

April 2024

SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO

# METAL PRESS

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



**SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO:  
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS  
OF EXCELLENCE**

**P. 9-10**



**MEMBER FEATURE:  
EOS MECHANICAL**

**P. 7-8**



**SMACNA**  
GREATER CHICAGO



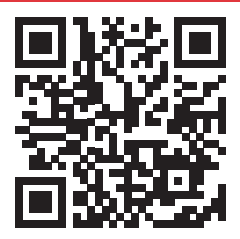
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## METAL PRESS QR CODES



You’ll find QR codes throughout the newsletter that take you to additional content online, including relevant links or event and class registration.



### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

## GROWING OUR CHAPTER: 10 YEARS OF GROWTH, SO MANY TO GO.

In January, the SMACNA Greater Chicago Board of Directors participated in our annual board retreat. This year, we brought in FMI’s team of expert consultants for a half-day presentation designed to give our association’s leadership a comprehensive snapshot of the construction industry. We touched on a variety of important topics with broad strokes, including which trends are shaping our industry, where work is contracting and expanding, ways to boost efficiencies and more. We came away energized and ready to face the challenges that lie ahead, particularly as we navigate the uncertainties that come with an election year.

February brought SMACNA Greater Chicago leaders, contractors and young professionals together with our labor partners at Local 73 and Local 265 during the Partners in Progress Conference. This event gives us a chance to collaborate with our union partners, strengthen those relationships and focus on continuing to build a successful future for everyone in our industry.

Speaking of our union partners, negotiations with Local 265 are set to take place this spring. Our hope is that both sides will come together with reasonable and realistic requests, and we anticipate a smooth process.

Finally, SMACNA Greater Chicago invites you to join in our association’s 10-year anniversary celebrations this year! Our rich history combines SMACNA Chicago and Northeastern Illinois Sheet Metal Contractors Association — a merger orchestrated by our own Executive Vice President, Tony Adolfs, in 2014. The SMACNA Greater Chicago team has rolled out a new logo to commemorate this exciting milestone and is planning a few special events and giveaways throughout the year to keep the momentum going.

Jeff Lukitsh  
President, SMACNA Greater Chicago

## LEGISLATION TO KEEP AN EYE ON

The construction industry is experiencing a massive boom across the nation, in part because of several large infrastructure and economic development bills in the past year. But more federal-level projects means more federal-strength red tape. Should they pass Congress, these three bills will address some of the sticking points of these larger projects.


# 3 BIG THINGS

## THE MOST IMPACTFUL BILLS ON CAPITOL HILL

**T**hanks to the passage of several large infrastructure and economic development bills in the past year, the construction industry is experiencing a massive boom across the nation. Obviously, this is great, but it also brings into focus some issues SMACNA Greater Chicago members have with federal regulations.

We asked Stan Kolbe, SMACNA's Executive Director for Government and Political Affairs, to highlight the three most impactful pieces of legislation on Capitol Hill.

SMACNA GC encourages members to contact their senators and representatives to urge them to support bills like these. Your voice carries weight! To find your congressional reps and how to contact them, visit <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.

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### H.R. 7024: TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND WORKERS ACT

**STATUS:** H.R. 7024 passed the House on Jan. 31 and is up for consideration in the Senate.

#### RETROACTIVE EXTENSION OF 100 PERCENT BONUS DEPRECIATION

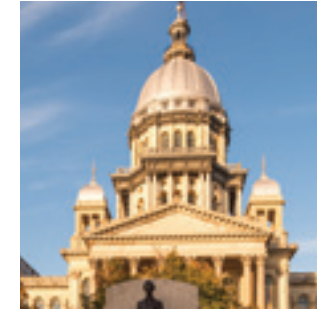
would restore 100 percent depreciation for qualified property instead of the 20 percent annual phase down that's currently in place. This is retroactive for 2023.

#### EXTENSION AND PERMANENCE FOR R&D EXPENDITURES

would allow companies to immediately deduct research and development expenses instead of amortizing over a five-year period. This is retroactive for 2023.

#### EXPAND EXPENSING AND INTEREST DEDUCTIBILITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

would increase the maximum eligible amount of equipment investment and extend the point at which the benefit phases out.



### H.R. 2726: SMALL BUSINESS PAYMENT FOR PERFORMANCE ACT

**STATUS:** Referred to the House Committee on Small Business on April 19, 2023. Has yet to leave committee.

#### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Under current federal practices builders aren't compensated for change orders until the entire federal project is completed. The scope of federal projects can be monumental. Millions of dollars can be added to the cost of a project through change orders. And since federal projects take months or even years to complete, it could be months or years before members are compensated for additional expenses. This bill would require the federal government to pay 50 percent of the cost of a change order once it's certified by a government official and the remaining 50 percent upon project completion.



### H.R. 2891: THE SAFE BANKING ACT

**STATUS:** H.R. 2891 was introduced to the House on April 26, 2023. It was referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity on May 3 and has yet to leave committee.

#### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Currently, most banks do not serve the state-legal cannabis industry because it opens them up to the potential of federal retribution, even if cannabis is legal medically and/or recreationally in that state. Because of this, most business is done in cash. State-sanctioned cannabis growing facilities require extensive, high-tech HVAC infrastructure. The passage of this bill would help SMACNA contractors conduct business more safely with the growing legal cannabis industry.



## ATTRACTING TEENS TO THE TRADES

In 2021, the Heavy Metal Summer Experience was created as a way to introduce teens to the trades. Now three years into the program, HMSE has more than 40 summer camps throughout the U.S. and Canada. This summer, SMACNA Greater Chicago member contractor Sheet Metal Werks will host the first HMSE camp in the Chicago area!

**HEAVY METAL**  
SUMMER EXPERIENCE

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: HEAVY METAL SUMMER EXPERIENCE COMES TO CHICAGO

In the next 5-7 years, 41% of the construction workforce nationwide is set to retire, leaving quite an experience gap in our industry. In response to this growing need for future workers, the Heavy Metal Summer Experience (HMSE) was born.

In 2021, Western Allied Mechanical, Hermanson Company, SMACNA-Western Washington and SMACNA National teamed up to introduce high school students and recent graduates to careers in the building trades.

**“LET’S FACE IT, COLLEGE ISN’T FOR EVERYONE. BY HOSTING A CAMP, WE WANT TO INTRODUCE STUDENTS TO THE EARN-WHILE-YOU-LEARN CONCEPT AND PROMOTE THAT THE SHEET METAL TRADE IS A GOOD CAREER CHOICE.”**

Kevin Ryan | *CEO of Sheet Metal Werks*

Built to offer hands-on learning, students between the ages of 15-19 are exposed to sheet metal, piping, plumbing and electrical trades, and many tour active jobsites and union training facilities for a glimpse at local apprenticeship programs to see firsthand what it takes to succeed.

Now three years into the program, HMSE has grown from just two pilot locations to more than 40 camps throughout the U.S. and Canada.

choice. Not only is it okay to become a skilled worker, but you can make an outstanding living at the same time!”

For nearly 35 years, Sheet Metal Werks has been an industry leader in sheet metal and phenolic duct fabrication. The company’s services include custom Thermaduct and KoolDuct fabrication — innovative systems that resist mold, bacteria and fungal growth.



This summer, SMACNA Greater Chicago is pleased to count member contractor Sheet Metal Werks among the camps in 2024, and the first in the Chicago area!

“We love the mission and what HMSE is trying to accomplish for our industry,” said Kevin Ryan, CEO of Sheet Metal Werks. “Let’s face it, college isn’t for everyone. By hosting a camp, we want to introduce students to the earn-while-you-learn concept and promote that the sheet metal trade is a good career

During their camp Sheet Metal Werks will provide 30 hours of sheet metal instructional experience. Ryan’s team also plans to develop the first ever Thermaduct/KoolDuct project for use in the HMSE program.

SMACNA Greater Chicago associate members DeWALT and Milwaukee have partnered with HMSE at the national level to provide a tool bag free of charge to all HMSE student participants.

**NEW MEMBER**  
WELCOME

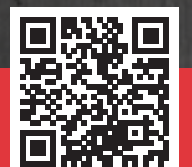


**EMCOR SERVICES TEAM MECHANICAL**

**847-803-8920**

431 Lexington Dr.  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

**PATRICK O'BRIEN**  
pkobrien@emcor.net



**EMCORTMI.COM**

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MEMBER FEATURE

# EOS MECHANICAL: EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY SETS EOS MECHANICAL A STEP ABOVE

## MEMBER FEATURE: EOS MECHANICAL

A veteran- and minority-owned and operated company, EOS Mechanical takes pride in delivering HVAC and piping solutions to Chicago-area customers. By embracing emerging technologies, the company has carved a space in a competitive market, which has helped them stand out from the competition.

**I**t's a classic American tale: An entrepreneur starts a business at his dining room table and a few years later, the company's an emerging leader in its industry.

Nirav Sapra really did start EOS Mechanical on his dining room table in 2019, and his company really is an emerging leader thanks to his future-focused strategies. As an Indian-born American, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and an experienced engineer, Sapra saw a niche to fill within the Chicagoland construction market. His goal: build up a top-class HVAC contracting firm able to fulfill Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE) requirements for general contractors in the public sector. It's safe to say Sapra realized that goal, and in short order!

That's not to say it was easy. The business's first three years of operation were in the middle of the COVID lockdown era.

We were probably the only company in America that didn't get PPP money," Sapra said with a laugh. "It was a tough market. We had to figure out how to bid competitively in that environment. That forced us to adopt new technologies early on."

**"I'M VERY LUCKY TO HAVE GREAT PEOPLE, AND THIS TECH ALLOWS US TO EXTEND THEIR CAREERS. I WANT THEIR INTELLIGENCE MORE THAN THEIR ABILITY TO LUG SOMETHING HEAVY."**

Nirav Sapra | *President, EOS Mechanical*

Embracing emerging technologies helped EOS carve a space in a very competitive market, and over time it's helped them stand out from the competition. The Elmhurst-based company was an early adopter of Procore construction management software, and they invested heavily in laser scanning tech. The latter has helped EOS crush some big, sensitive projects — like replacing the air handling unit (AHU) for two operating rooms at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago.



"We were working on this project while one of the ORs was operational, so we had to minimize dust creating activity," Sapra said. EOS laser scanned the space early on, allowing them to pre-fabricate all the ducting off-site. They installed anchors while the OR was closed, then slid the pre-fabbed ducting and AHU in between surgeries.

Laser scanning also allowed the firm to tackle similarly sensitive projects for the North Chicago VA hospital. EOS utilizes laser scanning as much as possible because, as Sapra says, it's less hassle for the people who hire them.

"If someone needs us to swap out a boiler system,

for example, we laser scan the space, assemble everything virtually, get most of the pipe and ducting pre-fabbed off-site, and then we come in and just slide everything together," he said.

To Sapra, utilizing modern tech, like laser scanning, helps tradesmen at least as much as their clients.

"I'm very lucky to have great people, and this tech allows us to extend their careers. I want their intelligence more than their ability to lug something heavy," Sapra said. "It's safer and there's less physical wear and tear. This is where I see the future of the construction industry going. Most of the people in my company see the vision and we're driving forward on it."

EOS Mechanical employs 26 skilled workers and has been a member of SMACNA Greater Chicago since March 2020.

**"WE'RE FOCUSED ON OUR OFFERINGS TO THE MARKET," SAPRA SAID. "FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, WE THINK HOW WE'RE GOING INTO THE FUTURE MAKES SENSE AND WE'RE JUST GOING AFTER IT REGARDLESS OF WHAT OTHER PEOPLE DO. WE'RE PRETTY PROUD OF WHAT WE'VE DONE SO FAR."**



LEARN MORE ABOUT  
EOS MECHANICAL

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## SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO: CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

This year marks the 10th anniversary of SMACNA Greater Chicago, formed in 2014 by merging SMACNA Chicago and Northeastern Illinois Sheet Metal Contractors Association. The past decade has allowed us to better serve our 130+ members through expanded offerings and more robust partnerships between labor and management.

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Twitter: @SMACNAGC



## SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO: CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

**T**his year marks the 10th anniversary of SMACNA Greater Chicago! To commemorate becoming one of the premier sheet metal organizations in the country, we'd like to share a brief historical snapshot of how we got here.

SMACNA's roots can be traced to Elgin, Illinois, back in 1943. The National organization was founded for the purpose of joining together sheet metal contractors with common problems, solutions and goals. Today, SMACNA has grown to represent more than 3,500 signatory contractors throughout 100 international chapters — including SMACNA Greater Chicago.

Our SMACNA Greater Chicago chapter is the result of a 2014 merger between SMACNA Chicago and Northeastern Illinois Sheet Metal Contractors Association. At the time, current Executive Vice President Tony Adolfs was overseeing both entities as Executive Director, managing two sets of members, events, negotiations and more. Combining the rich histories of the two chapters made sense not only from an organizational standpoint, but also aligned with both board's goals of enhancing the business environment for all Chicagoland sheet metal contractors and their union counterparts.

"The merger certainly made the combined association stronger than what either of the associations was alone, and has given us a stronger presence at the national SMACNA level," said Ken Wiesbrook, president of Wiesbrook Sheet Metal. "As a result, our membership is more vibrant and engaged."

**"WHEN I STARTED WORKING FOR NISMACNA IN 2006, IT TOOK EIGHT YEARS OF RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPING WITH BOTH BOARDS BEFORE EVERYONE FELT COMFORTABLE ENOUGH TO CONSIDER CONSOLIDATING. SINCE THEN, WE'VE WORKED TO CONTINUE A LONGSTANDING, SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT AND HAVE EXPANDED BOTH OUR MEMBERSHIP BASE AND OUR EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS TO BECOME A MORE ROBUST ORGANIZATION."**

Tony Adolfs | Executive Vice President, SMACNA Greater Chicago

In 2015, Tony was recognized for his efforts with the Petersen-Dunn Chapter Executive of the Year award - but he's quick to give credit to the team that has always surrounded him.

"The legacy of SMACNA Greater Chicago is made possible by all the members and leaders who came before me. I'm proud of everything our boards have done to make sure our chapter thrives now and into the future."

### SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO 10-YEAR GROWTH

**70 ➤ 87**  
MEMBERS

**17 ➤ 43**  
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Join us throughout the year as we continue to celebrate 10 years of strength in unity and work toward an even better future.



**NEW  
MEMBER**  
WELCOME



**O'MALLEY  
BROTHERS, INC.**

847-803-8920

4302 Regency Dr.  
Glenview, IL 60025

JOHN REDDINGTON  
omalleybrothers@msn.com



LEARN MORE



## MARKETING MOMENT

Basically everything we do on our phones is tracked. That's creepy. But it's not going to change any time soon. There are ways you can use this to your advantage to market your business. What's a georecency campaign, how can you use QR scan data to tailor your marketing efforts for maximum efficiency? Read on to find out!

# ■ THAT'S CREEPY: ADVERTISING TACTICS YOU SHOULD BE USING TO PROMOTE YOUR BRAND

Everything we could ever want to learn about, or buy, or visit can all be found in the palm of our hands.

We all have a smartphone (yours is probably right next to you, or at least at arm's length as you read this, right?), and it's second nature to grab it for everything from finding directions to sending an email to ordering a pizza and more. Because of our (almost) blind acceptance of various terms and conditions, accepting cookies, and so forth, our phones know where we are, what we do, and where we've been.

Creepy, isn't it?

Now, let's flip that around and use it to your advantage. Today's marketing firms can take that wealth of data and use it to send targeted messaging to the people you, as contractors, want to reach. The result: measurable returns on your investment and a toolkit of strategic actions with potential to increase business over and over again. Because the more you use this stuff the more data you gather, allowing you to continuously fine tune your efforts.

Here's how to best reach your clients using the one thing they always have with them — their mobile device.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Recent research shows the continued rise in the popularity of social media, with more than half the world (62.3%) using it for an average of 2 hours and 23 minutes each day. Clearly, there are plenty of opportunities to reach and engage with social media users, from sharing company announcements and highlighting noteworthy projects, to recruiting the workforce of tomorrow.

## GOOGLE

Using keywords and geo-targeting — deploying ads to a strategically selected area — you can reach people in your market who are searching for exactly what you have to offer. Not only does this strategy boost your visibility by putting your business at the top of the search results, it also gives you better targeting and budget control.

## GEOREGENCY

This type of campaign works by identifying a location, or set of locations, and delivers targeted advertising to a strategically determined market population who visited the location(s). Let's say you've recently attended a large industry tradeshow, then began receiving messaging from the host location or perhaps other participating businesses or speakers. You've likely been the target of a georecency campaign. It's a powerful tool to have in your belt.

## QR SCAN DATA

QR codes give the user fast, easy access to just about anything. As a contractor, including a QR code on your sales and marketing materials is wildly beneficial because it allows you to collect data on how users interact with your content. Scan locations, the number of scans, what time the scan occurred ... QR code analytics are a great way to measure campaign performance and better optimize future strategies.



**nehlsen**  
Creative Marketing

## ALL-NEW MEMBERSHIP PERK FREE MARKETING HOUR

Nehlsen Creative is an award-winning marketing agency specializing in the union construction industry. We're proud to work with industry partners from coast to coast, including SMACNA Greater Chicago.

Email [notify@ncpr.com](mailto:notify@ncpr.com) to schedule your free hour!

- FREE CONSULTATION
- FULL BRAND REVIEW
- ADVERTISING REVIEW
- WEBSITE REVIEW
- SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEW
- RECOMMENDATIONS

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RECAP:  
HOLIDAY DINNER

The 2023 Holiday Dinner and Installation of Officers was a smash! Here's a brief recap.

RECAP:  
DANCING, DINING AND THE  
CHANGING OF THE GUARD

SMACNA Greater Chicago celebrated the holiday season during our annual Holiday Dinner and Installation of Officers. The event took place on December 2, 2023, at the beautiful Hotel Arista in Naperville.

More than 160 members and guests attended and enjoyed an elegant dinner, followed by the installation of new board members and executive leaders. Immediate Past President Hank Artlip transitioned leadership to Jeff Lukitsh, who shared his goals for the coming year. Festivities continued into the evening with dancing and socializing. It was great to see everyone and toast the end of another successful year!

VIEW MORE  
HOLIDAY DINNER  
DANCE PHOTOS

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## ASSOCIATE MEMBER FEATURE: HATCHELL & ASSOCIATES

For almost 30 years, Hatchell & Associates has provided the Chicagoland area with innovative commercial, industrial and institutional HVAC solutions.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER FEATURE

# HATCHELL & ASSOCIATES: BUILDING SOLUTIONS SINCE 1994

In 1994, Ernie Hatchell's mentor, Pete Murphy, decided to slow down and step away from his company. That was all it took for Ernie to pursue the next step in his career as business owner.

For nearly three decades, Hatchell & Associates has delivered custom, effective solutions for their customers' most challenging projects. Today, Ernie is still as active as ever in the daily operations of his company, which he runs with the help of his three sons: Mike Hatchell, sales manager; Jon Hatchell, operations manager; and Kevin Hatchell, sales engineer.

It is evident by their good-natured banter that the brothers get along well in their personal and professional lives.

"One of the perks of the job is getting to work and seeing your family members pretty much every day," Kevin said. "What better thing to do than spend quality time with the people that matter the most?"

According to Mike, the family-run business also includes other extended family members in various roles, and even those who aren't part of the family are treated as such.

"That's the backbone of how my dad grew and formed the company, and that's how it's always going to be here," Mike said. "Hatchell has always been relationship-driven, which is why we have so many tenured folks here and longstanding relationships in the community and with other industry partners."

In the nearly 30 years since Hatchell was founded, the team has continued to grow alongside their trusted industry partners.



Today, the company offers 50+ lines to best serve the evolving needs of their commercial and light industrial customers; most recently adding hydronic products and semi-custom air handlers.

"Building Solutions' is what we do, so we're continually exploring our options," Kevin said.

"We also hang our hat on being as responsive as possible and not hiding from difficult situations," Mike added. "It's easy to pump your fist in the air during successes, but we pride ourselves on being there for our customers during their tough spots."

During the height of the pandemic, most businesses and projects hit a universal rough patch as the world came to a screeching halt. One of Hatchell's customers required an upgraded HVAC system during that time utilizing VFDs, but the resulting supply chain disruptions bumped the lead time to a staggering 40-48 weeks.

"No one jumped out of the way of the firing squad," Mike said. "We went out and talked directly to the building owner to explain the situation, then we evaluated different sources in the VFD community and provided alternative drives that were available as soon as 12 weeks and met the requirements for that particular job. Our customer

cloud-based system gives the Hatchell team access from anywhere and represents "a better solution for future growth," according to Jon.

Speaking of future growth, the brothers are excited for what the future holds for Hatchell & Associates.

"Dad has never handed anything out. We've had to work for it," Kevin said. "But after working for another company and getting to travel the country and see how other rep offices do business, I have a lot of

admiration for my dad's work ethic and business acumen. We have big shoes to fill, but together my brothers and I can step in and fill those shoes."

"There's definitely a sense of pride in keeping this thing moving forward into the future," Jon agreed.

**"HATCHELL HAS ALWAYS BEEN RELATIONSHIP-DRIVEN, WHICH IS WHY WE HAVE SO MANY TENURED FOLKS HERE AND LONGSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY AND WITH OTHER INDUSTRY PARTNERS."**

Mike Hatchell | Sales Manager, Hatchell

needed the project done, and we were willing to do whatever it took to facilitate that."

With a largely remote workforce during COVID, Hatchell had to quickly pivot and adopt a new ERP system to better handle the demands of the changing landscape — both internally and on the jobsite. Their new

## LEARN MORE ABOUT HATCHELL

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SMACNA Greater Chicago offers a variety of educational programming and social events through the year. Save these dates for some of the most anticipated chapter and industry events through the summer.



FULL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

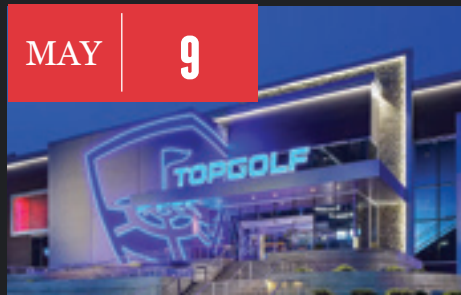
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MAY 9



TOPGOLF  
HOSTED BY YES  
FREE

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Naperville, IL 60563

Speaker Sonya Shearer will give a 30-minute presentation on “Generational Communication: Speaking the Same Language” so members can better understand ways to foster meaningful dialogue across generations. After, participants are invited to take aim at the giant outfield targets and enjoy an afternoon of socializing and climate-controlled golf.

REGISTER NOW



Spaces are limited — register by May 2 at  
[SMACNAGreaterChicago.org/YES](https://SMACNAGreaterChicago.org/YES)

JUN 12-16



ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
SOLD OUT

Fairmont Banff Springs  
Banff, Alberta, Canada  
June 12-16

We’re excited to once again take our Annual Conference to the Fairmont Banff Springs — Canada’s “Castle in the Rockies.” For more than 125 years, this iconic landmark resort has provided legendary hospitality and majestic views of Alberta’s Cascade Mountains and picturesque lakes.

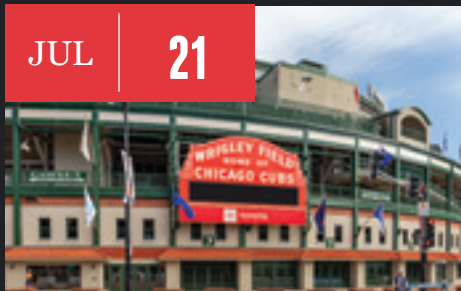
This year’s Annual Conference will offer an informative business meeting and update on SMACNA initiatives. Attendees may also choose to participate in a number of local activities, including an excursion to Lake Louise, golf outings and a sightseeing tour by helicopter.

SCAN FOR  
MORE DETAILS



[SMACNAGreaterChicago.org/Annual-Conference](https://SMACNAGreaterChicago.org/Annual-Conference)

JUL 21



CHICAGO CUBS GAME  
\$75/PERSON

Wrigley Field  
1060 w. Addison St.  
Chicago, IL 60613

There’s something about the atmosphere on gameday at Wrigley Field. It’s become one of SMACNA Greater Chicago’s most popular summer outing events, so we’re bringing it back as we continue our 10th anniversary celebrations this year!

Join us on the Left Field Porch for socializing, cocktails and an exciting matchup between the Cubs and last season’s World Series hopefuls the Arizona Diamondbacks.

*Watch for details and registration information coming soon!*



HEALTH & SAFETY

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the CDC dropped some disturbing statistics about safety and mental health in the construction industry. We have the power to change this.

SAFETY:  
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY  
SECOND HIGHEST IN  
WORKPLACE FATALITIES

Every year the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases a National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Report, and the latest contains some concerning news: Fatal work injuries in the construction and extraction industry increased 11 percent, from 12.3 deaths per 100,000 full-time employees in 2021 to 13 in 2022.

In addition, the construction industry reported the second highest number of on-the-job fatalities compared to other industries. When some of the other industries are “office and administrative support,” that makes sense. But there are many things we can do to cultivate a culture of safety and keep anyone from becoming a statistic.

Construction Safety Week is May 6-10, providing an opportunity to take stock of your company’s safety protocols, examine and replace faulty PPE, and refamiliarize staff with safety rules, regulations and best practices. The Construction Safety Week website ([www.constructionsafetyweek.com](http://www.constructionsafetyweek.com)) offers videos and discussion topic

packages for each day of safety week, as well as an overall planning playbook to help navigate a daily huddle on jobsite safety. Safety week resources are available for free to any organization who chooses to participate. Additionally,

companies have the opportunity to support safety week as an advocate, sponsor or member. SMACNA Greater Chicago also offers a number of safety resources on our website ([www.smacnagreaterchicago.org/safety/safety-resources](http://www.smacnagreaterchicago.org/safety/safety-resources)), including free OSHA construction safety courses and other instructionals at [www.smacnagreaterchicago.org/education/clicksafety-online-training](http://www.smacnagreaterchicago.org/education/clicksafety-online-training).



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS MONTH

Workers in the construction industry have the highest rate of suicide across all occupational groups, according to the Centers for Disease Prevention. Construction Safety Week reports that one in five construction workers struggle with anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.

Let’s be honest, it’s not easy for most of us to open up and be vulnerable with our co-workers, but it could literally save a life. If you notice some of the warning signs listed in the box to the right, a simple “how are you doing” can go a long way. Letting your team know you’re here for them in this way is incredibly valuable.

It’s not always easy to recognize signs of a mental health crisis, but knowing what to look for can help.

SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH  
STRUGGLES IN YOUR WORKPLACE

- ✓ CHANGES IN PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, I.E. LESS MINDFUL OF HYGIENE OR WEARING INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHES
- ✓ INCONSISTENT BEHAVIOR, INCLUDING MOOD SWINGS, INCREASED IRRITABILITY AND/OR WITHDRAWING OFTEN
- ✓ INCREASED ABSENCES OR A CHANGE IN TYPICAL PUNCTUALITY
- ✓ DIFFICULTY FOCUSING ON EVERYDAY TASKS, BRAIN FOG
- ✓ EXCESSIVE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL AND/OR OTHER DRUGS

MENTAL HEALTH  
RESOURCES

- 1. Open your camera
- 2. Hover it over this



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## PROJECT MANAGEMENT: TWO NEW HALF- DAY WORKSHOPS TO CHOOSE FROM

SMACNA Greater Chicago is proud to help members prepare for success by offering a variety of meetings and educational programming through the year. This spring, we're excited to announce a new day-long offering to our lineup targeting project management professionals!

## RECAPS: NOVEMBER & JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Darryl Harris joined us for January's membership meeting to speak about essential skills and strategies vital for sales and customer service teams. Matt Sanchez of Nehlsen Creative was our November presenter, speaking on the digital advertising tactics contractors should be using to promote their brand.

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## TWO NEW WORKSHOPS: TO PROVIDE VALUABLE MANAGEMENT INSIGHTS

**O**n April 24, Troy Aichele of Aichele Associates will join us for two new half-day project management workshops. Troy brings 30+ years of experience in the plumbing, fitting and sheet metal construction industry. He is recognized as an effective team builder, as well as a leader in business and sales planning, scheduling, cost control, design, constructability, value engineering and labor productivity.

Here's a sneak peek at the upcoming workshops:



### CHANGE ORDER BOOTCAMP

"Change Order Bootcamp," is perfect for project managers, assistant project managers and estimators looking to enhance their construction change order knowledge in the sheet metal industry.



### SCHEDULING FROM A SHEET METAL PERSPECTIVE

A workshop geared toward project managers, assistant project managers, project engineers and project coordinators. Attendees will learn the different types of schedules used by sheet metal contractors, along with their benefits and challenges that accompany optimization.



## RECAP: NOVEMBER & JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS



### ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND STRATEGIES VITAL FOR SALES

Despite a snowy start to the day, our first membership meeting of 2024 went off without a hitch. On January 9, SMACNA Greater Chicago President Jeff Lukitsh welcomed Darryl Harris from The Carrol-Keller Group. Darryl has long been a mainstay with SMACNA Greater Chicago, lending his industry expertise to various educational courses through the years. During this meeting, he was on hand to showcase essential skills and strategies vital for sales and customer service teams.



### DIGITAL ADVERTISING TACTICS TO PROMOTE YOUR BRAND

There wasn't an empty seat to be found during our November 14 membership meeting. Matt Sanchez, owner of Nehlsen Creative, joined us for an eye-opening presentation on the digital advertising tactics contractors should be using to promote their brand. In the days after the meeting, Matt hammered home how easy (and effective) it is to tap into the power of a phone's location services by sending advertising directly to those who attended the meeting!

We also welcomed our newest Associate Member, John Reddington Jr. from O'Malley Bros., Inc. during the November event.



RECAP:  
APPRENTICE FOR A DAY

We were thrilled to bring back our industry favorite Apprentice for a Day workshop on February 22! For the third year running, SMART Local 265 has partnered with the SMACNA Greater Chicago YES Steering Committee to host a day of hands-on training to better understand the world of sheet metal fieldwork.

# APPRENTICE FOR A DAY

Hosted by the  
**YES**  
Steering Committee

On February 22, we held a well-attended industry favorite event — Apprentice for a Day! Members spent the day at SMART Local 265 for a hands-on training event that gave them the opportunity to gain insight into the world of sheet metal fieldwork.

Thank you to President and Business Manager John Daniel for hosting our group and to Tony Aarns, who facilitated and kept the day on schedule. We'd also like to give a special shoutout to the wonderful instructors, including Joe Carone, Chris James, Kelly Marcellis and Joel Orozco, who showed us what it's like to be an apprentice.

## WORKSHOP SESSIONS


**1** **SHOP (SHEET METAL)**  
Chris | *Instructor*

**2** **BIM (SHEET METAL)**  
Kelly | *Instructor*

**3** **TAB (SERVICE)**  
Joel | *Instructor*

**4** **GAS IGNITION (SERVICE)**  
Joe C. | *Instructor*



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RECAP:  
PARTNERS IN  
PROGRESS

The 2024 Partners in Progress Conference took place February 27-28 in Orlando, Florida. Several SMACNA Greater Chicago and SMART Local 265 representatives attended the two-day conference. This year's theme was "The Future is Now," and focused on creating a collaborative environment for all to discover innovative strategies to shape a more prosperous future.



RECAP:  
PARTNERS IN PROGRESS:  
THE FUTURE IS NOW

The 2024 Partners in Progress Conference took place February 27-28 in Orlando, Florida. Our Executive Vice President, Tony Adolfs, attended with Hank Artlip, Mike Suggs and Ken Wiesbrook, along with representatives from our labor partners, John Daniel of SMART Local 265 and Ray Suggs of Sheet Metal Workers' Local 73.

The two-day conference was geared toward labor and management leaders throughout the country. This year's theme was "The Future is Now," and focused on creating a collaborative environment for all to discover innovative strategies to shape a more prosperous future.

**"YOU'LL NEVER ACCOMPLISH BY YOURSELF MORE THAN YOU COULD ACCOMPLISH TOGETHER."**

Mike Coleman | General President, SMART



SMACNA President Carol Duncan and SMART General President Mike Coleman delivered the conference welcome to more than 600 attendees before breaking into smaller sessions. Topics ranged from ways to maximize communication strategies, to navigating future industry challenges and trends, to mental health and wellness and more. Based on the presentations, contractors and their counterparts can expect continued growth in technology adoption, including project management and parametric software, and increased collaboration across major

projects. Our industry will also continue to face a workforce shortage and must find innovative ways to engage the next generation through workplace flexibility, a focus on developing soft skills and targeting underrepresented groups. Overall, this year's Partners in Progress Conference offered realistic knowledge and information to chapter executives, contractors, union leaders and young professionals that can be used to further elevate the sheet metal industry.

**"CAN WE SEE BEYOND OUR CURRENT SITUATION TO IMAGINE AN INDUSTRY AND PARTNERSHIPS THAT ARE DIFFERENT? DO WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO STEP INTO IT?"**

Dushaw Hockett | SPACES





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