

# PIPELINE

MAY 2024  
ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear MCA of Chicago Members,

It's been my absolute honor and privilege to have served as your President these past two years. I'm proud of many things during my term, particularly the outcome of the agreement between our MCA of Chicago Joint Arbitration Board and our Local 597 labor partners. This four-year labor agreement works for both sides of the table to provide stability in price and help us continue leading the industry in professionalism, innovation and quality.

It's imperative we continue to cultivate strong relationships with our Local 597 partners. At more than 7,000 members strong, the Local 597 program continues to grow and evolve to better serve the next generation of our workforce, and in turn, MCA of Chicago contractors. By committing to work together in a coordinated way, we'll continue strengthening our existing markets and expanding to increase potential market share.

During a time when service is an important emphasis to the strategic growth of our association, I'm thrilled to pass MCA of Chicago's presidential responsibilities to incoming President Nick Marino. I'm confident Nick's considerable expertise in the service arena will only add to the continued quality of our partnerships and programming.

As your outgoing President, I'm excited to be able to continue representing you and other industry leaders in my newly elected role on the national MCAA Board of Directors! This position will allow me to apply my local experience to the national level and learn from other executives throughout the country on additional ways to elevate our industry as a whole.

The past two years have seen record participation and engagement from our MCA of Chicago members, and I hope to see that continue to grow and expand throughout the next two years. Our contractor members and their teams are truly best-in-class professional and it is a privilege and honor to help contribute to that success.



**Jim Jacobsen Jr.**  
DePue Mechanical, Inc.

# LEGISLATIVE



LEGISLATIVE

## **PHELPS BARRY & ASSOCIATES HIRED AS NEW LOBBYING REPRESENTATIVES**

**MCA of Chicago recently hired the firm Phelps Barry & Associates to be our representatives in Springfield. We're excited to begin working with them and have already had our first bill review, which went as expected.**

More than 4,000 bills have been introduced this year, and this first meeting with them not only gives us a baseline of bills to watch, but also helps Phelps Barry better understand our concerns going forward. If anyone needs a pre-apprentice waiver for a state project, Phelps Barry will intervene directly for them.

The bills we're currently watching pertain to the following topics: energy, bidding laws, workers' compensation, design-build, Illinois pre-apprentice requirements, prevailing wage, wage requirements, labor, liens, zoning and more. We decided to "slip" for a couple of bills, and did not slip against any at this time.

Phelps Barry also has resources in Chicago to help us keep our ear to the ground there. Both Springfield and Chicago have been very active lately and it's important that we keep up with the latest developments. Hats off to our government affairs members who put in a lot of time on this.

We also participate in IMSCA, which includes almost 30 construction groups that get together on issues that affect the construction industry. Most of the time they align with our own concerns. Frontline is our new firm running IMSCA, and Ryan Roth is the new executive director. IMSCA is using a new video update where Ryan talks about what's going on in a TV news-like format. To get on the distribution list, email Dan Bulley at [dbulley@mca.org](mailto:dbulley@mca.org).

Finally, our own Government Affairs Committee will be going to Washington D.C. in May for the National Issues Conference. We'll provide a full recap of the event when we get back.

As always, it's important that each of our members gets to know their elected officials. Please meet with them before we need their vote! Don't know your representative? Visit [elections.il.gov](http://elections.il.gov) and click on Find My Elected Officials.



**Get on the distribution list**

✉ [dbulley@mca.org](mailto:dbulley@mca.org)

## SAFETY



## MARK ROOK FROM AMS INDUSTRIES WINS PRESTIGIOUS MILWAUKEE TOOL® SAFETY AWARD

**Mark Rook, Safety Director of AMS Industries, was recently presented with the 2023 Milwaukee Tool Safety Professional of the Year award!**

The honor was bestowed during the annual Mechanical Contractors Association of America Conference in March.

“Mark’s dedication to national safety and health advocacy, coupled with his leadership in the industry, truly sets him apart,” said Ben Campbell, CEO & president of AMS. “His extensive voluntary contributions to both national and local committees reflect a passion for creating safer work environments

across the country. His remarkable efforts have significantly contributed to advancing worker safety, creating safer jobsites across the country.”

In addition to this achievement by AMS, BMWC Constructors won the Safety Excellence Award in the largest category.

Congratulations to all members for your commitment to prioritizing safety!



# SAVE THE DATES

JUNE  
**10**

## INTERN/NEW HIRE DAY

**Burr Ridge, IL**  
11:30am-3:30pm

MCA of Chicago will host an Intern/New Hire Day on Monday, June 10, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All interns and new hires working in positions related to mechanical construction are invited to attend. Mark Rogers, former MCAA President and current MCAA National Education Initiative instructor, will present *The Real Cost of a Manhour* and Blake Wentz, Helm Group, will present on the *Mechanical Construction Industry*.

MCA of Chicago  
7065 Veterans Blvd.  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

JUNE  
**20**

## MONTE CARLO CASINO NIGHT

**Medinah, IL**  
6-9:30pm

Experience the excitement of Monte Carlo nightlife!

MCA of Chicago invites you to our Annual Meeting at one of Chicagoland's most distinguished event locations — Medinah Country Club. Guests can mingle over cocktails and try their luck at a variety of casino-style table games. This year's event also features live entertainment, raffle prizes and the installation of new MCA of Chicago officers.



### Details

Medinah Country Club  
6N001 Medinah Rd.  
Medinah, IL 60157

# GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

Support our industry. Stay involved.



JUNE  
**24-26**

## 2024 MCAA CONVERGE

Indianapolis, IN  
Multi-day

The 2024 MCAA Converge is a meticulously crafted experience designed to address the unique needs of your company. Set against the backdrop of Victory Field, this exclusive gathering of industry leaders redefines engagement and offers a top-tier, strategic experience that goes beyond the local level. Join principals from 40 member contractors and 25 manufacturers and suppliers to explore a spectrum of topics ranging from current and future market conditions to upcoming significant projects, emerging technologies and the invaluable art of relationship building.



### Details

The Westin Indianapolis  
241 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204



SEPTEMBER  
**16**

## 2024 MCA/PEC GOLF OUTING

Hinsdale, IL  
11am

Work on your backswing while connecting with fellow MCA of Chicago members during a day on the course! This year's Golf Outing will be at Ruth Lake Country Club, a first-class golf course set on a serene lakefront. Enjoy a little friendly competition, prizes and more during this popular event.

Stay tuned for registration, which will open in late July!



### Details

Ruth Lake Country Club  
6200 S. Madison St.  
Hinsdale, IL 60521





**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**

# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

## 2024 KICKED OFF WITH A CO-HOSTED TRINGO NIGHT

The Young Professionals kicked off 2024 by co-hosting TRINGO Night with WiMI of MCA of Chicago.

The January 25 event at Noon Whistle Brewing Company drew 50 people from the two groups. They enjoyed an evening of networking and socializing with individuals from various companies and playing the ultimate combination of bingo and trivia!

For the most recent event on May 7, our Young Professionals met at The Table at Crate in Oak Brook to network and catch up on the spring season.



**Join Young Professionals**

✉ [jrayburn@mca.org](mailto:jrayburn@mca.org)

**AUGUST  
28**

**Save the date**

Topgolf Schaumburg  
Schaumburg, IL





## A REFRESHED BRAND IDENTITY

As our group continues to grow, we wanted to enhance our identity with a fresh new logo! Look for this logo on future marketing materials.



MEMBER BENEFITS

# MEMBER VISITS

MCA of Chicago's team has been on the move in recent months, visiting member companies to tour facilities and talk about all the benefits of membership with our association.

These visits are a great opportunity to dive into conversation regarding how MCA of Chicago can help our members thrive.



Interested in setting up a visit from us?

✉ [jrayburn@mca.org](mailto:jrayburn@mca.org)

## MEMBER BENEFITS

# ARE YOU TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ALL YOUR MEMBER BENEFITS?

### Lobbying

MCA of Chicago works with lobbyists at the State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois to help implement legislation specific to member interests at the state level.

### Labor relations

Members are offered staff coaching on labor-related questions pertaining to Local Union 597, including contract and code interpretations, jurisdictions, drug plan, wage and benefits, audits, bonds and apprentice issues.

### Local & National Events

You receive exclusive access to networking events at premier venues with peers and influential industry leaders. Our events are curated for everyone from industry rookies to seasoned professionals and are designed to help cultivate growth within a supportive community of industry leaders.

### Be an Industry Leader

Members have the opportunity to positively influence the mechanical contracting industry through active participation in MCA committees and groups.

### Additional Memberships

MCA of Chicago membership also includes membership to:

- Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA)
- Chicagoland Better Heating-Cooling Council (CBHCC)
- Construction Safety Council (CSC)

### Event Subsidies

Members are offered subsidies to attend industry conferences and conventions, including:

- MCAA Convention
- MSCA Annual Educational Conference
- Safety Directors' Conference
- Women in the Mechanical Industry (WiMI) Conference
- MEP Innovation Conference

### CEI Education

Access to training and development from industry heavy hitters at the Construction Education Institute (CEI), with options to earn certificates in Essentials of Project Management and Advanced Project Management

### Industry Resources

Access to professional resources, including:

- MCAA's web-based labor estimating manual
- Subsidies for Institute Project Management, Advanced Institute for Project Management and Advanced Leadership Institute
- Two free passes for each CBHCC class
- 33% discount for most CSC classes
- 10-hour and 30-hour OSHA training (\$299 value each)
- Safety webinars and seminars



**EVENT RECAP**

# MCAA CONVENTION

## WORK HARD, PLAY HARD WAS THE NAME OF THE GAME IN ORLANDO

This year, MCA of Chicago had 50 members, their spouses and guests attend the MCAA 2024 Annual Convention in Florida. Hosted at the beautiful Marriott Grande Lakes, a magnificent fireworks display dazzled attendees after the opening reception, starting the event with a bang!

The next day, MCAA President Robert Beck and UA General President Mark McManus presented opening remarks, followed by a presentation by keynote speaker, Navy SEAL Jocko Willinik. Educational sessions throughout the morning included identifying and managing risks, as well as recognizing our value and playing to our strengths. An afternoon session on applying AI in

construction was well-attended and covered a lot of territory. Additional topics included classes on resilience and guidance on the economy. We ended the day with a dinner at Discovery Cove, where MCA of Chicago and PICRA (Piping Industry Council Rockford Area) members, spouses, kids and students from ISU, Bradley and Purdue kicked back and enjoyed a taste of island living.



<p><b>MARCH 2025</b> <b>1-6</b></p>	<p><b>Save the date</b> 2025 MCAA Annual Convention Austin, TX</p>
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Tuesday morning started with the Manufacturer/Supplier Expo and the job fair for Student Chapter members. The few students who didn't already have jobs wore "hire me" pins to let contractors know they were available this summer for internships or regular employment. Lunch-and-learns on a variety of topics filled the rest of the afternoon. That evening, our Board of Directors had dinner and talked about the lessons learned to that point.

The Awards of Excellence breakfast took place Wednesday morning. Mark Rook of AMS Mechanical Industries was recognized with a Safety Professional of the Year award. BMW Constructors was also honored with the Safety Excellence Award, meaning they were voted the safest contractor in the 1,000,000 hours and up category. Our congratulations to both! More educational sessions closed out the day, followed by the closing dinner and concert featuring the Barenaked Ladies.

During the closing general session on the final morning, MCA of Chicago's President Jim Jacobsen Jr. was named to the national Board of Directors. Congratulations, Jim! He will serve along with contractors from all over the country, and is joined by existing MCAA Board member Kathy McCauley who serves until March 2025. It was a long and prosperous week. Mark your calendars for March 1-6 for next year's event in Austin, Texas!



**NEW MEMBER**

WELCOME  
CIRCLE  
MECHANICAL



## **CIRCLE "R" MECHANICAL**

**Circle "R" Mechanical, Inc. is a full-service mechanical contractor in Northwest Indiana. Since 1973, this woman-owned, family-run business has specialized in the manufacturing and installation of commercial and industrial heating, ventilating, air conditioning and plumbing systems.**



### **Contact**

6620 Shepherd Ave.  
Portage, IN 46368  
219-787-5566  
[Circlermecanical.com](http://Circlermecanical.com)





# MCA OF CHICAGO

WiMI

## WiMI RECAP

### WIC WEEK HAPPY HOUR RECAP AND THE NEXT WiMI EVENT IS SCHEDULED

**MCA of Chicago's WiMI chapter gathered for food and drinks and a lesson on the game of pickleball!**

During Women in Construction Week in March, WiMI of MCA of Chicago held a happy hour networking event to honor our women members and all women in the trades, who are the keys to the success of the mechanical construction industry. In addition to food and drinks, a pickleball instructor joined the group to teach us the fundamentals of the game.

Up next: Come find your voice and join others hoping to make impactful changes during the 4th Annual WiMI Conference. This year's event takes place from June 10-12 at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. Whether you're new to the industry or a seasoned executive, this conference offers something for everyone.



**2024 WiMI Conference**

✉ [srocque@mca.org](mailto:srocque@mca.org)

**JUNE  
10-12**

**Save the date**

2024 WiMI Conference  
Cleveland, OH

EVENT

MCA OF CHICAGO  
ANNUAL MEETING

# MONTE CARLO CASINO NIGHT 6.20.24



REGISTER BY  
JUNE 13



JOIN US FOR AN  
UNFORGETTABLE  
EVENING!

- June 20, 2024
- 6-9:30pm
- Medinah Country Club

**MCA**  
OF CHICAGO  
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# MEETING RECAPS



**MEETING RECAP**

## CHRIS HERNANDEZ PRESENTS ON THE STATE OF LOCAL 597

**We had nearly 90 members turn out for our February 13 membership meeting at Gibsons Bar & Steakhouse in Oak Brook.**

There's always a good meal at Gibsons and everyone also enjoys President Jim Jacobsen's friendly face as he reports on the latest happenings of the association. Following the business meeting, we heard from Pipefitter Local 597 Business Manager

Chris Hernandez on the state of the local and all the progress they are making. After Chris, Training Director Joe Bonato gave an update on the apprentice program and training school.





**DON'T  
MISS OUT.**

Next meeting  
August 20, 2024



**MEETING RECAP**

## **WHITE SOX LEGEND RON KITTLE INSPIRES WITH HIS STORY**

**MCA members gathered at Ditka's in Oakbrook Terrace for our regular meeting on April 9.**

Barring a White Sox-themed restaurant, Ditka's was the perfect place to host Sox legend Ron Kittle, who regaled MCA of Chicago members with stories of his experience as a Major League Baseball player in the Second City.

Kittle's stories were so engaging that we have to admit the MCA of Chicago business meeting took a bit of a back seat. But members were informed of the latest goings on with association, were prepped for

what's coming around the corner and were happy to hear our organization continues to be a leader in our industry.





**MEMBER FEATURE**



# AMS INDUSTRIES

**60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE**

Over six decades, AMS Industries has brought full-service MEP+ contracting to clients across a variety of projects, including commercial HVAC, industrial refrigeration, food process piping and more.



**FOUNDED  
1963**

**WOODRIDGE  
ILLINOIS**

**EMPLOYEES  
700+**



**“WE AIM TO EMBRACE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS, ENHANCE SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES, FOSTER INNOVATION IN OUR PROCESSES, NURTURE OUR CULTURE, AND CONTINUE DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY AND SERVICE TO OUR CLIENTS.”**

**Ben Campbell, CEO**  
AMS Industries

In 1963, John Berzanskis Sr. set out to own a refrigeration company with a simple mission: to care for its customers. And so, Arctic Refrigeration was born, with humble beginnings in a former gas station facility.

Fast forward to 2024 and the company now known as AMS Industries, Inc. has grown to 700+ employees, each of whom are seasoned professionals with a deep understanding of their industry. AMS has also expanded to include offices in Illinois, Indiana and Tennessee. Much of their growth can be attributed to strong leadership and a reputation for meeting the challenges and demands of an ever-changing industry.

“With over 60 years of experience in the construction industry, our goals for the coming years center around adapting to the evolving landscape of the construction industry,” said Ben Campbell, CEO & president of AMS Industries. “We aim to embrace technological advancements, enhance sustainability practices, foster innovation in our processes, nurture our culture, and continue delivering exceptional quality and service to our clients.”

During their six decades in operation, the AMS team has brought full-service MEP+ contracting to clients across a variety of multi-disciplinary projects, including commercial HVAC, industrial refrigeration, heavy industrial piping and construction, food and process piping, electrical design, plumbing, service, maintenance and more. With a strong focus on safety, quality and client satisfaction, the company continues to be a trusted partner for such clients as a Chicago-area confectionery plants, premier hotels, data centers, hospitals and school districts.

AMS Industries recently performed the design-build of a 1,700-ton ammonia refrigeration plant, which included a process steam, high pressure hot water and compressed air systems to support the operations of a new dry sausage and salsa processing facility. The work brought together multiple trade disciplines, including pipefitters, sheet metal workers, electricians and Local 597 service technicians. Additionally, their team wrapped up an exciting crane pick in historic downtown Nashville this winter, flawlessly orchestrating the installation of all essential HVAC

*Continued ...*



# AMS INDUSTRIES

60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

... Continued



equipment for the highly anticipated live music bar, Chief's on Broadway.

Not only is AMS proud to have built their reputation on delivering excellence, but they also hang their hat on reliability and relationships. Continuous collaboration with vendors transfers to successful client partnerships. Likewise, investing in AMS employees elevates the company as a whole, and the 2017 transition to 100% employee-owned was one way Berzanskis wanted to give back to those who've given so much to the company.

"We've built a culture of trust, respect and passion for being the best we can be. This is our core business strategy and is imperative to our success," said John Berzanskis Jr., successor of Berzanskis Sr., in a feature article that appeared in BisNow last December. "Our people are the reason behind all of our achievements."

AMS is committed to staying agile and exploring new opportunities that align with their strategic goals, and their membership with MCA of Chicago has proven to be a great resource to learn from and grow with other area mechanical contractors.

"We have been a proud member of the MCA of Chicago since 1990," Campbell said. "The relationship with MCA of Chicago has been immensely beneficial for us, as it has provided valuable networking opportunities, access to industry resources and participation in educational programs and events. Through our membership, we stay updated on industry trends, regulations and best practices, allowing us to continually improve and excel in our operations."

Campbell also serves on the Executive Board of MCA of Chicago as secretary/treasurer, and will eventually serve as president of the association.

AMS is excited to continue their 60-year journey of quality leadership, integrity and passion for excellence. Celebrations for the company's milestone anniversary are ongoing throughout this year, culminating with an Employee Appreciation Day this summer.

# EDUCATION



EDUCATION

## SPRING EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

Throughout the spring months, MCA of Chicago's CEI classroom was busy with members attending various classes on business skills, technology, field training, foreman training, project management, scheduling, estimating, dispatch and safety training. Our goal is to provide exceptional and quality programming for all MCA of Chicago members.



### Advanced Project Management

CEI is proud to offer the Advanced Project Management Program to our members. This program focuses on leadership, legal, managing and improving productivity and technology, and is offered for graduates of CEI's Essentials of Project Management Program (EPM) or to individuals who have extensive experience in the industry. Contact Mary Sebek at [msebek@mca.org](mailto:msebek@mca.org) for more information.

### Coming Soon: CEI Fall Catalog

Providing our members with high-quality continuing education opportunities is very important to us. MCA of Chicago offers courses in project management, technology education, safety and so much more through the Construction Education Institute. All upcoming CEI courses will be laid out in detail in the full CEI catalog, which we'll publish later this summer.



# SAFETY STATS

## THE COST OF WORKPLACE SAFETY

**“Safety first” is a saying we hear all the time, but how many companies in our industry practice what they preach?**

More than just investing in proper PPE and physical safety equipment, it's increasingly clear that MEP and construction leaders must invest in a culture of safety.

From training replacement workers, to increased insurance premiums, to delays in project completion, there are many indirect costs of workplace injuries. On the flip side, the benefits of safety are well-documented. In fact, OSHA reports that for every \$1 spent

on safety programs, construction companies save between \$4-6.

Every MCA of Chicago member company is different, which means every health and safety program will look different. There's no one-size-fits-all approach, but companies should routinely evaluate the implementation and progress of their programs and continue to tailor it to fit their unique needs.

**\$170B**

**THE TOTAL  
ESTIMATED COST  
OF WORKPLACE  
INJURIES IN  
THE U.S.**

National Safety Council

**40%**

**THE ESTIMATED  
PERCENTAGE OF  
CONSTRUCTION  
INJURIES THAT  
RESULT IN DAYS OFF  
FROM WORK.**

OSHA


**+17%**

**THE PERCENTAGE  
BOOST IN  
PRODUCTIVITY ON  
JOBSITES WITH  
SAFETY TRAINING.**

Construction Industry Work  
Force Foundation



**OSHA's Safety Pays tool**  
[osha.gov/safetypays/tool](https://osha.gov/safetypays/tool)



# MCA LEADERSHIP

## MCA OF CHICAGO 2023-2024 BOARD

**Jim Jacobsen Jr.**, **President**, DePue Mechanical, Inc.  
**Nick Marino**, **Vice President**, PremiStar-North  
**Ben Campbell**, **Secretary/Treasurer**, AMS Industries, Inc.  
**Charlie Usher**, **Immediate Past President**, Ideal Heating Co.  
**Lindsey Grilec**, PremiStar-South  
**Rick Cronholm**, Johansen & Anderson, Inc.  
**Charlotte Flesher**, F.E. Moran, Inc.  
**Sam Giampapa**, Midwest Mechanical  
**Andrew Syrios**, Precision Control Systems, Inc.  
**Al Youna**, The YMI Group, Inc.

## PIPING EDUCATION COUNCIL (PEC) 2023-2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Michael McCombie**, **Chair**, Command Mechanical Group  
**Marc Pittas**, The Hill Group  
**John Stern**, Dahme Mechanical Industries, Inc.  
**Brian Helm**, Helm Group  
**Brandon Hubner**, Premier Mechanical, Inc.  
**Eric DeLaney**, BMWV Constructors

## MCA OF CHICAGO ASSOCIATION STAFF

**John Rayburn**, **Executive Vice President**  
**Daniel Bulley**, **Senior Vice President**  
**Mary Sebek**, **Director of Education**  
**Susan Rocque**, **Director of Finance**

**MCA OF CHICAGO**

7065 Veterans Blvd.  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527



**GET THE MOST OUT  
OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP.**  
Support our industry. Stay involved.

**MCA.ORG**

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