

Industry Reporter

Meet the Board: Bryan Graham



Executive Director Report



Legislative Update



Partners in Progress 2026

A YEAR TO REMEMBER

There has been a lot of change and growth in our association over the last few months, and I want to first extend my gratitude for everyone who made this possible. We held several successful events, invested time and energy into the education committee, and have welcomed our new executive director, Kristine Hammond, all while connecting with contractors and keeping the association running smoothly. It has been a productive year!

I attended the December 2025 Council of Chapter Representatives Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, a biannual event for chapter executives and presidents to hear the latest updates on SMACNA initiatives and industry progress. It is also a chance for chapter representatives to share their experiences and understand other chapters' perspectives, while having their voices heard by their peers and SMACNA leadership. Kristine also attended, and we were able to enjoy sessions, network, listen to open forums, and gain valuable insights from SMACNA National staff, elected officials, and guest speakers. It was also great for Kristine to make new connections as she settles into her new role with our chapter.

SMACNA SoCal just completed its financial audit, which went very smoothly. The board is definitely doing it right. The chapter financial statements are available to any member who wishes to see them.

We are currently undergoing a website rebuild and upgrade. The new site, available in 2026, will have a new look, be easier

to navigate, and create opportunities for new information to be available to members. Watch for that sometime in the new year.

The education committee is also hard at work developing a great program for 2026. Be on the lookout for new learning opportunities as we release those in the new year.

2025 was a year of ups and downs with many great moments to highlight our look back over the year. We had some excellent events and opportunities to come together as a group. As the industry shifts and changes, I am grateful that we have a strong group of successful contractors who are committed to bettering our work and the sheet metal landscape. There is definitely a lot to look forward to as we move into 2026. I wish all SMACNA SoCal members a warm and restful holiday and growth and prosperity into the new year and beyond. As always, your association is here for support, reflection, and yearly events that bring us all together to celebrate what we have built. ■



By / Gina Medel
SMACNA SoCal President

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PUBLISHER / EDITOR

Jessica Kirby • 250.816.3671 • jessica.kirby@pointonemedia.com

CREATIVES

Lara Perraton • 877.755.2762 • lperraton@pointonemedia.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Jessica Kirby • Stan Kolbe

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MEET KRISTINE HAMMOND, SMACNA SOCAL'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The SMACNA SoCal Industry Reporter caught up with Kristine Hammond, who joined the association as executive director in November. Kristine is settling in to learning the association and industry, and she told us a little bit about herself and her vision for SMACNA SoCal. Read on to learn about Kristine and be sure to say hello if you see her at an upcoming event!

I bring more than a decade of association leadership experience to this role, having served for 12 years as executive director of the American Institute of Architects, Long Beach / South Bay Chapter. In that position, I was responsible for managing operations, supporting member engagement, working closely with boards and committees, and advancing the mission of a professional organization within the building industry.

SMACNA SoCal immediately appealed to me as a new and exciting challenge. While it remains within the broader building industry, the association's structure—representing member businesses rather than individual professionals—and its partnership with the labor union presented an opportunity to expand my perspective and skill set in a meaningful way.

There are a lot of moving parts to SMACNA—and a lot of acronyms! Everyone has been very welcoming—it has been great. The openness and willingness to help have made my transition both positive and energizing.



As I continue to learn about the organization and get to know our board members, I am still shaping longer-term, high-level goals. In the near term, my focus is on strengthening the foundation through initiatives such as a website refresh, a review and update of the bylaws, and the development and adoption of key administrative policies to support efficient operations.

I bring a strong work ethic, genuine curiosity, and a desire to learn something new every day. My goal is to apply my organizational skills to create efficiencies and add value wherever possible, while building strong relationships and maintaining a sense of humor along the way.

Reach out to Kristine at kristine@smacna-socal.org or through the SMACNA SoCal office at 562.944.6345 ■

LMCT CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION SEMINAR

SMACNA SoCal held a Labor Management Cooperation Trust contract administration seminar in November, sponsored by the Southern California LMCT. The one-day seminar invited bookkeepers, project managers, supervisors, personnel that call for dispatching and/or hiring of employees, and compliance personnel to learn about a variety of topics, including dispatch slips and procedures, fringe benefit reporting, WebERF online reporting, national pension online reporting, union dues and member savings plans, audit procedures, and prevailing wage/public works.

“We host this seminar every two years,” says Kim Williams, office manager for SMACNA SoCal, who oversaw the seminar. “It is important to attend for in-office staff that handle the bookkeeping, project management, dispatch from the JATC and local union hiring, fringe benefit and online reporting. The topics are the same each time and are selected to help these employees administer contracts efficiently and effectively.”

The following is a breakdown of specific topics and the individuals who facilitated the training on each:

Audits

Igal Khoshlesan – Miller Kaplan

Health & Pension and Fringe Reporting

Gwendolyn Lipsey – Trust Funds

401(a) Plan – Local 105 Health Reimbursement Plan

Melissa Ramos, Kim Jackman – NWPS Benefits

Industry Fund & LMCT Fund

Kim Williams, Rubi Diaz – SMACNA Southern California

JATC – DAS 140 & DAS 142 as it affects Prevailing Wage

David Garcia, Elisa Vallejo – SoCal Sheet Metal JATC

SMART Local 105

Vanessa Chavez – SMART Local 105

WebERF Fringe Fund Reporting

Robert Huff – Trust Benefit Technologies

Cassandra Post, office manager at Applied Air Conditioning, attends the seminar each time it is offered and walks away every time having learned something new.

“You’d be surprised how much there is to cover doing payroll for a company,” she says. “I always enjoy the speakers and what they have to say.”

A key takeaway for her this time was covering the health reimbursement arrangement portion for employees. “I try to learn as much as I can regarding questions that I think they would have for me when starting at our company,” she says.

Watch your email for the next LMCT Contract Administration seminar, which will be held in 2027. ■

DECEMBER UPDATE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

This year has already resulted in governmental shutdowns, one-vote wins on the floors of Congress, and unprecedented challenges for contractors and the construction industry. Nevertheless, the Government Affairs Department has quietly but effectively battled to deliver significant legislative victories on behalf of its members. This quarterly report spotlights the hard-fought wins in Washington and across the states, as well as how members can engage with this crucial work. While the ever-changing and historic level steel, aluminum, and copper tariff rates were predicted in our 2025 outlook, and the political environment remains challenging, we have witnessed many significant advances for our policy goals in the 119th Congress.

Top Legislative Wins in 2025

The first nine months of 2025 have been remarkably productive in advancing legislative priorities vital to SMACNA members. While many of SMACNA's contractors have expressed appreciation for the key policy wins in the tax bill, the Government Affairs Committee knows well they are expecting more positive results on legislative and regulatory issues that were not part of the mega tax and budget package signed into law on July 4 (PL 119-15). The game plan for the rest of the 119th Congress is to urge industry champions in Congress to advance the key policies SMACNA members value. This would include more funding for indoor air quality in schools and public buildings, greater funding and tax credits for the *CHIPS and Science Act*, and boosting grid financing and financial support for expanded data center projects and workforce development.

Here are the top ten of the association's top successes and/or goals on the legislative front.

1. Secure Extension of R&D Tax Credits, Expensing / Section 179 Bonus Equipment Depreciation Provisions

Passed as part of HR 1 / P.L. 119-15. One of the landmark accomplishments this year is the extension of vital tax incentives, including research and development credits and expanded bonus depreciation under Section 179. These provisions support investment in cutting-edge technology and critical equipment upgrades for SMACNA contractors and their client businesses. The *CHIPS Act*, promoting semiconductor manufacturing, has been transformed into a powerful 35% tax credit that benefits the construction workforce and suppliers in the sheet metal and HVAC sectors.

2. Defend the *Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)* Tax Incentives for Private Construction Incentives / Public Projects

SMACNA vigorously and vocally defended the tax incentives



By / Stan Kolbe, Executive Director of Legislative and Political Affairs, SMACNA National

found within the *Inflation Reduction Act*, which have become pivotal in driving private construction investments and public infrastructure projects benefitting sheet metal and HVAC contractors.

3. FAA 5 – Year \$130 Billion Reauthorization: New HVAC Energy Efficiency Work / Terminal Energy Upgrades

The FAA's five-year, \$130-billion reauthorization unveiled new avenues for energy efficiency work, specifically targeting HVAC upgrades at new and existing airport terminals nationwide. This legislation also incorporated provisions under the *SAFE Act*, enhancing safety and workforce development standards essential to federal construction projects.

4. Promote the *Change Order Reform / Small Business Payment for Performance Act*

SMACNA has renewed its call for Congress to endorse the *Change Order Reform Act*, (HR 4615) formally known as the *Small Business Payment for Performance Act*. This bill would provide much-needed federal contractor payment reform by requiring government procurement officials to provide contractors with far more prompt payment on at least half of completed change orders, with expedited resolution procedures for remaining tariff-boosted material costs.

5. Support *Nuclear Energy Financing, Licensing, and Advanced Technology Act* — Now Law

Another significant victory this summer is greater nuclear industry tax incentives and financial support for the recently enacted *ADVANCE Act*, accelerating deployment of advanced nuclear energy technologies serving data centers and industrial production growth.

6. Defend PLAs / *Davis-Bacon Act* — Oppose Prevailing Wage or Harmful Reform or Repeal Bills

Protecting project labor agreements (PLA) and upholding the *Davis-Bacon Act* remain high dual labor standard priorities as SMACNA anticipates legislative threats aimed at repealing or weakening these standards. PLAs ensure fair wages and quality labor conditions, critical to project success and workforce quality and stability.

7. *IAQ in Schools Act* (H.R. 5123) and IAQ Commercial Building Assessment Tax Credit – Reintroduction in 2025

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) continues to gain legislative focus at the local, state, and federal levels. SMACNA has boosted its media and legislative focus and supports for the *IAQ in Schools Act* and a corresponding tax credit for commercial building IAQ assessments.

8. Boost Registered Apprenticeship: Support Funds for Skilled Workforce Development Programs in 2025

Workforce development remains a pillar of SMACNA's agenda, with bipartisan efforts expected by the Department of Labor (DOL) and in Congress in 2025. The goal remains to enhance greater support and funding for registered apprenticeship recruitment, support, and oversight efforts.

9. Commercial Conversion Tax Credits – Reps Carey (R-OH) and Gomez (D-CA) on Ways and Means Committee

SMACNA is supporting Representatives Carey and Gomez as they advance their innovative commercial building conversion tax credits bill. The tax initiative is designed to quickly incentivize and stimulate commercial building retrofits, reuse, and upgrades.

10. Tackling Tariff Challenges with Pragmatic Advocacy

While tariffs remain a hot-button issue impacting the bottom lines of SMACNA members, SMACNA's approach is measured and focused on material supply cost mitigation. Instead of escalating political conflict, the Government Affairs team is advocating for change order reforms that allow contractors to recoup costs caused by tariffs; proposals urging federal agencies to better recognize these cost changes in contracting rules; and efforts ensuring tariff-induced expenses are tax deductible, correcting current inequities.

Government and Political Affairs Beyond Congress: State Government Relations

State capitols are where many of the rules that shape our businesses—and the communities we serve—are written. From tax policy to public health standards to procurement rules, the decisions made closer to home often move fastest and reach furthest. That's why SMACNA's state government relations work is laser-focused on three things: healthier buildings, smarter tax systems, and expanding the market share for our members.

Our team will continue working one-on-one with state and local chapters to plan effective advocacy days and set a focused policy agenda for the coming legislative sessions. A few victories and noted ongoing battles include:

- Advocating tax rules that reward investment in training, equipment, and project quality.

- Leading a multistate effort to support energy efficient retrofit codes and standards
- Procurement and permitting reforms emphasizing safety, scheduling, and skilled labor.

The Power of Engagement: Our SMACPAC and Legislative Ambassadors, Chapters SMACPAC

Beyond constant and skilled advocacy by the Capitol Hill team on legislative initiatives, SMACNA recognizes that member legislative advocacy and political engagement is a necessary element to any effort to move Congress in the right direction. The Congressional ambassador program has grown dramatically in recent years involving many leading contractors in the effort to educate Congress on our industry and its priorities. The Congressional advocacy program is designed to provide members with structured opportunities to meet lawmakers, advance SMACNA policy positions, and amplify SMACNA's voice and impact across Capitol Hill and the agencies implementing passed and signed bills into law.

Without question, I credit SMACNA's vast network of informed, energetic, and engaged contractor and chapter executive advocates with creating much of this year's success. The ambassadors meet with their Members of Congress and Hill staff constantly—from coast to coast—keeping conversations flowing with legislators, staff, coalition business leaders, and trade media outlets. These grassroots efforts translate into a more informed Congress producing vitally important results in the halls of Congress. Our ambassadors are the backbone of our outreach campaign effort to Congress. They don't just attend local, state, and national policy events, seek handshakes and take photos, they are the face of SMACNA to Members of Congress and top staff. They represent the lifeblood of our advocacy. Our goal is to keep growing the contractor ambassador lobbying network, so every member that is interested can be empowered and participate.

SMACNA has also boosted the number of Washington, DC, and regional political and PAC retreats, issue conferences, and webinars specifically designed to educate contractor members on why political involvement matters and how every contractor can have an impact, if they engage.

Legislatively, we forecast more hard work ahead, especially in navigating state-level issues, and we are calling for all SMACNA members to join the contractor and chapter advocacy program campaign and be as informed as possible, so step up for SMACNA to grow its footprint in the policy space as well across the political landscape. This year and next we want to remind everyone that this is a team effort and all about keeping the industry strong and thriving to consistently advance our policy agenda to better serve all of our member businesses and the economic viability of their HVAC and related markets. ■

Meet the Board:

Bryan Graham

Bryan Graham, P.E., is senior vice president, operations & compliance, for ACCO Engineered Systems, which specializes in the design, fabrication, installation, maintenance, and service of commercial and industrial mechanical systems, including HVAC, plumbing, refrigeration, process piping, and site utilities.

He is also a new member of the SMACNA SoCal board of directors, serving as a director. He has been in the sheet metal industry for 23 years, and having grown up around construction, it was an inevitable career choice.

“My father was a welder by trade, and my uncle taught refrigeration classes at the local community college,” he says. “I studied mechanical engineering at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and was drawn to thermodynamics and fluid dynamics. My involvement in the ASHRAE club in college naturally led me to a mechanical contractor after graduation.”

Over the years, the construction industry has faced many changes, opportunities, and challenges, perhaps the most noteworthy of which is the adoption of new technology.

“The challenges in adopting new technology, such as tooling (e.g., laser cutters), software, and AI, stem from several factors,” Graham says. “It requires large capital investments, system downtime associated with upgrades, cost and time needed for staff training, and the necessity of updating existing legacy processes.”

Innovation also brings opportunity by providing contractors with new technology, improved equipment, and more relevant and specific data that can be leveraged to increase productivity and reduce material costs while maintaining quality.

“Some examples of that include predictive maintenance, digital twins and simulations, and different manufacturing processes,” Graham says.



The industry has also seen a significant shift toward energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, primarily driven by regulatory changes. While the overall positive or negative impact of this legislation is debatable, it has significantly affected contractors.

“Compliance with these regulations requires capital investment, changes from suppliers, and substantial time for staff training to stay current with changing rules,” Graham says. “This burden is increased by inconsistent or shifting enforcement of the regulations.”

Looking ahead, these changes also introduce opportunities for contractors, led by SMACNA’s guidance and contributions to industry advancement.

“SMACNA’s most important role is setting technical standards to ensure quality, consistency, and efficiency, in addition to promoting workforce development,” Graham says.

During his term, Graham hopes to promote the adoption of new technology, innovations, and training to propel the industry forward. In doing so, he will lean on his preferred words to live by: “Be curious and ask questions.” ■

SMACNA SOCAL EVENTS JANUARY – JUNE 2026

Sweethearts’ Ball

The Pasea, Huntington Beach – February 21

Semi-Annual Membership Meeting/Luncheon

San Antonio Winery, Los Angeles – April 22

Angel Game Night

Angel Stadium, Anaheim – May 2

Friends of the Industry Golf Tournament

Friendly Hills CC, Whittier – June 15



PARTNERS IN PROGRESS CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 16-18, IS BACK IN

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The 2026 *Partners in Progress* Conference in Orlando, Florida, is set to be another success, bringing labor and management representatives from the United States and Canada together for three days of collaboration and education under the theme, “Leading Together to Deliver Results.” *Partners in Progress* is the only jointly funded conference focused exclusively on labor-management cooperation and offering learning, networking, and strategies for building a stronger industry together.

This year’s line-up of breakout sessions is dynamic and diverse, focused on market development, diversity, labor and training, leadership, and more. The general sessions will include talks by SMART General President Mike Coleman and in-coming SMACNA National President, Todd Hill, as well as a fireside chat with these and other leaders representing labor and management.

Partners in Progress has some incredible keynote speakers lined up. Mike Massimino is a former NASA Astronaut, a New York Times bestselling author, a Columbia University professor, an advisor at The Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum, and a television personality. A spacewalker on the final two Hubble Space Telescope servicing missions, Mike and his crews traveled faster (Mach 26) and higher (350 miles) than any other astronauts in the 21st century while increasing the discovery capabilities of arguably the greatest scientific instrument ever built by a factor of 100.

Mike uses humor and his unique storytelling ability to inspire audiences to identify the passion in their work, to use teamwork and innovation to solve problems, to provide leadership in the face of adversity and crisis, and to never give up when pursuing a goal.

Melissa Stockwell is an American war hero who has triumphed over personal tragedy to achieve greatness and

World Champion status, and she has dedicated her life to chasing remarkable accomplishments while giving back to others, particularly those who face challenges similar to her own.

In 2002, Melissa graduated from the University of Colorado and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. In March 2004, she deployed to Baghdad, Iraq. Just three weeks later, a blast from a roadside bomb struck Melissa’s Humvee, causing the loss of her left leg above the knee. After enduring numerous infections and surgeries, Melissa was medically retired from the Army. She is the first female to ever lose a limb in active combat.

Melissa is proud to have served her country as a member first of The US Army and now as part of Team USA. On September 11, 2016, Melissa raced in honor of her fellow soldiers and their families who had given the ultimate sacrifice serving and protecting America. After a grueling race, the day ended on the podium, draped in the American flag, as the newly crowned Paralympic Bronze Medalist.

Both of these speakers are sure to deliver engaging, relatable talks that will inspire and connect your teams.

If you’re thinking about attending the 2026 *Partners in Progress* Conference, consider that there is irreplaceable value in meeting with your labor partners in a more casual, less pressured environment. In fact, one way to get the most out of the conference is to plan time in advance.

Reach out ahead of time and agree to spend hour together before dinner or grab a cocktail afterwards to connect and make the effort. It will be beneficial for everyone.

Visit pinp.org for a full list of speakers and their bios and to register. ■

COMING EVENTS

2026 SWEETHEART'S BALL—FEBRUARY

Are you ready for a delicious, four-course menu, a beautiful selection of local wines, and plenty of time for socializing and dancing the night away? The annual Sweethearts' Ball is just around the corner. Held at the Paséa Hotel & Spa in Huntington Beach, this is one of SMACNA SoCal's most highly anticipated events.

Hear from the chapter president and executive director, see old friends and make new connections, and, of course, sweethearts can look forward to a beautiful gift.

Nearly 130 SMACNA SoCal members and their sweethearts gathered for the 2025 Sweetheart's Ball—a tribute to the partners who support SMACNA contractors in their tireless efforts to grow the sheet metal industry.



"I want to recognize and thank the sweethearts—the partners and families who support our members in contributing their time and energy to this association," said Gina Medel,

SMANCA SoCal president, at last year's event. "We know that the work we do here takes time, and it would not be possible without the support of those at home who allow us to be involved. Your patience, understanding, and encouragement do not go unnoticed, and we truly appreciate you."

SMACNA SoCal looks forward to welcoming its members to the 2026 Sweetheart Ball. If you've never attended this event, be sure to put it on your must-go list. Registration is open now. Contact the SMACNA SoCal office for details. ■

REGISTER TODAY FOR CAL SMACNA'S 2026 DAY AT THE CAPITOL *January 26 & 27, 2026*

Meet directly with your legislators in their Sacramento offices and help us educate and influence them on issues of importance to the health of California's construction industry.

Together we can make a difference. The DAC event will begin on the evening of Monday, January 26, with a hosted legislative reception, dinner, and special guest speakers. On Tuesday, January 27, we will have a hosted breakfast and Capitol office meetings.

Get to know your legislators and help voters hold them accountable for the health of our state. Don't let others speak for you and your business!

Visit cal-smacna.org and click Events to register. ■

LOS ANGELES / ORANGE EMPIRE AGREEMENT

Pursuant to our Collective Bargaining Agreement, the following wage and fringe package shall be effective Jan 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026. The total wage and fringe package is unchanged from the May 31, 2025 notice.

Effective January 1, 2026, the Local Union 105 - Los Angeles / Orange Empire wage and fringe package shall be as follows

	Journeyman Wages	Foreman/Detailer	General Foreman
Hourly Taxable Wage (increase)	\$62.41	\$71.77	\$74.89
* Savings Plan (taxable)	-10%	-10%	-10%
* 401(a) Plan - mandatory	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
* Retiree's Supplemental Health Plan	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65
* Health Plan (increase)	\$11.25	\$11.25	\$11.25
* Health Reimbursement Acct. (HRA)	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50
* Local Pension	\$11.82	\$11.82	\$11.82
** Local Training JATC	\$0.70	\$0.70	\$0.70
*** National Training ITI	\$0.12	\$0.12	\$0.12
*** National Pension	\$4.54	\$4.54	\$4.54
*** NEMI	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.03
*** SMOHIT	\$0.02	\$0.02	\$0.02
**** LMCT/FP-ACC	\$0.09	\$0.09	\$0.09
Total Wage Package:	\$93.13	\$102.49	\$105.61
**** Industry Fund	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60
TOTAL:	\$93.73	\$103.09	\$106.21

The mileage rate established is sixty-seven cents (\$0.70) per mile. See zone and subsistence.

***** WORKING DUES RATE: Effective January 1, 2026, the dues check-off rate remains at two dollars and thirty-four cents (\$2.34) per hour worked.

*, **, ***, ****, and *****: Please note there are changes on the enclosure titled "Funds Payment and Remittance Reporting Procedure effective January 1, 2026" for information regarding remittance payable names and the remittance mailing addresses.

For questions or to review supporting documents, please call Local 105 at (909) 305-2800.