



AIST YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Alex Roach, Engineer II, HDGL Process Technology



What first interested you about learning more about the steel industry?

When I took a tour of the Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa mill while I was in college, it was amazing to me how the process was performed! I was hooked from the first moment I saw a furnace charge all the way to the finished product.

Did you participate in any of AIST's programs or attend AIST events as a student?

I have a B.S. degree in metallurgical and materials engineering from The University of Alabama (UA) and an M.B.A. from Ohio University. I attended the Birmingham Member Chapter events and went to a couple AIST conferences while attending UA. Since graduation, I have continued to attend these AIST conferences to advance my social network and knowledge base.

What things did you do as a student that enhanced your passion or understanding of the steel industry?

Participating in a co-op at Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa and an internship at AM/NS Calvert allowed me to further my passion toward steel. These opportunities allowed me to apply what I was learning in class to the real world, and vice versa. I also participated in the casting team at UA, which allowed me to see different forms of casting processes.

Did any AIST programs assist with your career advancement?

Attending the AIST conferences allowed me to enhance my knowledge of the steelmaking process and meet great contacts in the industry.

What advice do you have for students who are curious about pursuing something related to the steel industry?

Ask questions about what opportunities are out there! To my surprise as a student, the steel industry offers a wide variety of opportunities! I know when I started in the industry, I had no clue what I would enjoy the most. I would suggest reaching out to your local AIST Member Chapter and get in touch with one of the Young Professional chairs near you! Since I have been a part of the AIST Young Professionals (YP) program, it has allowed me to speak with students interested in a career in the steel industry. Your YP contact can help clear up anything that you might be curious about.

What are your plans for continued involvement in AIST?

I am excited to finally be able to attend conferences and meetings again after a crazy 2020! These events are great for social networking and gaining more contacts in the industry. I am also eager to assist more with the AIST Young Professional programs in my area and speak to nearby chapters or universities regarding what AIST can offer them.

What do you find unique and interesting about the steel industry? What do you enjoy the most about it?

The steel industry offers such dynamic career opportunities. To me, it offers the ability to gain experience in both a business sense and a technical sense. It is the only job I have ever had that I truly get the best of both worlds. Some days are spent at the desk, analyzing data to construct a plan for process improvement; other days are spent all day on the floor, working hands on with the operation. I love having this type of variety! ♦