2020 Partners in Progress

More than 500 contractors and union leaders travelled to Las Vegas to attend the 2020 Partners in Progress Conference. Attendees heard from SMART General President Joseph Sellers and SMACNA CEO Vince Sandusky on topics ranging from workforce development, women in the workforce, and the impact technology is having on the industry.

The Partners in Progress Conference is based on the mutual goal of delivering quality sheet metal applications and heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems using skilled, trained, craft workers. It aims to advance the interests and prosperity of the union, its members, signatory employers, associations, customers and users of union services in the sheet metal industry.

When it came to finding new people and especially “job ready” workers several suggestions were offered:

- Improve communications
- Hold regular meetings
- Be honest with your workforce
- Encourage two-way communication
- Listen to understand

Other ideas put forward involved flexibility with ratios, establishment of a direct entry program, and expectation of lifelong learning. There was also an emphasis on how to create a culture for innovation in preparing workers for future challenges.

A best practices committee made up of SMART and SMACNA Members discussed a new promotion called “My Job is My Gym.” This program spotlighted the dual benefits of working in construction by allowing one to have a good paying profession and getting much needed exercise.
California Construction Workers Prepare to Mobilize for Coronavirus Surge Response

Authors: Carla Marinucci & Katy Murphy (www.politico.com)
Date: March 20, 2020

The head of California’s powerful building and construction trades union says plans are in the works to deploy tens of thousands of construction workers to retool and refit hospitals, hotels and buildings the state needs as a surge response to the coronavirus pandemic.

“We’re being mobilized — more than we’re being told to step back,” said Robbie Hunter, president of the California Building and Construction Trades Council, which represents 460,000 workers and 63,000 apprentices.

He said he has been in close communication with the office of Gov. Gavin Newsom, who issued an unprecedented statewide “stay home” order Thursday night. Any trades employees whose work has been curtailed, plus thousands of apprentices, are expected to move into new priority projects related to fighting the coronavirus, he said.

The state is currently in the process of acquiring and converting two hospitals devoted to treating coronavirus patients, one in Northern California and another in Southern California. The state is also asking the federal government to send the USNS Mercy to California, which could provide 1,000 hospital beds, as well as mobile hospitals. All will require workers to prepare for a potential surge of thousands of Covid-19 patients.

The building industry was initially concerned that Newsom’s order would stop construction sites in their tracks after Newsom provided few details Thursday night on how specific industries would be affected.

Nathan Click, spokesperson for the governor’s office, noted in an email that the order applies to all workers “except as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the federal critical infrastructure sectors, critical government services, schools, childcare, and construction, including housing construction.”

Hunter said officials in the trade union were assured that the governor’s shutdown order doesn’t apply to the vast majority of construction projects in California because its workers are on projects directly related to critical issues like trade, transportation, health care, supply chain and state operations.

“We are threaded through every part of keeping the infrastructure up,” Hunter said in an interview. “We are the people that keep the generators and service work sites open, and the police stations and fire stations and state buildings operational.”

The union has mandated that its members maintain social distance, bring their own lunch and prepare to dine alone — not in groups or in gatherings at food trucks. Construction sites that are too compact, close to the public or congested in urban areas “should be closed down,” Hunter said.

Still, the governor's orders have caused some confusion in the ranks of California's construction industry, as business owners tried Friday to digest an avalanche of ever-changing news and government mandates.

Jeremy Brooks went to bed Thursday night prepared to do the unthinkable: lay off 27 of his workers in response to the governor’s order, based on his and his attorney’s reading of the new mandate. But by Friday morning, the owner of Brooks Painting in Davis got word that Newsom had issued a clarification that deemed construction activities “essential” — which meant that he could continue his services.

But Brooks is still on edge. “I think things are going to change again,” Brooks said. “They seem to be changing virtually hourly and nobody knows anything. That’s the biggest problem.”

More answers — and more comfort — could come now that Newsom this week announced the state is procuring hotels and motels and attempting to bring decommissioned hospitals back online, as well as asking the federal government for hospital bed capacity.

The USNS Mercy, for example, “is a modular unit that is completely ready to go,” Hunter said. So “we could end up building ramps to get ambulances right up to the ship — and come in with our cranes to get materials transferred from the dockside into the ship.”

Hunter estimated the new work to stop the coronavirus spread and provide treatment would involve filling 24-hour shifts and potentially “tens of thousands” of jobs.

And he said the union is also ready and eager to get members to work on another project mentioned by both Trump and Newsom — the possibility of retooling large manufacturing sites to produce desperately needed medical equipment like ventilators.
Save the Date!
2020 Chapter Night in Colorado Springs!

The Tuesday night of every SMACNA Annual Convention chapter members have a special activity and this year is again something extraordinary. This year our event is set for September 29th.

Members attending the 2020 annual convention are invited to experience dinner in the world renowned Penrose Room—Colorado's only Forbes Five-Star, AAA Five –Diamond Restaurant

A classically elegant ambiance with enchanting mountain views and gracious service provides the perfect atmosphere to indulge in artful entrées crafted with the finest seafood, meats, and local produce available. After a busy day of meetings, members will sit back and savor an amazing dining experience. After your meal, enjoy live entertainment and dancing from the Penrose Trio.

Attention!
COVID-19 Scams

If you receive calls, emails, or other communications claiming to be from the Treasury Department and offering COVID-19 related grants or stimulus payments in exchange for personal financial information, or an advance fee, tax, or charge of any kind, including the purchase of gift cards, please do not respond. These are scams. Please contact the FBI at www.ic3.gov so that the scammers can be tracked and stopped.

Mark Your Calendars

June 10, 2020 - Member Charter Fishing Event
6:00 AM –12:00 PM | Chesapeake Beach, MD
Network with existing clients and expand your customer base.
*Sponsorships remain available. Please call 301/446-0002

October 29, 2020 - Top Golf Networking Event
4:40 PM –7:30 PM | Germantown, MD
SMACNA Mid-Atlantic Chapter and MCAMW are hosting an afternoon of networking at Top Golf in Germantown.

November 10, 2020 - Industry Trade Show
Marriott College Park | College Park, MD
*Details are forthcoming.

Bernie Brill, Stan Kolbe visit last month with U.S. Representative Brian Fitzpatrick who is a strong proponent of construction.
“Supply Side”
A new feature spotlighting one of SMACNA Mid-Atlantic’s key industry suppliers.

PolyArmor Benefits
By John Sorna

Ductmate’s PolyArmor insulation is soft, safe and fiberglass free. PolyArmor is strong and durable in the air-stream protecting indoor air quality. This revolutionary design is an inherently water-resistant polyester material that is often used in pillow-top mattresses and air filters. Multiple engineers have concluded that PolyArmor is good for sound attenuation to minimize noise through the ductwork.

Have you tried PolyArmor yet? Through years of research, Ductmate found a more environmentally safe material that engineers, building owners, and contractors can agree upon!

PolyArmor is a fantastic substitute for fiberglass and elastomeric options within their specifications.

And if you’re looking for a fast-drying quick tacking water-based adhesive to hold your insulation tight, try our new Gecko Glue. Available in Gecko Gold, Gecko Silver or Gecko Concentrate. The Gecko Glue concentrate is very economical when made on your shop floor. Within 15 minutes Gecko Glue can be matched to your desired viscosity! One portable drum and done! All adhesives come in black or white.

Combine PolyArmor with Gecko Glue and have a professional, clean installation on large ductwork projects with structural reinforcements; all while keeping the weight down!

Ductmate...for all your HVAC needs!

Questions? Please contact John Sorna
Northeast Regional Manager
Celk: 240-626-1394

SMACNA Mid-Atlantic Welcomes NEFCO Corporation

The NEFOC Corporation is the association’s newest associate member. NEFCO was founded in 1981 and specializes in fasteners. Additionally, they supply struts, threaded rod, pipe hangers, tools, anchors, safety supplies, abrasives, and onsite supplies for the HVAC/Plumbing/Mechanical trades. They offer complimentary services to include a rental division, a tool repair division, and a technical services division to assist with planning, designing, and development of large plumbing and structural support systems. NEFCO has branches in Washington DC, Southern Virginia, Boston, Philadelphia, Greensboro, South Florida, and New York City.

For more information, please contact Jay Livak at 877-419-2755 or by email at jay.livak@nefcocorp.com.

Chapter Member Justin Couch at Hispanic Construction Seminar

Justin Couch of Stromberg Metal Works, Inc. (left) was a panelist at the recently held Hispanic Construction Seminar in Lanham, Maryland.

The program was sponsored by the Baltimore/Washington Building Trades for the purpose of spotlighting the value union contractors bring to every job. Various construction trade associations and local unions also attended the event with many having display tables.

In addition to SMACNA Mid-Atlantic, on the panels were people representing Ironworkers Employers Association, National Electrical Contractors Association of Washington, and others.

Share Your News!

Have news about your company, job promotions, or awards you would like to share with your industry friends? Please send them to: Info@smacnaatl.org