



MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The construction industry is constantly evolving, and staying on top of the latest trends and technologies is essential for contractors who want to stay competitive. To achieve this, subcontractors must work together on shared challenges to improve the industry. That's why the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), the Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA), and the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA) recently held a joint meeting to discuss innovation, construction technology, and how subcontractors and work collaboratively to prepare for the future of construction.

The meeting brought together representatives from all three associations to discuss how they can work together to incorporate new technologies and innovative practices into their projects. Contractors from NECA's Innovation & Strategy Taskforce, MCAA's Innovative Technologies Committee, and SMACNA's Construction Technology Committee joined forces in Atlanta, GA from May 1 – 2, 2023. The group was hosted both at Southwire's offices in the Braves' Battery Park and at Allison-Smith Company's Headquarters.

As a leading manufacturer of wire and cable, Southwire delivers power to millions of people around the world. In addition to this significant impact to our industry, Southwire also invests in the design and training of user-driven tools and solutions to improve construction across all trades. Innovators from the Southwire Spark Lab, which is focused on profitable, responsible, and sustainable business growth, led the group through several ideation exercises. These exercises focused on the future of workforce, innovation as a practice, and sustainability strategies.



Much of the meeting was dedicated to identifying areas where member contractors from NECA, MCAA, and SMACNA can improve efficiency, productivity, and safety on jobsites. The platform provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences and best practices, as well as learn from each other's successes and failures. This information is critical to the planning and development of the content and activities for next year's MEP Innovation Conference. MEP Innovation 2024 will be held in Orlando, Florida, from January 29 – 31, 2024. The contractors who participated in this strategic meeting in Atlanta are a key voice in driving the vision and execution of the MEP Innovation Conference.

Members of the three trade associations also discussed the importance of adopting new technologies, such as drones, robotics, and augmented reality, to improve safety and efficiency on job sites. For example, drones can be used to survey job sites and gather data, while robots can perform repetitive tasks that are unsafe for humans. Augmented reality can be used to create virtual models of job sites, allowing contractors to visualize and plan their work before construction begins. They reviewed the hype and promise of these technologies versus the realities of how each technology is actively in use on the jobsite.

Another topic of discussion was the need for more training and education on new technologies and best practices. The three organizations agreed that they need to work with technology providers to develop training programs that can be used by all subcontractors in the industry. This will help ensure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to using new and innovative technologies and developing practical best practices.

The group capped off a successful meeting with a site tour at the Allison-Smith Company. Allison-Smith is an industry leader in electrical contracting and engineering. They specialize in wiring controls, security systems, voice and data technology, fiber optics, design build, and emergency backup services. While touring Allison-Smith's facilities, the group met with experts in prefabrication, modular services, project management, and safety. One of the most powerful opportunities when forward-focused contractors get together is to tour, evaluate, and provide feedback to a host contractor. This summit offered exactly such an opportunity and the group enjoyed a productive conversation with the Allison-Smith team.

Overall, the joint meeting between NECA, MCAA, and SMACNA was a success. The participants agreed on the need to continue working together to improve the industry and better understand common challenges, goals, and areas of opportunity. By sharing their knowledge and experiences, these leaders can pave the way in the identification of new ways to incorporate innovative technologies and practices into their projects, ultimately leading to safer, more efficient, and more cost-effective construction projects.

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INDUSTRY PIONEERS

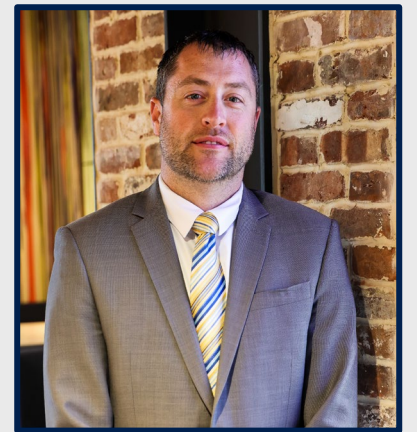


"Being an innovator means improving efficiencies through any means necessary."

Tanner Venema

Special Projects/Service Division
Manager at Skyline Electric Co.

NII Edison Cohort, 2021 – 2022



Click/Scan for more info about the NECA Innovation Institute



"We must continue to evolve; we must continue to change our strategy."

David Peterson

President and COO
of ERMCO, Inc.



Click/Scan to check out the Innovation Overload Podcast

Celebrate Your Innovators!

The **NECA Innovator of the Year** is awarded to an industry pioneer from a NECA member contractor who champions innovation and continuous improvement across their company and the entire NECA community.

Click/Scan to nominate an innovative team member today



AROUND THE INDUSTRY



WHAT WE'RE READING

- [From Start-up to Scale-up: Accelerating Growth in Con Tech](#)
5/3/23, McKinsey & Company
- [Loneliness Is An Epidemic, and the Health Risks Are 'Profound'](#)
5/2/23, Los Angeles Times
- [National Contractor and Veterans' Organization Call for Suicide Awareness](#)
5/2/23, Business Wire



UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

- [NECA Safety Conference](#)
5/24/23 – 5/26/23 in Nashville, TN
- [Advancing Preconstruction](#)
5/24/23 – 5/26/23 in Phoenix, AZ
- [ENR Future Tech](#)
6/5/23 – 6/7/23 in San Francisco, CA

