



2014 Leadership Conference Recap

*“Don’t Run Away From a **Challenge**,
Run **Toward It**... But Make Sure
Your Team Is Following You!”*
– Dan DiMicco



The **AIST Leadership Conference** is hosted annually for our Technology Committee and Member Chapter officers, as well as our Board of Directors and Foundation Trustees. The objectives of the conference are to enhance AIST programs for improved value, and to build strong leaders for our Association and the steel industry.

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The 2014 Leadership Conference was held 19–21 November 2014 in New Orleans, La., USA, at the historic Roosevelt New Orleans — A Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The event was co-located with the DRI: Logistics, Production and Utilization Technology Training conference and the Birmingham and Southwest Member Chapter Joint Annual Meeting. The combined program drew more than 330 people, representing a tremendous networking opportunity. The event kicked off with a reception on Wednesday evening at the Roosevelt, allowing attendees from all three events to network and check out the vendor displays. The Leadership Conference program began in earnest on Thursday morning with a State of the Association presentation by Ron Ashburn, AIST's executive director. Keith Prather, managing director, Armada Corporate Intelligence, followed with an overview of the manufacturing economy. Mr. Prather's presentation provided insight and perspective on current conditions and their impact on the steel industry.





Daniel R. DiMicco, chairman emeritus, Nucor Corp.



Dr. Tasha Eurich, principal, The Eurich Group

The Leadership Conference provides AIST a great opportunity for feedback from some of our most engaged members. The “Air-It-Out” Discussion allowed for an open forum to discuss what is working, and what’s not, within AIST. This frank conversation helps establish key initiatives to evolve AIST’s strategic plan.

The morning concluded with a Leadership Perspectives keynote presentation with Daniel R. DiMicco,



Keith Prather, managing director, Armada Corporate Intelligence

chairman emeritus, Nucor Corp. Moderated by Ron Ashburn, Mr. DiMicco discussed, in his trademark gregarious manner, the early days of his involvement in the steel industry, his career path and the people who influenced his leadership style. “Never run from a challenge, run toward it. But make sure your team is following you,” Mr. DiMicco said, referencing a number of moments in his career, from putting together a team at Nucor Steel–Utah to replacing Kenneth Iverson as chief executive during a troubled time for the steel industry in general, and for Nucor specifically.

Robert Hunter of Midrex Technologies Inc. delivered the keynote address during lunch, titled “Shale Gas — A Revolution in the Energy Sector: Effects on Iron-making and Steelmaking in America.” Mr. Hunter’s detailed presentation captured many of the numerous angles and impacts of shale gas.

The afternoon’s Strategic Initiative Planning built on the morning’s Air-It-Out session. Breaking into small groups, attendees brainstormed on ideas that included boosting the value of AIST conferences, meetings and membership, continuous improvement for *Iron & Steel Technology*, growth, engagement and retention of younger members, acquiring additional users for the AIST Process Benchmarker® (APB), promoting the Steel to Students program, building



Leadership Conference attendees participated in AIST Jeopardy.

relationships with trade schools and targeting new international opportunities.

After an evening reception for all three events' attendees, Thursday finished with dinner and a panel discussion. Moderated by Donald Bryant, Steel Dynamics Inc., the panel featured Chris Stout of The David J. Joseph Co., AIST past president Terry Fedor of Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. and current AIST president Glenn Pushis of Steel Dynamics Inc. – Flat Rolled Div.

Friday's morning session was led by Dr. Tasha Eurich, a leadership guru and *New York Times* best-selling author. Dr. Eurich's presentation focused on three main topics: Bankable Leadership, Generational Hysteria and Hope Is Not a Plan — Why You Need a Leadership Strategy. Drawing on her experiences as an executive consultant and backed by human behavior research, Eurich's presentations challenged the attendees' presumptions on many topics, and elicited great responses on problems and solutions for many of the challenges facing individuals in leadership roles.

The Leadership Conference closed on Friday afternoon with a game of AIST Jeopardy. Attendees were quizzed on their knowledge of the Association, its activities and New Orleans. After a lively game with no serious injuries, the program finished with Mr. Ashburn's summary of the conference and action items under consideration for AIST. ♦



Panel discussion after Thursday's dinner.