How did you get started in the steel industry?
It’s a bit of a different story than most people. I’m actually a chemical engineer by degree. My father worked in the steel industry for the longest time — he actually worked here at The Techs. When I was looking for an internship, he suggested that I look at Steel Dynamics. I applied and got an internship up on the melt deck and have really never looked back since.

Do you remember your first time in the mill?
Absolutely. My very first day as an intern I walked out onto the floor, and they timed it so that I walked out onto the melt deck right as they started arcing on the furnace. I think I jumped about six inches when they started doing that because they didn’t warn me it was coming. It was absolutely terrifying and inspiring at the same time. It was one of those things that you see once, and felt like, “I need to keep seeing this. I need to stick around.”

Have you been recognized as the face of AISTech 2022?
I’ve had a couple of people from my old job in Butler shoot me emails saying, “Hey, look whose face this is!” My dad isn’t in the steel industry any longer, but I made a point of showing him the first time it appeared in the magazine; otherwise, I think my mom would have somehow still managed to find out, knowing her. They were both very proud.
How has it been for you, seeing yourself in the AISTech marketing materials?
It’s been odd, but in a good way. There’s always that little jolt of recognition when I get an email and I see my face on it. It’s been really cool, and I’m glad to have this opportunity. I’m sure when I go to AISTech, it will be a little bit of a shock to see my face up there all big. It’s a good thing. I’ve been to AISTech before — the last time it was in Pittsburgh, I was able to go. We rotate through the plant metallurgists in terms of attending. When it’s in Pittsburgh, all of us at The Techs go since it’s in our backyard. I’ve attended a couple times and I’ve always enjoyed it. It’s always been pretty interesting.

Has Steel Dynamics been supportive of you being the face of AISTech?
Absolutely. My manager made sure that I was OK with being [the Goggle Person]. Once he got permission from the five of us, we knew that he’d support whoever got picked. When I got picked, he made sure to let me know he was glad I’d been selected.

AIST has featured more women as the face of AISTech in recent years. How does it feel to be part of this group?
It’s really cool. It’s been really good to see more women enter the industry. Here at The Techs, two of our four metallurgists are women, which is very encouraging. It’s always good to put a spotlight on that because it shows that we’re here, and we’re not going away. It feels like I’m in good company.

What tips would you share with Young Professionals who are just getting into the steel industry?
Finding somebody in your organization that you can depend on and ask questions of, who can be a bit of a mentor, is a really important first step. I know that I had several people help me in my various career moves that have really helped support me and helped me learn. Also, just getting involved in the various resources that are offered — AISTech is an excellent one. The AIST Member Chapter meetings and everything that they offer as well have been really interesting and a good place to meet more people. Realistically, the more people you meet, the more people that you can then go to when you need them. Building up that support network is the most important thing you can do as a new industry member.

Pictured with Sarah McCormick are (left to right) Joe Hines, Matt Baldauff, Kelly Stewart and Caleb Sites.