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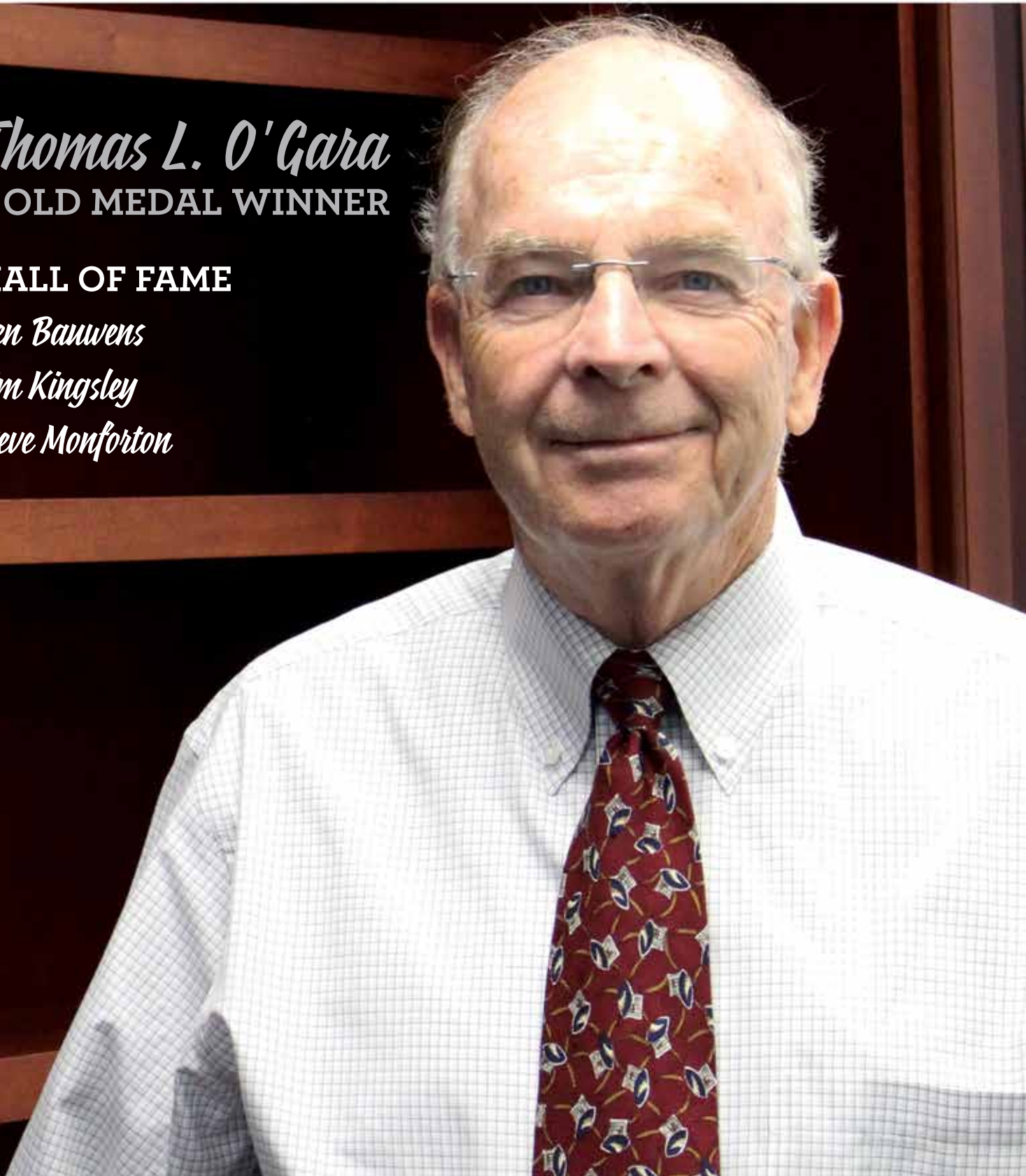
Thomas L. O'Gara
GOLD MEDAL WINNER

HALL OF FAME

Ken Bauwens

Jim Kingsley

Steve Monforton



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To provide members of the electrical industry of Chicagoland and their employees with formal educational opportunities, professional development, information exchange, and member services.

— and —

To serve as the interface between various organizations serving the same industry, and foster the interchange of ideas, product knowledge, and programs in order to create the best external environment possible for conducting business in the electrical industry.

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President's Report

Tom Scherzer

And the winners are...

The Electric Association Awards program was developed over 60 years ago, to honor distinguished service, leadership, and excellence in the electrical industry of Chicago. It is my great honor as President to present these honors at the Membership Awards Dinner each fall. I am happy to congratulate this year's recipients: Gold Medal Award winner, Tom O'Gara (Remke Industries), and Hall of Fame inductees: Ken Bauwens (Jamerson & Bauwens Electrical Contractors), Jim Kingsley (Callas-Kingsley Electrical Sales), and Steven Monforton (Environmental Systems Design). You can read more about our winners in this issue, and join us to honor them at the Annual Awards Dinner on October 18, 2018 at the Carlisle in Lombard.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Executive Director, Ali Novinger. We are confident she will be an excellent addition to the team at the EA and are very pleased to welcome her to the industry. Please take a moment to introduce yourself to her at the next industry event.

As I am nearing the end of my term as your President, I want to take this opportunity to publicly recognize our sustaining members. These companies contribute above and beyond their annual dues payment to help advance the efforts of the association. They are the primary reason we can develop important programs such as the association's new mobile app, new education programs, and other services that help advance our Chicago electrical industry.

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Executive Director's Report Ali Novinger



Changing of the Guard

I am delighted to join the team at the Electric Association and to serve this great industry and association. As a means of introduction, I can give you a brief background of my experience. I am an Illinois native, raised in Wheaton and then I obtained a degree in International Studies from the University of Iowa.

Returning to the land of Lincoln after graduation, I earned my event planning stripes, working as a Sales Manager at a hotel in the western suburbs. While my role in event planning and hospitality encompassed a broad range of clients, I took particular interest in my work with associations. This led to my career change into association management, spending five years as the Senior Association Manager and Meetings Manager for the Thermoset Resin Formulators Association (TRFA) and the Bearing Specialists Association (BSA). Additionally, I was able to work with other association partners as needed, lending valuable experience in a variety of industries.

As you know, Carrie Spaeth has moved on to a new role at the Electrical Contractors Association of Chicago and

Cook County. Thankfully, this means Carrie will still be involved in the industry and at future EA events in her exciting new role. Carrie has proven to be a wealth of knowledge on the history and daily operations of EA. I would like to extend my gratitude to her for her time and effort for a smooth transition. On behalf of myself and the entire Association, we are grateful and indebted to Carrie for her dedicated 20 years of service. There is no question that Carrie cannot be replaced, but I am honored to carry on the torch to advance the goals and mission of the Electric Association in the years to come.

Thank you to EA team members Amy Kasser and Aileen Caravelli who have also provided me a warm welcome and will continue to share their valuable knowledge and insight during this transition. In addition to the amazing staff, I would like to thank the Electric Association Board for providing me the opportunity to champion this important association and to the many members who have already provided valuable support and education as we work together for the successful future of the Electric Association. ●



Mark your calendar! January 24th and 25th, 2019



E. John Ryder
Kelso-Burnett Co.
2018 Electric Golf Club President

Electric Golf Club 2018 Season Closes

Electrical Golf Club held our final outing of the 2018 season at St Andrews Golf & Country Club in West Chicago. This outing has been a long standing tradition as the final outing of the year and we look forward to continuing the tradition for many years to come.

If you have not done so in a while, take a closer look at the invitation from the final outing. Amy Kasser sends them out in an email blast. The invitation is a double page document that lists all the current Directors, Committee Members as well as past participants. The success of the EGC

relies heavily on the participation of many individuals from all walks of the industry. Special thanks to all who remain part of the Electric Golf Club.

As we put away our clubs for the season and head into winter the The All-Industry Dinner Dance will be held on February 9, 2019. Dave Anderson with Agents Midwest will be taking over as the 2019 President. Mark your calendars and look for the invite. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Thanks again to all who participated and helped make the Electric Golf Club a success in 2018. ●



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Thomas L. O'Gara

GOLD MEDAL WINNER

The slogan of Remke Industries, where Thomas L. O'Gara serves as CEO, is: Connecting Possibilities. That has turned out to be an apt description for what O'Gara has done throughout his career. He has made important connections, and through those connections, he has realized his greatest professional and personal possibilities.

The very first connection that O'Gara made launched him on an impressive industry career, which has earned him this year's prestigious Gold Medal Award from the Electric Association. It was 1970, and O'Gara had just returned from serving in Vietnam. His neighbor happened to be James A. Edmonds, president of Daniel Woodhead Co., which at the time was a growing manufacturer of electrical infrastructure products (since acquired by Molex).

O'Gara asked if he could interview for a job at Woodhead, and Edmonds agreed. As part of the interview process, however, he was required to take some tests. As O'Gara recalls, the testing did not go well. "Afterwards, Jim called me into his office and said, 'You flunked all the mechanical tests, but we think you'll be a good salesman,' so he went ahead and hired me."

Starting out in customer service at Woodhead, O'Gara quickly progressed to greater responsibilities throughout the 1970s. He moved up to regional sales manager, then marina division sales manager and finally to general sales manager.

During his time at Woodhead, O'Gara made several additional connections with individuals who turned out to be great friends. One of those friends is John Alton, president of Minerallac Electric Co. (now Minerallac Co.). "I've known Tom for the better part of half a century—probably 45 years," says Alton, who is retired and living in Tucson, Ariz. "The thing that brought Tom and I together was that we ran companies of similar sizes. We were small manufacturing companies with similar challenges, both people-wise and machinery-wise, and that gave us the opportunity to bounce ideas off one another and discuss solutions to common problems."

Alton and O'Gara also bonded over discussions about their families—oftentimes on the golf course. "We both love golf and we played golf together all over the United States," Alton recalls. "We very much enjoyed each other's camaraderie through that sport for a long time."



Another important connection that O’Gara made was with John Remke, president of Remke Connectors. Alton knew both Remke and O’Gara and was in a position to weigh in on what turned out to be an important career transition in O’Gara’s life.

As Alton recalls, Remke came to him to ask for advice. “It was probably the late 1970s, and he said, ‘John, I want to bounce something off of you. What would you think of me hiring Tom O’Gara to back me up?’ I got hugely excited because they were similar guys, and I knew it would create a wonderful team at Remke.”

In 1979 O’Gara accepted Remke’s offer to help grow the company and expand its sales effort. Sadly, Remke’s life was cut short in 1985 after a lengthy illness. O’Gara assumed the role of president and continued to grow the company in keeping with the founder’s vision.

The company grew so quickly that its current facility was no longer adequate. In 1987, O’Gara oversaw the design and construction of a new headquarters in Wheeling, Ill. At this point, the company became known as Remke Industries to reflect its expanded product offerings.

Alton recalls being impressed by how effortless O’Gara made this major expansion look. “He did it all so smoothly, you’d think it wasn’t a big deal at all, but in fact it was a beautiful building with offices, manufacturing, a tool room, inventory spaces and a place for the people at Remke to grow and appreciate.”

O’Gara is so humble, Alton adds, that it’s easy to miss just how impactful his leadership is. “Tom is an extremely smart guy, and it’s always covered up with a wonderful sense of humor. You wouldn’t realize how much he’s accomplished until you stopped to take a look, and then you’d realize that ‘Wow, this is really something.’”

Just as John Remke hired O’Gara to back up his leadership, O’Gara made a similar move when he hired Mark Sweeney. Originally hired as sales manager, Sweeney became president when O’Gara became CEO. The two men currently lead a company that has grown to include more than 75 production and administrative personnel. A recent addition was Alton’s son, Jim, who relocated from Southern California to take a position as Remke’s VP of operations.

Remke’s continuing growth prompted another move earlier this year. The company headquarters and warehouse operations were relocated to Vernon Hills, but machining operations remain in Wheeling.

There are several reasons for Remke’s success, but O’Gara pinpoints service and flexibility as two particular strengths. “Our philosophy has always been to provide the highest quality products, designed to meet the expecta-



tations and applications of our customers,” he says.

O’Gara has made additional connections in the industry through his involvement with the Electric Association. He is a longtime board member who served in the role of president in 2001-2002. He remembers with humor that his term got off to a memorable start.

“I had just been named president in the Fall of 2001,” O’Gara recalls. “It was the 75th anniversary, and we were having our event at Maywood Park Race Track. I had just started my speech, when there was an announcement made, ‘Betting windows are now open.’ That was it. People rushed off, and I never did get to make my speech. As the Gold Medal winner, maybe I’ll finally be able to give that speech at the dinner in October.”

Throughout the years, O’Gara has seen the Electric Association persevere through economic downturns that might have sunk a less resilient organization. “There were lean years for the association, but people like Steve Anixter, David Hardt, Chuck Currie, Dennis Ball and Carrie Spaeth helped turn it around. Now it’s a fairly big and robust organization, with lots of support from all facets

of the industry—manufacturers, manufacturers’ reps, distributors, contractors and engineers.”

O’Gara is particularly grateful for the leadership of Spabeth, who recently left the association after 20 years. “The Electric Association is better because of her,” he says.

Being on the Electric Association board requires a commitment, but O’Gara considers it time well spent. “You have your hand on the pulse of what’s going on in the industry. There are so many advantages that the association offers—including networking, a jobs hotline, training and a foundation for scholarships.”

O’Gara also feels he has benefited greatly from the camaraderie among members, who have come to regard each other as friends despite the fact that they are competing in the same market. “At any one time, you might have any number of competitors in a room together,” O’Gara says. “We share our ideas for improving our businesses, which improves our industry, so it’s really sharing on behalf of the greater good.”

The challenges for the Electric Association have become more complex over the past few decades. For instance, O’Gara observes that industry companies are dealing with the fallout of what he calls “the Amazon effect,” which has raised expectations of how quickly products and services must be delivered in the marketplace. “People have to be much more nimble in terms of how they sell and service their accounts.”

Another challenge is finding quality young people to take on jobs in the industry. “The young people today are more transient,” O’Gara opines. “Many of them move on to different jobs every 18 months or so. It’s a different mindset.”

Nonetheless, O’Gara sees many possibilities thanks to the innovation that is occurring in the industry. “It’s exciting. There are real opportunities for new products for new markets.”

One way to take advantage of these opportunities is by filling voids, which is something that Remke does very well. The company serves a variety of industries—from automotive to food processing to railcars with a diverse line of products such as cord grips and cable connectors. But the company also offers application-specific solutions to meet the precise needs of a single customer.



“We’re not a standard commodity-type company,” O’Gara says. “We’re specialized in what we do. We’re finding customers who don’t want 10,000 of a given piece, they want 10. John Remke used to say the smallest quantity we make is one—unless the customer wants it cut in half. And we still operate by that philosophy.”

There’s a connection between O’Gara’s professional life and his personal life; his son Tom O’Gara works for the company as the Midwest territory manager. O’Gara and his wife of 44 years, Mary Jo, have three additional children. By the time O’Gara receives his Gold Medal Award at the October dinner, he and Mary Jo will have welcomed grandchild No. 10.

That should be a great night—and maybe O’Gara will finally be able to give that speech he intended to give 17 years ago at Maywood Park. But what is more certain is that he’ll accept the congratulations from the people with whom he shares a connection in an industry that has meant so much to him over the past 48 years.

“The Electric Association has given me the opportunity to meet and learn from our industry leaders while also rewarding me with life-long friendships,” O’Gara concludes.

Ken Bauwens

HALL OF FAME

Cooperation and collaboration are two key attributes that have characterized Ken Bauwens' successful career in the Chicago electrical industry. That's obvious from the moment you learn his business title: co-president of Jamerson & Bauwens Electrical Contractors Inc. in Northbrook, Ill. Certainly, to hold that title, you have to be a great collaborator who believes in the spirit of cooperation.

Sharing the co-president title with Bauwens is Richard Jamerson. Since becoming co-presidents 14 years ago, the two men have taken the company that bears their names to greater success and prominence in the industry.

"Our fathers started the business together in 1974," Bauwens says. "They have both since passed away, but Rick and I have continued to grow the company. We're proud of the long-term relationships we've built with our clients. That's how we're carrying on our fathers' legacy. They laid an incredible foundation for the company that really set the culture for the organization."

Now the two co-presidents have something else in common to be proud of—they are both members of the Electric Association Hall of Fame. Jamerson was named to the Hall three years ago, and Bauwens has received that honor this year.

Bauwens and Jamerson became co-presidents after the death of Bauwens' father, Howard. The two younger men had been vice presidents prior to ascending to that role, and they felt it would be most beneficial to the company if they continued with that same equilibrium.

"We are equal owners, so we didn't want to put one of us over the other," Bauwens explains. "We have different strengths—strengths that really complement each other—and that's how we've been able to grow."

Bauwens and Jamerson's co-presidency works because of clearly delineated responsibilities. "Most of my responsibilities lie with the operational side—overseeing project management, strategic planning and delivery of our services," Bauwens says. "Rick's responsibilities are more on the finance side. One of the things we've been working on is developing and growing the talent in the organization upward, showing them that there's a path for advancement and professional growth."

Currently, Jamerson & Bauwens has 35 people working in the office and upwards of 200 field electricians at any given time. "We've expanded beyond our original mar-





ket area of northeastern Illinois and Chicago, going into central Illinois and southern Wisconsin," Bauwens says. "In addition to our office in Northbrook, we have another office in Urbana."

Collectively the two co-presidents have served the Chicago electrical industry by involvement in the various associations, including the Electric Association and the Electrical Contractors' Association. "The majority of my work has been with benefit funds associated with the ECA and the electricians of IBEW Local 134," Bauwens reports. Currently he is chairman of the Board of Electric Insurance Trustees (EIT) for the EIT Benefits Funds, which is a jointly managed fund that provides health, welfare and pension benefits to the 14,000 electricians and retirees in Cook County. He succeeds Bill Divane, who retired in 2015 after 30 years as chair of the trust.

Bauwens feels privileged to succeed Divane in that role. "There are a few members of the industry whom I have learned from. Number one is my father. The next Bill Divane. Another is Mark Nemshick, who led the ECA, and is a fellow associate trustee, a mentor and a close friend."

Bauwens credits Divane's leadership as well as the partnership with Don Finn at Local 134 and EIT Administrator Sean Madix with giving the EIT its stability and success. "We probably have one of the most solid benefit plans in the multi-employer world," Bauwens says. "The success of the plans is largely a collaborative effort."

Bauwens also has served on the Board of Directors for the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans, a nonprofit organization dedicated to being a leading objective and independent global source of employee benefits, compensation and financial literacy education and information.

Nemshick, who retired from his position as ECA manager after 35 years, appreciates Bauwens' tireless efforts in working on behalf of the industry. "Ken is a very kind



individual," Nemshick says. "He's very analytical, but also has a good sense of humor. He's quick to volunteer and has taken on a number of worthwhile causes. He's doing a great job on behalf of the EIT. His work has had a positive effect on the health and welfare of 50,000 lives."

Additionally, Nemshick says Bauwens is a terrific family man. Bauwens and his wife, Karen, have four children (Lauren, Megan, Tim and Alex) and two grandchildren, ages 3 and 5. He and Karen enjoy traveling, with Sanibel Island being one of their favorite destinations. And like many in the electrical industry, Bauwens also enjoys golf.

Bauwens has a number of extracurricular activities outside of his involvement with electrical industry organizations. To keep abreast of what is happening in the construction industry, Bauwens is a member of the Chicago CoP (Community of Practice) for the Lean Construction Institute, the national organization for Transforming Design and Construction using the techniques and teaching from The Toyota Way.

Involvement with LCI is vital, Bauwens believes, because the design and construction industries are changing so rapidly. "It's always exciting," he says. "There are new developments every day. The technology and innovative approaches to delivering construction are increasing exponentially—it's a wave that we're all riding."

Bauwens gives back to the community through his involvement in board and foundation activities related to the healthcare industry. Over the course of 25 years, his involvement has expanded from one to 11 hospitals, with all of those facilities under the umbrella of Presence Health (recently acquired by Ascension Health). Bauwens currently services as chair of the Presence Health Foundation Board of Directors.

In past years, he has served on the Board of Directors for the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation, has chaired the Board of Directors for Catholic Health Partners Foundation, and

was Development Council chair for St. Joseph Hospital.

Other community involvement activities include serving on the Board of Directors for the St. Anthony Hospital Foundation and participation in activities for the Northeast Illinois Council of Boy Scouts and the University Club of Chicago.

With such a busy schedule, Bauwens still finds time to participate in the various organizations and activities of the Chicago electrical industry.

While other cities have local chapters of various industry organizations, Bauwens sees the camaraderie in the Chicago electrical industry as something quite unique. "In Chicago, for some reason, we take it to another level," he says. "We work together when it comes to advancing the industry, providing training and education to the contractor members. I've probably learned more from conversations with my fellow contractors and industry partners than anything else, and I've built a lot of friendships as well. I think that's something very special."



Jim Kingsley

HALL OF FAME

The summer of his 18th birthday, Jim Kingsley took a summer job working in the electric industry. That was more than 40 years ago, and he's been in the industry ever since. Today, he is co-owner of Callas/Kingsley Electric Sales in Wood Dale, Ill., one of the premier agencies in the Chicago market.



It was a family connection that first drew Kingsley into the electrical industry. "My uncle was a business agent with IBEW 134, and he was the one who got me into the business," he recalls. Based on his uncle's connection, he took the summer job at Peter Vrame and Associates, a manufacturer's rep agency in Elk Grove. Within a short time, the job evolved into a permanent position.

Vrame promoted Kingsley to a regional sales management position at another one of his companies, SP Products, before he even reached his 21st birthday. "He put me out there at a very young age, and said, 'Go ahead, kid, and let's see what you can do,'" says Kingsley. "When I first was out there traveling, I wasn't even old enough to rent a car or go out to the bars with the guys. But it was fun, it was exciting. I learned a lot fast."

Much of what Kingsley learned came from interacting with the various company owners he called upon. One whom he remembers in particular was Jake Rosenstein, owner of Brook Electric Supply (since purchased by Sonepar). "He basically took me under his wing," Kingsley recalls. "He took the time to talk to me and mentor me—not so much on products and technical subjects—but rather on the ways and people of the Chicago electrical industry. He was one of the first people who guided me, and I considered him a true friend."

With that sort of guidance and mentorship, Kingsley continued to progress quickly in his career. Before the age of 30, he co-founded his own agency, Callas/Kingsley Electric Sales, with partner George Callas, who is a past recipient of the Electric Association's Gold Medal Award. He and Callas first got to know each other when working for Peter Vrame.

"George started a year before me in inside sales, and I basically followed his career path," Kingsley recalls. "When he went to outside sales, I replaced him in inside

sales. When he became a sales manager, I went to outside sales.”

Kingsley took the regional sales position for SP Products in 1977, traveling with representatives to call on distribution and electrical contractors throughout the United States. “In 1982, I transitioned back into the agency side of the business, expanding the Peter Vrame agency into Wisconsin as well as having account responsibility in the Chicago area,” he reports.

In 1985, Callas and Kingsley started their agency at the urging of a couple manufacturers. Over the next three decades, the two partners built their business to be a major force in the Chicago market. They have worked with some of the largest manufacturers in the industry and earned “Agent of the Year” awards from several of them, including Milbank, Electri-Flex, United Copper Industries, Buchanan and Wheatland Tube Co. Eventually, they bought Peter Vrame’s agency and incorporated it into their own.

If Kingsley had to pinpoint one reason for the agency’s success, it would be the owners’ hands-on involvement in the sales side of their business. “From the top down, George and I are both always out on the streets. We don’t

sit back in the office. We’re actively out there soliciting business.”

They are supported in their selling efforts by a great office staff, many of whom have decades of experience in the industry. “We empower our inside people to make decisions,” Kingsley says. “People like talking to them because they know they are going to get good qualified answers.”

Kingsley credits Callas’ great selling ability as a major reason for the agency’s success. “George is the consummate salesman,” he says. “He’s one of the few guys that, to this day, goes out there wearing a suit and tie. He’s just as comfortable on a contractor job site, teaching them how to run a tool or a piece of equipment, as he is at a corporate meeting.”

Callas likewise has nothing but positive comments to say about Kingsley. “Jim and I have known each other for a very long time and I couldn’t ask for a better partner,” Callas says. “He’s very supportive of what I do, and I’m very supportive of him.”

The division of duties among the two partners plays to their strengths. Whereas Callas is focused almost



exclusively on selling, Kingsley handles administrative duties in addition to the selling. However, Kingsley prides himself on his sales ability, too.

"We're both competitive guys, so I like to get out there and sell," Kingsley says. "It's fun to compete to see who can go out and get the most orders."

With a selling career spanning more than four decades, Kingsley firmly believes in the power of commissions to motivate salespeople. "When we hire salespeople, we always tell them that we're paid on commission. If we don't sell, we don't get paid. I think commission is the best way to pay a salesman. Every day, you have to be on your A game. As owners of the agency, we've done it all our lives."

Callas and Kingsley are not only a team at the agency but also in industry-related activities. They are members of the Electric Association and the National Electrical Manufacturers Representatives Association, but have essentially split up their association-related activities. Callas has served on the Electric Association board for more than 25 years, whereas Kingsley's is a past president of NEMRA's Chicago chapter. In addition, Kingsley has served on the Electric Association's Silent Auction committee as well as the St. Paddy Day Luncheon committee. He was voted Big Shillelagh of the St. Paddy Day Luncheon in 2006. Other industry activities include being a

member of the Electric League of Milwaukee and serving on numerous "rep councils" for various manufacturers.

Kingsley sees Chicago as unique in the sheer volume of industry-related networking opportunities that are available. "In traveling around, I know that other parts of the country have their various groups, but it's nowhere near what you see in Chicago—whether it be the Little Wheels group that younger people are involved, the Electric Golf Club or the Electric Association. I think Carrie Spaeth did an excellent job these last several years keeping everyone involved. It's not only the business relationships but the friendships we form that make it a tightknit group."

Kingsley is married and has two grown sons, Jeffrey and David. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Lory, and his extended family. Among his favorite leisure activities are golfing and fishing. When his kids were growing up, one of his favorite activities was coaching his sons' baseball teams and basketball teams.

"I'm glad I made time for that, and it's something I talk to people about to this day—you only need so much money in life, so make sure you take the time to spend with your kids and have fun," Kingsley says. "I have a very strong relationship with my kids, and I think that spending time with them was a large part of it. It's something that I really cherish."



Steve Monforton

HALL OF FAME

Steve Monforton, Senior Vice President/Technology for Environmental Systems Design Inc., has seen firsthand how inclusive the Electric Association is to all facets of the Chicago electrical industry. About 20 years ago, it came to Monforton's attention that there was a gap in national industry organization's ability to address the needs of the low-voltage side of the industry at the local level—specifically those involved in the voice and data communications fields.

"Back in 1999, I was contacted by Bill Curran, who asked me what I thought about working with him to create an industry group in Chicago that was targeted at this segment, and I said, 'Yes, absolutely.'"

There already was an international group, Building Industry Consulting Services International (BICSI), whose mission is to advance the information and communications technology industry. "Bill recognized, and I agreed, that there was a need for a local industry group for people in the low-voltage information and communications technology industry to get together for networking and educational opportunities," Monforton says. "It was not meant to compete with BICSI in any way, but rather to bring the value of BICSI down to the local level."

Curran and Monforton worked together, along with others from the Electric Association and the industry, to launch the Communications Technologies Forum. "The first formal event of the group was in the Spring of 2000, and it has flourished ever since," says Monforton. "The CTF is for people in every aspect of the low-voltage industry, including contractors, manufacturers, manufacturers' reps, distributors and engineers—essentially anybody involved with the manufacturing, sales, design and installation of low-voltage infrastructure and systems."

Curran, who is president of manufacturers' rep agency CMA Inc. in Naperville, served as the CTF's first chairman, and Monforton succeeded him as the second chair. Perhaps it's only fitting that Monforton is following Curran again. Last year, Curran was inducted into the Electric Association Hall of Fame, and this year Monforton will be entering the Hall.

Like Curran, Monforton continues to serve on the CTF board. "In 20 years, I've probably only missed one or two meetings," he says. Additionally, he was involved in creation of a CTF scholarship as part of the Electric Association's Scholarship Foundation.

While Monforton is long affiliated with the Chicago electric industry, he was born and raised in the Detroit area. He graduated from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor with degrees in electrical engineering and computer engineering, but then headed to Chicago to launch his career. He started out as a control systems engineer for M&M/Mars Candy, designing automation and control systems in a manufacturing environment. He was the lead controls engineer in developing a new, at the time, pro-





duction line that doubled the capacity of the three older manufacturing lines it replaced.

After leaving M&M, Monforton joined EESCO Englewood Electrical Supply as a sales engineer and then became manager of the company's Chicago Tech Center. When EESCO created a low-voltage data-comm division, he became the district sales manager.

"We grew the business very quickly, going from zero to more than \$4 million in just a couple of years," Monforton recalls.

Eventually, EESCO including the data-comm division was sold, at which time Monforton moved on to his current company, Environmental Systems Design (ESD), where his career once again shifted back to the engineering side of the industry. He started as an associate at ESD in 1997 and was promoted several times before achieving his current position as a senior vice president.

As principal and director of ESD's Technology Consulting Engineering practice and as leader of the firm's IT operations, Monforton guides and delivers strategic vision and services to connect facility technology infrastructure and systems. Within IT, he leads digital transformation to provide superior service delivery throughout the firm.

Using his expertise in the engineering and application of technology systems and infrastructure, Monforton has played a key role in high-profile projects such as Jeddah Tower in Saudi Arabia, the world's tallest building. He serves clients across numerous industries, including financial services, trading firms and large-scale data centers, both nationally and internationally.

In addition to the Electric Association, Monforton is active in several other organizations. He is a member of the Uptime Institute as well as the Lake Michigan Region Chapter of the 7x24 Exchange and BICSI. In addition to



his continuing involvement with the CTF, he has volunteered for several other Electric Association activities, such as the Electrical Industry Annual Christmas Party for Homeless Children.

Monforton has made many friends in the electrical industry. In addition to Curran, he has a close connection with another Hall of Famer, Stefan Lopata. Lopata is currently president/CEO of Kelso-Burnett Company, but Monforton and Lopata know each other from their days at EESCO Englewood Electrical Supply Co.

"I've known Stefan for at least 25 years, back when I was in the tech center and he was a manager for one of the branches," Monforton recalls.

When it came time to notify the 2018 Hall of Fame inductees, Lopata as the Electric Association treasurer was the one who contacted Monforton. "He said he wanted to be the one to call me," Monforton reports. "I felt very honored by that. It meant a lot to me that, having known each other for so many years, he wanted to be the one to reach out."

Dating back to those days at Englewood Electrical, Lopata came away impressed with Monforton's abilities. "Steve is a very solid guy—very knowledgeable, very intelligent, and he was always great with customers," Lopata recalls.

Fast-forward 25 years, and Monforton is still impressing his colleagues—notably Zac House, the CEO at ESD. "I've been working with Steve for the last 5½ years, and I've found him to be a very family-oriented, company-type person with great leadership abilities," House says. "He's one of the smartest, most technologically savvy people I know, and I'm excited to have him as part of our team."

House is certainly accurate about Monforton being a family man. He and his wife, Laura, have two adult children and one grandchild, and he loves spending time with

them. As a parent, he has strived to instill in his children the importance of volunteerism. He himself has volunteered for worthwhile causes for many years, including his work with Hessed House, a homeless shelter in Aurora. He also focuses on other charities that serve the underserved, such as Habitat for Humanity and Feed My Starving Children. "It's an effective way to avoid the 'honey-do' list," he said jokingly.

A few years ago, he and Laura volunteered for a two-week mission trip to Navajo territory in Chinle, Ariz., to assist with construction projects as well help with the food pantry and other local parish needs. "It was one of the most personally rewarding experiences of my life," Monforton says. "We went there with a desire to help others and yet somehow, through the graciousness and gratitude expressed by those we went to humbly serve, came away feeling like we got more out of it than we put in."

That's how Monforton feels about his involvement in Electric Association-related activities as well. He helped to get the CTF off the ground, but it has come back to him by strengthening his ties in the industry and providing him with long-term friendships.

"I think the CTF is a microcosm of the value that the Electric Association in general brings to the industry," Monforton says. "It provides opportunities for industry professionals to get together, to share opportunities and challenges, to attend educational and social events, and to keep the communication channels open within the industry."



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Customer Service / Communication Skills

Computer Software Training (ie: Microsoft Office)

English as a Second Language

Team Development

Executive Leadership Development

Supervisory / Management Skills

Finance

Coaching, Mentoring

Change Management

Time Management

Strategic Planning

Behavioral Interviewing

Human Resource Topics

Negotiating

Planning / Project Management

Conflict Resolution

Contact us today for more information! | Chicagoland Electric Association Education Foundation
p: 630-305-3050 | e: anovinger@eachicago.org | Visit us online: www.eachicago.org/education



Consulting Electrical Engineers *Annual Awards*



The CEE, Division of the Electric Association, honored three electrical engineers for their design and service achievements at the annual technical forum on September 24th at the Union League Club of Chicago. The CEE created the annual awards program to recognize consulting electrical engineers from our region for their outstanding achievements in design and service to the industry.

Charles Steinmetz Award



The **Charles Steinmetz Award** for Technical Merit, is awarded to a consulting electrical engineer whom distinguishes him/herself by innovative design of a project with greater than one million dollars of electrical equipment installed. This year, the CEE was pleased to honor **Dan Kline** for his management

of the Addition of the 5th. Transformer at substation TSS65 Ohio of the ComEd Capital Investment Program.

As Program/Project Manager, Mr. Kline, working with multiple ComEd project resource groups were directly responsible for the complete management and oversight

of all project costs, Outage management, on-time execution of the project and all upgrades at related substations (TSS34 Kingsbury, and TSS58 Grand). Mr. Kline met on a weekly basis with ComEd's senior management, and daily with ComEd resources and outside contractors to monitor all substation and related improvements. Mr. Kline was responsible for Project Scope, Budget, and Schedule Management to ensure the on-time and within budget completion of the project. The project's major installed electrical equipment includes:

- 50MVA 138kV to 15kV transformer
- 12kV switchgear
- 125VDC battery system, complete with:
 - Battery Charger, Positive and Negative disconnect switches, and DC distribution panel



- 12kV specialized self-contained cable bus (1st. time use on the ComEd system)
- 138kV Capacitor Banks
- Connections to 138kV Gas Insulated Bus (GIS)
- New Control Building constructed to house major electrical equipment.

Because of Mr. Kline's work, professionalism and his collaborative effort between ComEd's management, and related groups, his efforts resulted in safely, and effectively providing for the future growth of electrical service to ComEd's Downtown and Near North area customers, in addition to increased substation and distribution circuit reliability.

Mr. Kline's impact to the electrical industry of northern Illinois can be summed up simply as the installation, management/oversight of a major addition to ComEd's Chicago and Downtown electrical system. Bringing additional capacity and reliability to the distribution systems and improvements to the relay protection of major equipment supplying the current and future electrical service needs of downtown Chicago.

In Mr. Kline's role as the TSS65 Ohio Project Manager and overall Program Manager he has a direct effect on the ComEd community and Chicago customer base. The many benefits of Ohio project contribute to the individual customers in the downtown and near north areas that ComEd serves. The societal benefits which are concentrated in the immediate geographical area served by this project, are beyond the increased reliability to the surrounding customers. For example, having the additional capacity that this project provides, aides in the economic development of the area, and increased tax base for the City. Residential and commercial businesses now better protected from outages will use this reliability as a further selling point for development of the area. In short, to improve the electrical infrastructure that is responsible for supplying reliable power to current and future

downtown customers, is what this project and Mr. Kline's efforts ultimately were and are directed to.

For these outstanding project management achievements, the CEE was pleased to award Dan Kline with the 2018 Charles Steinmetz Award.

William P. Hogan Award



The William P. Hogan Award for Technical Merit is awarded to a consulting electrical engineer who has distinguished him/herself among his peers by innovative design of a project with less than \$1 million dollars of electrical equipment installed. The 2018 recipient was **Alex Marshall** for his achievements as the lead electrical engineer for Cush-

man & Wakefield's corporate headquarters relocation project in Chicago, IL. Cushman & Wakefield is a leading global real services firm, relocated their Headquarters to 83,000 square feet of interior fit-out space at 225 W. Wacker Drive. The project included a complete renovation and retrofit of 20-year-old electrical and HVAC systems/controls across four floors.

The project also recently achieved LEED Silver and WELL Building Certification. This included the credit for optimization of lighting controls, designed by Alex Marshall, by utilizing a state-of-the art lighting control systems consisting of occupancy/vacancy sensors and day lighting control to reduce baseline energy usage to achieve 6 LEED points. In addition the lighting illumination was designed to comply with the WELL building circadian requirements. Alex was tasked with integrating and coordinating the lighting controls to meet the WELL circadian prerequisite requirements.



The project's biggest challenge was the building's original pneumatic control system; all controls were converted to direct digital control (DDC) to ensure that the upgraded existing and new systems all aligned with the project's sustainability goals. Also, Alex designed a system such that half of the general use office receptacles were placed on a timer. This enabled half of the floor's utilization power to shut off when the floor is unoccupied for even more energy savings.

Alex Marshall partnered with local design and construction talent to address complex and varied programmatic requirements as they created this significant new workplace in Chicago in 2017. This project required technical prowess and finesse to blend mission-critical functionality with robust engineering infrastructure, while maintaining a commitment to the aesthetic expression of Cushman Wakefield client's culture in their new space.

From initial site assessments and exiting equipment condition analysis, through the design collaboration process and into construction and occupancy, each phase of this project demanded close cooperation with the design team. The mission was to weave systems and services into the fabric of the whole, without compromising structural integrity or architectural vision.

This project demanded creative engineering and flexing of Alex's technical abilities. From modeling simulation and concepts design to walking the site during construction, Alex delivered on the new facilities as evidenced by Syska Hennessy Group submitting this work as one of three project examples to win the 2018 Consulting Engineer of the Year Award by the Chicago and Real Estate Association.

Alex clearly demonstrated leadership to the project team by coordinating the complex electrical design and construction administration tasks through project completion. For his innovative achievements, the CEE was pleased to honor Alex Marshall with the 2018 William P. Hogan Award.

The George Nejdil Professional Service Award



The George Nejdil Professional Service Award is named in honor of one of the founding members of the Consulting Electrical Engineers (C.E.E.) Division of the Electric Association. It is awarded annually to an individual who has contributed to the overall improvement of the electrical industry and/or to the

improvement of the practice of consulting electrical engineers. The CEE honored the City of Chicago's Chief Electrical Inspector, **Mike Reynolds**, for his key role in the development of the new Chicago Electrical Code. Mr. Reynolds has worked in the Chicago Department of Buildings for the past eighteen years, and has served as the Chief Inspector since 2015.

Mike Reynolds is also co-chair of the Chicago Electrical Commission.

The development of the new Chicago Electrical Code directly affects the role of the City's Electrical Inspection Bureau: to enforce the safe installation of electrical wiring and equipment and to avoid the danger of electrical shock and fire. The Electrical Bureau is responsible for a variety of inspections. Their primary function is to inspect all electrical installations and to check that they are installed in an approved manner to ensure public safety. Mike Reynolds role in the development of a new electrical code leads to the improvement of the practice of electrical engineers and the safety of our city. For these accomplishments, the CEE was pleased to honor him with the George Nejdil Professional Service award.

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Electric Association's Annual Conference returns to Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace on January 24th and 25th, 2019

Plans are underway for the Electric Association's 2019 Annual Conference. Join us on January 24th and 25th at Drury Lane Theater and Conference Center in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois for this two day conference featuring over 10 contact hours of education programs and an All Industry Trade Show.

The conference planning committee is working on a great line-up of programs for the event, including:

- Changes coming to 2020 National Electrical Code
- NFPA 70e: Electrical Safety and Lock Out Tag Out
- Updates on the new IECC (energy code)
- New Lighting Standards: ASHRE 90.1
- Chicago Electrical Code Update on Fire Systems / High Rise Requirements
- Jobsite Hazzard Awareness
- Photovoltaic /Solar Incentives and Rebates in Illinois
- NABSET Certification (Solar Inspector certification)
- Lighting and electrical for urban gardening / agriculture
- Contact Negotiations - Business Training

Sponsor and Exhibitor registration is underway at www.eachicago.org. Companies that sponsor the Conference, receive discounted exhibit rates as well. Learn more about the marketing benefits that come along with sponsorship, and sign up to exhibit online at www.eachicago.org.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, January 23, 2019: Exhibitor Set Up

Thursday, January 24, 2019:

Conference Education Programs run 8am to 4pm

Tradeshow Hours: 9am to 5pm

Friday, January 25, 2019:

Conference Education Programs, 8am to Noon

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

- Building owners
- Facility Managers
- Electrical contractors, electricians, installers, project managers
- Architects, engineers, specifiers, designers
- Electrical and building inspectors

- Safety Managers and Professionals
- HVAC and Mechanical contractors
- Public sector planners: municipalities, schools, hospitals
- Energy professionals, consultants, utilities
- Industrial maintenance supervisors & personnel

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERING ASSOCIATIONS AND INDUSTRY ALLIES:

- International Association of Electrical Inspectors, Illinois Chapter
- National Electrical Contractors Association
- IBEW
- Construction Safety Council
- National Association of Electrical Distributors
- Middle States Electrical Contractors Association
- PowerForward DuPage
- Consulting Electrical Engineers Division of the Electric Association
- Chicago Electrical Estimators Association
- Illinois Solar Energy Association
- IES Chicago

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Kevin O'Shea, (Chairman) Shamrock Electric
Harry Ohde, IBEW Local 134
Tom Adams, IDCS LLS
Mike Gryn, Concentric Integration
Mark P. Gibson, Agents Midwest Ltd.
Stefan Lopata, Kelso-Burnett
Paul Brown, Kelso-Burnett
Kris Fedoruk, Acuity Brands
Brian Haug, Continental Electric Construction Co.
Richard Wyton, Steiner
Bill Poss, Eaton
Jerry McGlynn, McWilliams Electric
Joe Romano, Epstein
Russ Bozzetti, WESCO
Brian Earl, ConneXion
Tony Clarke, Graybar
Jim Westerfield, Chicago Lightworks ●



NECA National Electrical Contractors Association Tony Mulizio | Chapter President

Here Comes the Sun

Researchers from MIT and Sandia National Laboratories are among the many who have pointed out that the sun delivers more energy to the earth in one hour than humanity consumes in one year. Who knows if their calculations are easily proven, or are more like something from an episode of the popular television show *The Big Bang Theory*, but it sure makes me think about the potential for opportunities in solar electric installations.

On a more practical basis, a development that has provided more momentum for solar electric installations here in Illinois was the passage of the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA). You may recall that this particular law will require at least 4.3 gigawatts of new solar and wind power in the state by 2030. The Sierra Club was quick to note that this would be equivalent to adding the power of two nuclear plants. Add in the other “community solar” provisions of the Act, as well as some tweaks to the way renewable energy charges are monetized by the state office of the Illinois Power Agency, and the outlook for this segment suddenly looks a whole lot better.

In fact, things are looking a lot brighter for solar installations throughout the Midwest. The NECA Midwestern Region and the IBEW Sixth District have identified \$40 billion of work that will be performed within the next three years on 410 projects across Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and some areas in Minnesota. What’s more, the projects that these organizations have tracked are only for solar installations larger than 2 megawatts and do not include the large number of smaller commercial and residential installations.

Our industry is becoming better positioned for this work every day. It is worth noting that under the above mentioned FEJA legislation, the IBEW in Chicago has received a \$3 million training grant which will enable

them to team up with the 17 NECA-IBEW Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees across the state of Illinois in order to provide solar craft training to our workforce. They will also be providing training to a number of community colleges and high schools located within disadvantaged neighborhoods beginning in September 2018. The NECA Midwestern Region is also working closely with the IBEW in order to promote labor agreements that if adopted will ensure that electrical contractors will be poised to offer entire solutions to developers and customers. Such solutions will not only encompass the actual electrical power systems but will also incorporate support structures such as posts, racking, blocking and panel assembly at a competitive composite wage rate.

NECA members have the additional benefit of having access to the NECA Energy Conservation And Performance platform (ECAP) that brings contractors together with financing firms, engineering, insurance services, and supplier support in order to offer turnkey renewable energy solutions to both new and existing customers – a comprehensive program for NECA member firms. NECA has recently added inventory financing to this platform to provide additional support to contractors who otherwise may not have access to such financing. NECA members also can tap into member discounts on solar equipment through a value added program with Day and Night Solar based in Collinsville, Illinois.

So, although the rays of the sun may not completely emblaze our Illinois landscape, we are fortunate that we will have more than enough of its energy to help power our state’s future. If you want to find out more about opportunities in solar energy, energy storage, and micro-grid technologies please contact the NECA Chapter office at (630) 876-5360. ●



ECA Electrical Contractors Association of City of Chicago

Eric Nixon | ECA President, Maron Electric Company

ECA Student Committee Update

The Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) is a construction trade association that provides business and labor relations services to nearly 600 electrical contractors in Cook County, Illinois. The Association works with its industry partner, Local Union #134, IBEW to negotiate and administer labor agreements, coordinate apprentice and journeyman level training, as well as promotion of the industry on behalf of these employers. The ECA is also known as the Chicago and Cook County Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). Currently, 70 signatory firms are members of the Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) / Chicago and Cook County Chapter, NECA.

The ECA Student Committee oversees the NECA IIT Student Chapter, as well as other activities. The Committee helps promote the industry to students. Contractor members work to better enhance the student's knowledge of the industry, as well as broadening potential employment opportunities. The students are active with NECA-promoted challenges. The group also has at least two Membership Meetings per semester held at the IIT Smart Tech Lab. The NECA IIT Student Chapter advisor and students raised about \$180,000 in cash and in-kind contributions to create the state-of-the art Smart Tech Lab and PoE system with help from area electrical contractors. The formation and expansion of the new Lab is the "physical home" for the IIT NECA Student Chapter meetings and events.

In January 2018, NECA offered the Green Energy Challenge competition to provide university students and faculty advisors an engaging and fulfilling event that fosters meaningful interaction between students, their community and NECA member companies. The technical portion

of the competition is for each student team to simulate all of the details of a project proposal for an organization/entity within the community. It is not a competition in which the actual construction work is performed by the winning team.

The Student Team must create a volunteer plan of interaction with the client organization and demonstrate – in the proposal – the activity and number of hours volunteered by the student team towards the mission of the organization. Teams are challenged to design an energy upgrade for a facility in their surrounding area that provides community services to others. Examples of this type of facility include a homeless shelter, food pantry, daycare center, library, house of worship, etc. Teams were requested to prepare a proposal on how their chosen facility can achieve net zero energy consumption by incorporating energy saving measures and distributed energy resources. An emphasis is placed on detailed technical solutions for proposed systems, including lighting retrofit and integrated window treatments/controls, detailed design of PV solar array based on system specifications, and the re-design of an energy efficiency upgrade to the facility that responds to the unique needs of the building and climate. Teams were to assume the client had requested a path towards a Net-Zero Energy facility and that their solution should work towards and potentially achieve this goal.

Competing against 14 universities in the U.S. (NECA student chapters), IIT won FIRST PLACE in the NECA Green Energy Challenge for conducting a net-zero focused energy audit of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA). As of this writing, a team of seven students are to participate with the NECA Convention in Philadelphia where the top 3 finalists compete with a presentation. The Student Chapter is also competing for the Outstanding

continued from page 25...

NECA Chapter of the Year (with a focus on the new IIT Smart Tech Lab). We want to congratulate the students on their efforts and wish them well in the Finals. We also wish to thank the IIT advisor and ECA members who have assisted the students over the semester.

In the Spring of 2018, NECA IIT students also entered the university IPRO competition with the submission of an energy audit of the Chicago Institute of Cultural Affairs building competing against several other student project groups. The NECA IIT students won first place with the Dean's Choice Award. On March 5, 2018, at the NECA IIT Student Chapter meeting held at the IIT Smart Tech Lab, the session featured Mark Willie, Chief Sustainability Officer, McKinley Design, LTD and Lindsey Elton, ECO Achievers. They discussed, "Energy Efficiency and Achieving Net Zero." On March 26, 2018, David Martindale, PE engineer at Ballard Engineering spoke on Net Zero Green Energy for the NECA IIT Student Chapter. This event was open to all ECA members and various industry contractors.

The above information is a sampling of the year-round activities of the Association. It is the participation of our member volunteers that has kept the Association on the forefront of the industry. We hope that all signatory contractors within the Cook County area will make the commitment to the industry and join our Association. Please contact the ECA office at: (708) 531-0022 or by fax at: (708) 531-0071 or visit our website at: www.ecachicago.com for membership information, as well as information regarding Chapter and NECA programming. ●

Industry News

Mulcrone & Associates to Represent START Lighting in Northern IL, Eastern WI, Northwest IN, Upper Peninsula of MI

START Lighting is pleased to announce Mulcrone & Associates as its new representative in northern Illinois (Chicagoland) and eastern / southern Wisconsin.

START, a commercial and industrial lighting manufacturer is known for designing and producing quality lighting fixtures while having the flexibility to modify fixtures to address customer needs and designing new fixtures to fit unique applications specific to customers, is selectively expanding its rep network.

While Mulcrone, like many electrical manufacturers' reps, represents some other lighting lines, they saw some of START Lighting's capabilities as a unique way to differentiate themselves and add value to their electrical distributors and the distributors' customers.

The ability to modify products to meet customer needs and some of START's unique products such as its Vari-Just™ troffers and panels with tunable CCT and adjustable power controls, as well as its Parking Garage Canopy Luminaire with its Kwik-Link feature to simplify installation attracted Mulcrone & Associates.

And recognizing that the Chicagoland market is very demanding, START and Mulcrone have decided to stage key products in Mulcrone's distribution warehouse. The benefit being robust inventory to handle larger projects, and a regional ship point to cover the market.

Said Jason Barbour, CEO of START, "Mulcrone & Associates is a dynamic and forward-thinking organization, the type of agency we want to be aligned with. They have strong product knowledge, are committed to supporting their distribution customers, and understand the needs of their large and diverse geography. Together I'm confident that we can bring value to the agency, its distributors and most importantly our joint customers." ●

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