thermosystems officially joined the association as an Associate Member in 2018 as a way to continually stay in touch with the contractors they work with every day.

“Not being in the direct business of sheet metal, it’s important for us to understand the challenges that our customer faces and be a part of the community to help solve the problems we face as a

whole,” Strittmatter said.

Among the top challenges: energy efficiency. Much of Thermosystems’ business focuses on integrating new technologies into building projects — from new construction to retrofits — with a goal of improving affordability and achieving energy savings for the end user.

“It starts with the design,” Strittmatter said. “If you want to save some energy, we’re going to talk about collecting the right type of filtration, sizing the heating

and cooling coils appropriately to minimize energy usage, and use the latest variable speed fan technologies. We optimize all those to make the system as efficient as possible.”

Thermosystems knows that no two projects are the same, so they strive to customize each piece of equipment with technology that will meet the exact jobsite conditions required by clients.

“That’s our value that we add beyond just going into a catalog to pick out a product,” Strittmatter said. “We find out what the hot button issues are and provide solutions that meet exactly what our customers want. We have dedicated salespeople to assist customers throughout the process.”

In addition to LEED-certified experts, the Thermosystems team also includes some of the industry’s top engineers and service technicians, each qualified to perform start-up, testing and maintenance, as well as instruct customers on equipment use and care. Contractors can also rely on Thermosystems to provide a

variety of training opportunities at the Elmhurst headquarters, or travel to the client’s office for lunch-and-learns.

“If contractors are looking to see equipment installed, they can come and look at the equipment we have here. If their service technicians need training, we provide that as well,” Strittmatter said. “When it comes to the office side of things, we do engineering seminars all the time, and if you have a building you’re designing and need more information on a particular product or system, we’ll do a presentation.”

Thermosystems is committed to providing resources that will help the next generation of HVAC professionals gain hands-on experience. Last fall, the company donated engineering services to make the Building Energy Systems Technology Laboratory at Harper College a reality. And this August, the Daikin authorized factory sales representative and service provider will host the Daikin HVAC Innovation Roadshow. The interactive event will feature demonstrations and educational sessions highlighting the latest technology and trends in HVAC and building systems — and interested SMACNA Greater Chicago members are invited! For more information or to RSVP, email Gwyn Greenwalt at GGreenwalt@Thermohvac.com.

As Thermosystems continues to find innovative ways to enhance their partnerships with clients, they’re proud to offer top-notch expertise and responsiveness throughout all phases of a building system’s lifecycle.



INDUSTRY NIGHT 2019 | Hofbrauhaus Chicago

## SAVE DAS DATE: INDUSTRY NIGHT 2019

Grab a stein and join other SMACNA Greater Chicago leaders during Industry Night 2019! Create valuable and lasting industry connections as you enjoy business and delicious German bier during this FREE annual event.

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
INDUSTRY NIGHT 2019	SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 5:30 – 8:30 PM	HOFBRAUHAUS CHICAGO (ROSEMONT)

Industry Night 2019 is your passport to the premier networking opportunity for our members — but it’s also a fun social event. Whether you’re new to the association, a leader in training or a seasoned professional, join us for an energetic, educational and entertaining evening!

**More details are coming soon!**

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE | June 3, 2019

# LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW: END OF SESSION REPORT (06/03/19)

The Illinois General Assembly adjourned Sunday, June 2. Following are highlights that have been pared down to include the legislative updates most pertinent to our industry. For the full report, please go online for a complete update.

Legislators on both sides of the aisle dubbed the spring 2019 legislative session a success with Republicans and Democrats joining together in support of many measures. Legislators approved Governor Pritzker's "Rebuild Illinois" plan that provides \$45 billion to address Illinois' infrastructure needs.

Governor Pritzker has been a champion of finding ways to fix the state's crumbling infrastructure and stated early on that everything would be considered as a possible funding source. This issue became one of the hottest topics discussed this spring. Various groups, including IMSCA, advocated for a comprehensive capital plan that addresses the needs for roads and bridges, as well as vertical infrastructure like state-owned facilities, universities and schools. After years of neglecting our infrastructure needs, the Illinois General Assembly passed a bipartisan

comprehensive infrastructure plan for the first time in a decade.

The final budget agreement approved by the Illinois General Assembly includes a group of business-friendly reforms that were pushed by House Republicans. In exchange for putting Republican votes on the proposed tax increases to fund the capital bill, House Republican Leader Durkin fought for the inclusion of a variety of reforms; two of which were:

- Enact the Blue Collar Jobs Act to help attract large-scale construction projects.
- Provide tax incentives to enhance Illinois' ability to attract data centers to locate in Illinois.

Ongoing negotiation between the four legislative leaders and Governor Pritzker led to the approval of these issues. Although Illinois residents will be paying more in taxes and fees, the results of the spring 2019 legislative session are in stark contrast to the previous years of government dysfunction and a year-long budget impasse. Once push came to shove, super-majority Democrats showed a willingness to compromise on some

issues with Republicans — paving the way for these to be passed in a bipartisan fashion.

IMSCA will continue to monitor progress on these larger issues and approval of the capital plan. As always, we will keep the membership updated. The spring 2019 legislative session was busy, but successful for our association. Thank you to everyone who participated in our Calls to Action and provided feedback on legislation to help define our position on these bills. You will be called upon this summer to assist with efforts seeking Governor Pritzker's signature on SB 1636. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this very important effort.

The Illinois General Assembly returns to Springfield on October 28 for the fall veto session. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact Jessica Newbold by phone at 217.523.4361 or via email at jnewbold@boldnewstrat.com.



YES EVENT RECAP | K1 Speed - Addison

## YES EVENT RECAP: RACING TOWARD TIME MANAGEMENT

Our first YES event of 2019 was a huge success! We had 49 young professionals meet for networking, cocktails and go-kart racing at K1 Speed (Addison). Featured speaker Darryl Harris provided an educational presentation on time management and personal effectiveness, then the group met at the go-kart track for some friendly competition. **Congratulations to our top 3 members who had the best lap times!**



**1 KEVIN OWEN**  
State Mechanical  
Services



**2 ALEXANDER NG**  
CES Mechanical  
Services, Inc.



**3 ALEX D'ORSI**  
GHC Mechanical Inc.

Our young executives are the future of our association — and the sheet metal industry. If you're a young executive, or know someone who is, join us at our regular YES meetings!

For more information about the group and upcoming YES events, visit

**SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG**



2019 SAFETY STUFFERS | Game of Groans

## SAFETY STUFFERS NOW AVAILABLE IN ELECTRONIC FORMATS



The sheet metal guild of SMACNA Greater Chicago doth hereby announce the 2019 Safety Stuffer Programme — Game of Groans!

Lay the groundwork for a strong safety culture and reinforce safe work behaviors with our paycheck safety stuffer program — FREE to SMACNA Greater Chicago members. New this year, you can choose from the traditional paper safety stuffer, a series of safety PDFs that can be emailed and social media graphics that are perfect for posting to company Facebook, Twitter or other social platforms.

**ORDER TODAY!**

**SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG/STUFFERS**







SUMMER OUTING RECAP | Cubs Game at Wrigley Field

## 2019 SUMMER OUTING WAS A BIG HIT!

It was a beautiful day on Chicago's North side — perfect for taking in a Cubs game at Wrigley Field! Our sold-out event brought 110 SMACNA Greater Chicago members together in the Fannie May Bleacher "Sweet" for an exciting game, where we watched as the Cubs completed a three-game sweep over the Pittsburgh Pirates, winning 8-3. Gary Tarazi of International Test & Balance, Inc. impressed everyone who attended with his skills as he predicted the final score before the game even started!

The 2019 Summer Outing was a great event for networking, building connections and relaxing with friends in the industry. We hope everyone who joined us enjoyed the event, and we look forward to seeing new and familiar faces at the events we have planned this fall!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | James Cesak

## SMACNA'S COLLEGE OF FELLOWS TO INDUCT JAMES CESAK



In October, James Cesak, president of Tal-Mar Custom Metal Fabricators in Crestwood, Illinois, will be inducted into SMACNA's College of Fellows during the 2019 SMACNA Annual Convention in Austin, Texas.

A graduate of Washburne Trade School in Chicago, Cesak's four-decade career in the sheet metal industry began with an apprenticeship in 1978. At Tal-Mar, he served as vice president of operations prior to becoming president of the company in 2005.

Cesak currently serves on the SMACNA Greater Chicago Board of Directors. He is also a trustee of both the Local 73 Apprentice and Journeyman Education and Training Fund and the Local 73 Sheet Metal Workers Annuity Fund, and represents SMACNA Greater Chicago on the New Horizons Foundation Summit Council.

Membership in SMACNA's College of Fellows is reserved for top industry professionals who have made significant contributions to advance the sheet metal industry, capping years of committed service and dedication. Congratulations, James!



ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECAP

## 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

More than 80 SMACNA Greater Chicago members and guests gathered in Los Cabos, Mexico, for our Annual Conference from May 1-5. Nathan Dills, SMACNA president, joined us for an informative session on the state of the industry. His discussion included an update on increased man hours throughout the unionized sheet metal industry, and the challenges we face to recruit qualified talent to our field — on both the labor and management side.

In addition to business and networking, the Annual Conference was relaxing and rejuvenating. Members were treated to a number of activities that allowed them to explore the natural beauty of Mexico, like optional horseback, dolphin and cooking experiences. During a catamaran cruise in the Sea of Cortez, we even spotted whales — an unusual sight during the late spring!

We're pleased with the success of the 2019 Annual Conference, and hope to see many new and familiar faces during the educational and social events we have planned this summer and beyond!



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