



The AIST Mexico Member Chapter office staff celebrated the chapter's first 20 years (left to right): Felipe Villarreal, Homero Menchaca, Myrna Molina, Rafael Colás, Juan Carlos Rodríguez and Demetrio Velasco.



AIST Mexico Member Chapter Celebrates 20 years

Founding Members

Miguel Ángel Pedroza
 Marco Herrera
 Octavio Rodríguez
 Antonio Uribe
 Florentino Luna
 Rafael González
 Raúl Gutiérrez
 Rafael Colás
 Julián Sánchez
 Rogelio González
 Luis Caballero
 Humberto Castillejos
 Diego Gutiérrez
 Andrés Acosta
 Carlos Domínguez

Members of the AIST Mexico Member Chapter gathered at Club Industrial in Monterrey, N.L., Mexico, on 17 April 2015 for a dinner to celebrate its first 20 years and recognize the small group who dared to take the first steps in March 1995 to create the chapter. Those were the days before the ISS-AISE merger that gave rise to AIST. The Mexico Member Chapter opened the door for the offshore expansion of the organization that was born in the U.S. Miguel Angel Pedroza, the chapter's founding president, recalled the chapter's initial challenges with a speech full of nostalgia and pride.

The first meetings were in coffee shops and restaurants, then Fundidora Park, and soon in the offices of some of the participating companies or local universities; it was 16 years before the chapter

had its own offices. One of the keys to the founding members' success was the enthusiastic participation of three industry sectors: producers, suppliers and academics. The unconditional support of the Iron & Steel Society (ISS) and then AIST was also very important.

One of the first decisions of the founding group was to edit a small newsletter that quickly evolved into the current magazine: *Hierro y Acero* (Iron and Steel), which became the most important source of income for the chapter through advertising sales. Today, it is published quarterly with a circulation of 2,000 copies distributed for free.

In 2003, it was decided to organize the first CONAC (Steel National Congress). Currently it is the economic mainstay of the chapter and has grown into an international event. The sixth edition, which



AIST Mexico Member Chapter founders, staff and AIST staff representatives were invited to the celebration.

was held in 2014, was attended by 110 exhibitors; more than 70 papers were presented, as well as two short courses. It attracted more than 1,300 participants from Mexico, the U.S., Central and South America, Europe, China and India.

Soon it became necessary to create committees to concentrate on specific activities. The Meltshops Committee was the first to organize annual meetings for managers and directors to exchange experiences, discuss common problems and visit a plant; shortly after, meetings for EAF and Caster supervisors began with a similar format. Currently the chapter has nine committees with more than 50 members who regularly participate in session and perform a number of activities: Meltshops, Rolling Mills, Processing Lines, Maintenance and Industrial Security, CONAC, Editorial, Courses and Technical Events, Students, and Horno 3 museum.

The chapter members participated in the early activities that led to the founding of Museo del Acero Horno 3 (Blast Furnace 3 steel museum) in 2005. Located in the heart of Fundidora Park, the museum was built inside what was Blast Furnace 3 of former Fundidora Monterrey. Today, the chapter has a close relationship with the museum and collaborates on various educational activities, as well as scientific and technological dissemination.

Since its founding, the chapter has been keen to encourage students to approach the steel industry and has supported the student chapters of Mexican universities in their extracurricular activities, providing both financial support and speakers for the events organized by the students themselves. From 1998 to 2000, the chapter organized and financed, with the support of the ISS, three summer

programs for outstanding students called STEEL 2000, that took place in the facilities of Monterrey Institute of Technology and Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Faculty.

During the dinner celebration, Ronald E. Ashburn, AIST executive director, congratulated the members of the chapter for 20 years of achievements. He highlighted the vision of the founders and the commitment of its leaders, and expressed confidence that in the years to come the chapter will continue to grow.

As part of the celebration, an agreement was signed with Monterrey University to provide full scholarships for five students of Polytechnic School of Santa Catarina, a joint project between the university, the municipality of Santa Catarina and the state government that provides high-quality technical education for young people in the area who have financial needs. This project is the chapter's first step in aiming to stimulate the preparation of technical professionals who can be integrated into the steel industry and meet the high demand generated by the recent industrial growth of the Monterrey metropolitan area. ♦



Five Polytechnic School of Santa Catarina students received full scholarships from Monterrey University as part of the celebration.



Antonio Dieck (left), UDEM, and Rafael Colás (right), AIST Mexico Member Chapter, signed an agreement for the scholarships.

