



MEET OUR SPEAKERS

AWMI 2023 Annual Conference

Thursday, November 9, 2023

Education Workshop: Handling Conflict & Difficult Conversations

1:15pm-3:15pm



Dr. Amber Wright, Communication Expert & Speaker at The Asbury Group

Dr. Amber L. Wright is a relationship communication expert and founder of Words Well Said, a personal development company that helps organizations do a better job at making their people feel seen, heard, and valued. As an executive coach and speaker, she guides leaders toward expressing their highest selves with authentic authority and grace. Her popular TEDx Talk entitled, “Ask Better Questions to Build Better Connections,” has inspired people all over the world to become stronger communicators in their everyday lives. She has been mentioned in Fast Company, Essence, and Mashable, and is the creator of Can We Talk? Cards – 50 questions designed to help you take the guesswork out of small talk.

Keynote Speaker: How to Use Foundational Leadership to be an Intreprenuer in a Non-Entrepreneurial Company

6:30pm-8:30pm



Robert Griggs, Founder and President at Trinity Products

A lifelong Missourian, Robert graduated from the University of Missouri, Columbia in 1977. He started Trinity in 1979. Along with his wife, he currently lives in St. Charles, MO. His two sons are also both University of Missouri, Columbia graduates and currently working for Trinity Products. Robert has served as President and Treasurer of the National Association of Steel Pipe Distributors (NASPD), an international organization of more than 200 steel distributors. He has spent his entire career in the steel and fabrications industry. Robert bought out his original partner in 1993. Since that time, Trinity's revenues have grown from \$2.2M to \$60M in 2011. Projections for

sales in 2014 are \$70M; with sales of over \$275 million in 2022!

In 1979, Robert Griggs did something his college friends found daring, bordering on crazy: He and a business associate started their own company, Trinity Products, Inc. While his contemporaries struggled in entry-level corporate jobs, the 23-year-old Agricultural Economics major from rural Missouri saw an opportunity in the steel pipe business, and grabbed it. Initially, Trinity Products' mission was to provide quality products and services to the construction industry, piling contractors, road-boring contractors, utility contractors, and the caisson industry. Then in 1986, Griggs secured a lease on 15 acres of property and built a fabrication facility. Adding fabrication services increased the value the company could offer its existing customers, as well as further diversify its customer base. This expansion brought about the addition of high-rise sign structures, which lead to the addition of billboard fabrication, and other more complicated fabrication. The result? Trinity set itself apart from its competition.

By the early 1990s, Griggs saw an even brighter future ahead for the steel industry and aspired to take Trinity to new heights. He bought out his partner, and by 1999, had begun expanding the company's operation by building a new, \$1.3 million facility that included a 30,000-square-foot fabrication shop. The addition of a CNC, multi-torch burning table to custom cut parts from plate significantly increased Trinity's fabrication capabilities. Two years later, Griggs added new equipment for cutting angles, channels, and beams to facilitate the growing billboard and cell tower divisions. Responding to his customers' specific needs and to facilitate increased production requirements, Griggs added a 10,000 sq ft coating facility and a CNC beam liner to Trinity's fabrication capabilities by mid-summer of 2002.

In 2004, Griggs broke ground for his most ambitious expansion project to date, a \$15 million spiral-welded pipe mill. The move was a gamble. Only one other facility of its kind existed, and the market for spiral-welded pipe was still unproven. Griggs' enduring goal was to be the only totally vertically integrated supplier in the steel industry. The company has enjoyed a 127 percent growth in sales each year. Annual sales have grown from \$2.1 million in 1993 to projected sales of \$70 million in 2014.

Griggs applies his "out-of-the-box" thinking to his business as well as the management of his company. In 1995, Trinity became one of the first companies of its size to move to "Open Book Management," a management format that encourages employees to become involved in the decision-making process directly related to their job. At the time, Griggs' deep-seated belief was that he could not grow Trinity's sales, profitability, and culture on his own. To become truly profitable, he and his management team needed to become "teachers" of business. By viewing his employees as "experts" in their respective fields, workers were encouraged to voice their input and rewarded when the contribution was effective. Today, everyone – from shop and office personnel to management – understands Trinity's income statement. The company shares financial information at regular monthly finance meetings and solicits input from employees on current issues. Benchmarks are established and goals are set collectively. As their objectives are reached, all employees share in the profits. In 2001, Griggs was honored by the state of Missouri with the Governor's Achievement Award for Economic Development and the 2001 Innovative Training/Workforce Development Award.

There are two overriding themes when it comes to Robert Griggs: 1. Don't tell a lie. 2. The More You Give, the More You Get. Don't tell a lie is pretty simple as it is about the only thing you can do at Trinity that will get you fired. The more you give, the more you get is slightly more complicated. Robert believes that when you make someone else's life better your life will be better as a result. This is not just a monetary thing either. Robert makes it a point to learn about and know the families of all of the employees and what is important to them. He will then make every attempt to help that person achieve those goals. He encourages all employees to think in this fashion as well. Each year Trinity supports one of the local food pantries with a "canned food drive" as our way of giving back to the community. With management having this mindset, employees generally feel like they are part of something and want to come to work. They look at this as more than just a job and as such, Trinity has seen a reduction in turnover throughout the company.

The last part of the puzzle that drives Robert and Trinity every day is "Continuous Improvement" starting in 2010 we embarked on a mission to get better every day! It started with a program called COSI "Circle of Success Institute" which taught us the skills to ask what's now working; make a list and fix it! Most of the success we've experienced since then has been because of our "relentless pursuit to get better"!

Our Core Values:

1. We have a Boss, it's the Customer, serve them!
2. Serve our employees through Profit Sharing!
3. Relentless Pursuit of Continuous Improvement; every day!
4. Control the controllables!

And this beginning of the new Chapter is forming an ESOP "Employee Stock Ownership Plan" in 2020 in which the employees own the company! It couldn't be in better hands as the folks that help build this are now the Shepard's of this great vehicle for success!

Metal Tough: How to Create a Successful Career in the Metal Industries

8:15am-9:30am

Moderator: Sarah Moran, General Manager- Sales Ryerson, Singer Steel



Ashley Kotowski, VP Marketing & Sales at North Star Bluescope

Ashley Kotowski was named Vice President of Sales and Marketing for North Star BlueScope (NSBS) in 2021. With more than 17 years of extensive flat rolled steel experience, she has advanced through various roles in sales, customer service, marketing, and continuous improvement. Prior to joining NSBS, Ashley was an integral part of the Big River Steel commercial team where she managed national level sales accounts during the expansion of the Osceola, Arkansas facility. From 2015 to 2017, Ashley served as a Regional Sales Manager at Companhia Siderurgica Nacional (CSN) supporting flat rolled steel domestic sales and Brazilian steel imports. In 2006, she launched her steel career at Severstal North America as a college intern which opened numerous opportunities in commercial and continuous improvement roles. Ashley has held local, regional, and international board positions with the Association of Women in the Metal Industries (AWMI). She credits AWMI as her springboard for professional growth and influential relationships. She holds a bachelor's degree in Marketing and a master's degree in Business Administration from Wayne State University. Ashley currently resides in metro Toledo, Ohio with her husband and two children.



Kasandra Lutzko, General Manager at Commercial & Administration, Big River Steel

Kasandra currently manages the sales organization for Big River Steel which includes the regional sales managers, inside sales, sales operations and export. She joined BRS in April of 2019. Kasandra started her career at Sumitomo in Pittsburgh, PA as an import and export sales representative. She has worked as a sales engineer for Danieli and held various sales roles at SDI and Severstal NA and has also worked in purchasing for both Steel and Pipe Supply and Ryerson. Kasandra has a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering from Kent State University and an MBA from Robert Morris.



Jodi Parnell, COO at O'Neal Steel

Jodi Parnell serves as Chief Operating Officer for O'Neal Steel, where she is responsible company's Operations and Supply Chain groups. In this role, Jodi is passionately focused on safety, operational excellence, enhanced productivity, and supply chain management. Her career in metals began immediately following her graduation from the University of Alabama as an Inside Sales Representative at Tuscaloosa Steel (now Nucor Tuscaloosa). That was a tumultuous time for the steel mill, and when a mentor recommended that she apply for a position at O'Neal Steel as a long-term growth opportunity she began her journey in Purchasing. Her passion for streamlining process, learning new things, and project management took her through various positions and projects throughout the company to Vice President of Supply Chain Management for the past ten years and onto her current role of COO (effective this year).

Economic Climate Session: State of the Steel Industry

9:45am-10:45am



Paul Lowrey, President at Steel Research Association

Paul Lowrey is the President and Founder of Steel Research Associates, LLC. He has been in the steel industry for 30 years and provides management consulting services to steel producers, service centers, end-users, and the financial community. Prior to steel, Paul worked in the energy industry for 10 years. In addition to his consulting work, Paul is a guest speaker at industry conferences and writes articles for industry trade publications. Paul holds a bachelor's degree from Grove City College and a master's degree from Northeastern University.

Workforce Development Panel

11:00am-12:15pm

Moderator: Judy Ferraro, Leadership Development Judy Ferraro Associates



Shannon Guzman, Director of Human Resources at Chromalloy

Shannon Guzman joined Chromalloy in August 2016, and currently serves as Director of Talent Acquisition for Chromalloy North America and Regional HR Leader for East Operations. Shannon brings 20 years of HR leadership over the course of her career with diverse industries to include public sector with Department of Defense Education in the Netherlands, global technology ecosystems with Syniverse in Tampa, and manufacturing/engineering/foundry client groups with companies such as Ingersoll Rand and Western Forge in Colorado Springs. Shannon holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Human

Resource Management from the University of Maryland University College- European Division, and an MBA with an emphasis in HR Management from Colorado Technical University. During her tenure as Regional HR leader for Chromalloy Castings, Guzman worked closely with FLATE, Hillsborough Community College, CareerSource Tampa Bay and the Manufacturing Alliance to build strategic partnerships in education, talent development and manufacturing market insights. The partnership with FLATE/HCC culminated into the launching of a successful internship program to provide students with hands on learning, and a tangible career path customized to their skills, ambition and aptitude. Shannon Guzman was the recipient of the 2020 FLATE Distinguished Manufacturing Partner Service Award, and she now leads an incredible team of Recruiters and HR Business Partners that continue to pioneer new trails in community partnerships, talent pipelines, employee engagement, leadership mentoring and strategic workforce planning. Shannon was born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska, and has three beautiful children- daughter, Damaris, 23; and two sons Angel, 17 and Aaron, 4 with her US Air Force veteran husband of 24 years.



Paul Montague, VP People, Coated Products NA at NS Bluescope

Paul Montague is a Senior Human Resources Leader with extensive experience building global organizational capability, performance, and transforming organizations. Paul is a Global leader with 30+ years of broad experiences working across the Americas, Asia, EMEA/ UKI with equally diverse and broad company and industry experiences. Paul joined BlueScope as Vice President of Human Resources for Coated Products North America (CPNA), in March 2021. Prior to joining CPNA, Paul was the Vice President HR & Employee Communications for RTI Surgical. Other experiences include Johnson Controls, Baxter Healthcare, GE Healthcare, and Continental Airlines. Paul has undergraduate degrees in International Management and French, and a master's

degree in Industrial/Labor relations.



Amanda Rowe, Talent Manager at Gerdau Steel, North America

Amanda has worked for Gerdau for the past 5 years and currently leads the Talent Acquisition team to drive Gerdau's culture, development, and engagement of the workforce through talent management and talent acquisition activities, along with strategic initiatives. She has held Leadership roles at recruitment firms and has over 20 years of experience in full life cycle recruitment. Amanda holds a bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University with a degree in Communications.

Keynote Presentations

To Act or Not to Act, That is the Question

2:00pm- 3:00pm



Eddie Lehner, President and CEO at Ryerson Holding Corporation

Edward J. Lehner is President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Ryerson, a global industrial metals supplier and processor with operations in the United States, Canada, Mexico and China. Eddie began serving as Ryerson's CEO in June 2015 after having served as Ryerson's executive vice president and chief financial officer from July of 2012 thru May of 2015. Prior to joining Ryerson, Eddie served as the chief financial officer of PSC Metals, Inc., a diversified metals company, and before that, as the chief financial officer of SeverCorr, LLC., a primary steel manufacturing company headquartered in the southern United States. Eddie's career also includes senior general management, operational, financial, accounting, tax and consulting roles for Nucor, Birmingham Steel, Inc., Laurel Steel and Deloitte & Touche. Eddie has served as Board Chairman of the Metals Service Center Institute (MSCI), Board of Directors of Modumetal Inc., and The Mississippi State Workforce Development Board.

Keynote-Construction Market Update

3:15pm- 4:15pm



Tabitha Stine, Corporate General Manager of Construction Solutions Sales & Commercial at Nucor Corporation

Tabitha S. Stine, SE, PE LEED AP joined Nucor Corporation in 2020 to develop and lead their Construction Solutions Services division. Thru this role she has lead a team to knit together construction products across the Nucor portfolio to deliver comprehensive technical and commercial solutions to grow and win at a higher level. This is achieved by developing relationships at the highest level of projects beyond the traditional customer base, including owners/developers, architects, and engineers. Most recently she has transitioned to lead the Energy Solutions Services division to bring strategy and continuity to how Nucor serves both traditional fossil and emerging alternative energy opportunities as customers explore their future towards decarbonization and clean energy. Prior to joining Nucor, Tabitha was the Vice President of Market Development at AISC, and oversaw the activities of the structural steel specialists, NSBA bridge specialists, and AISC Steel Solutions Center, where she worked for nearly 16 years. Tabitha has presented at various conferences nationwide on topics such as innovations in steel, construction economy trends, resilience, sustainability, and architecturally exposed structural steel. Before working at AISC, Tabitha was a structural engineer for Sargent & Lundy specializing in industrial power design utilizing structural steel. Tabitha earned her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 2001 and her Masters of Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 2003.

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