



CONNECTIONS

CONNECTING MEMBERS, CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



IGNITING INNOVATION



Outgoing 2023 DCA President Ray Swerdfeger has been involved in the family business, K.R. Swerdfeger Construction, since he was a child. He learned the ropes from his father and took over as company president in 2006 when his father became the chairman of the board.



"He's Keith Ray Swerdfeger and I'm Raymond Keith Swerdfeger, and I always joked with him that when I took over the company that I was just going to change the K and R to an R and K," Swerdfeger said.

The company was recently acquired by Artera Services and Miller Pipeline, where Swerdfeger is now a regional vice president. Swerdfeger noted, "I believe what's already changed will just continue to move forward... we've been running under Miller Pipeline's umbrella for the last almost two-and-a half years."

Swerdfeger has been involved with the DCA for over 30 years, attending meetings and conferences after graduating from college with a construction management degree in 1995. In an interview with *Underground Infrastructure*, he discussed the priorities of the DCA over the past year, which included continuing to work on pipeline safety management systems and creating infrastructure protection coalitions to improve 811 services in every state. Additionally, Swerdfeger stressed the significance of local involvement and encouraging members to get involved at the state level, not just the federal level.

During his *Underground Infrastructure* interview, Swerdfeger discussed the challenges facing the DCA, including the drive for renewable energy.

"There is a push nationwide for green energy, but a lot of times the debate comes down to a local level," he said. "We're starting to see, even at the city and municipal level, that some places are having natural gas bans, at least for new construction. You've already seen that here in Colorado, and I know other places across the United States have seen the same.



That's our biggest challenge right now. As we say, if they want to get to a different source of energy or renewable energy, to get from here to there, we still must use natural gas in the meantime."

Natural gas, he said, is not going away anytime soon. He credited the DCA with working to lobby for the use of natural gas and not banning it at local levels.

As the country pushes toward building up the electrical infrastructure for renewable energy, budget-challenged customers who use both gas and electric face difficult decisions on where to spend their money.

"Our biggest challenge right now is maintaining that backlog of work going forward as the industry moves more toward electrification," Swerdfeger said.

Looking forward to the new year, the DCA is continuing its focus on retention and recruitment of members through their Strategic Vision Committee. They recently started a marketing campaign, "Success Looks Like This," to highlight the different jobs within the distribution industry. The DCA also plans to continue developing their successful new Leadership Development program. Swerdfeger is a strong believer in embracing new initiatives to engage emerging leaders in the distribution industry.

Swerdfeger's experience growing up in the family business and working with his father gave him a unique perspective on the importance of local involvement and the significance of DCA membership, expressing the belief that this is the most effective way members' efforts can support the industry. He said he looks forward to the DCA convention in Hawaii and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve as association president. He added that his involvement with the DCA will continue for many years and encourages others to become involved at any level where they can be effective.



"Our biggest challenge right now is maintaining that backlog of work going forward as the industry moves more toward electrification."

— **Ray Swerdfeger**
President

K.R. Swerdfeger
Construction LLC
Pueblo West, Colorado



VALUE

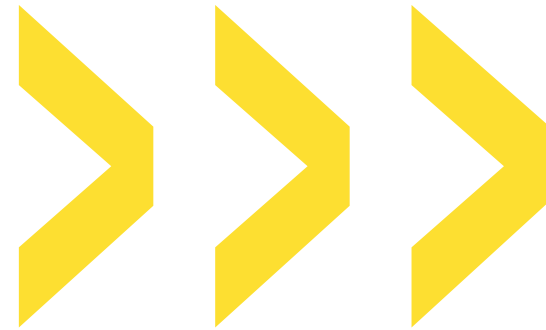
THE VALUE OF DCA

“

The Distribution Contractors Association (DCA) is one of the foremost professional organizations working to improve and promote the gas distribution industry.”



From the beginning, DCA has been about making the distribution contractor's life better. When DCA was founded in 1961, the distribution landscape was dominated by utilities and unions, divided by an endless patchwork of local rules and petty fiefdoms, and beset by cutthroat competition on every side. A few Midwest contractors had finally had enough and began the long, arduous process of improving working conditions, standardizing rules and requirements, and building collective bargaining power. Partnering early on with the manufacturing and service companies they worked with every day, the newborn organization quickly laid the template for the next six decades of accomplishment (and counting).



AND WHAT DID THEY ACCOMPLISH IN ALL THOSE YEARS?

- 1960'S** > **JOINED** the National Safety Council; negotiated agreements with National Association of Welders, Operating Engineers, and Laborers' International Union; worked with the United Association to administer the National Distribution Pipeline Agreement; transitioned to use of plastic pipe.
- 1970'S** > **FORMED** the Distribution Pipeline Committee to work with the federal government's Office of Pipeline Safety; released a new employee safety manual for members; negotiated for new wage rates with the Laborer's International Union; navigated the oil crisis; found new opportunities to increase production and productivity.
- 1980'S** > **FACILITATED** oil-to-gas conversions; renegotiated agreements with all three craft associations to lower wage rates and protect members from non-union competition; survived a recession by reducing costs; promoted natural gas as a clean fuel solution.
- 1990'S** > **ESTABLISHED** joint labor management trusts with the UA and LIUNA; established the DCA Annual Auction to raise money for industry scholarships; began promoting trenchless construction and rehabilitation; developed and released a computer-aided new employee safety orientation program; inaugurated the DCA Safety Congress and Safety awards; released the first DCA website; recognized that utilities were beginning to favor contractors over in-house workforces—a long-held DCA goal.
- 2000'S** > **DEVELOPED** a HDD good practices manual and training curriculum; elected the first female DCA president; unveiled the first DCA five-year strategic plan; worked to ensure the revised 2002 Pipeline Safety Act would contain language setting mandatory standards for verifying operator qualification; absorbed the assets of the Directional Crossing Contractors Association (DCCA) and established the Horizontal Directional Drilling (Trenchless) Committee; increased funding to scholarships; added signatory contractor wage and benefit pages to the website; addressed growing concerns about workforce development.
- 2010'S** > **CELEBRATED** DCA's 50th anniversary; expanded the safety awards; launched a redesigned website and an email newsletter to complement the new and improved *DCA News*; upgraded the association database; debuted the first DCA Professional Development Conference; initiated relationships with the Center for Generational Kinetics and SkillsUSA for workforce development and Wyman Associates for government relations and a new monthly publication *DCA Insights*; held DCA's first job fair; created the Workforce Development Committee; released a position paper from DCA's Cross Bore Initiative; participated in a damage prevention study by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA); published the first draft of its operator qualification (OQ) integrity document; raised \$1 million at the DCA auction for the first time; unveiled the Take Action Playbook providing members with tools to tailor their offerings to the Millennial and Gen Z mindset; developed the Contractor Workshop with AGA and observed that other groups were beginning to approach DCA for its expertise and leadership and co-created an energy-themed television show "Six Degrees with Mike Rowe."

Notice how those bullets keep getting longer. That's not an organization that's content to coast on its laurels—that's an organization that's accelerating. Today, as we head deeper into the 2020's and despite the numerous setbacks the Covid pandemic imposed on every industry, DCA is busy releasing new guidance on OQ integrity (OQIP) and pipeline safety management systems (PSMS), developing new workforce and educational resources, launching a leadership development program, influencing public policy with Washington, D.C. fly-ins and a member on the Gas Pipeline Advisory Council (GPAC), and even exploring the development of more environmentally-friendly electric drilling equipment. And the decade is not even half over.

The simple reason DCA can accomplish so much boils down to this: mutual support for common goals. Everyone is here for the same reason—to find the best ways to do the business of underground construction, whether that is serving or protecting the customers, improving worker safety, adapting to new technologies and new business and cultural climates,

eliminating inefficiency and waste, recruiting, and training new workers, or advocating for better public policy. The organization is structured specifically to facilitate discussion of ideas freely and openly, and to disseminate those ideas to the members and the public. Its leadership over the decades has proven to be flexible and open to continuous improvement, and it shows.

The founders of the DCA were mostly family-owned companies, and their family values continue today. Competitors form life-long friendships, their kids play and grow up together at DCA events, and new generations take up the mantle.

Great foundations support great results. DCA has earned a reputation as a valuable source of business and technical expertise, whose members consistently uphold and promote the highest professional standards year after year. Sixty years on, they are still finding new ways to make the distribution contractor's life better, along with the lives of the people they serve and who serve them. If that isn't value, then what is?





MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP

DCA MEMBERSHIP

All members can participate in DCA Committees by contributing and discussing ideas in a collaborative forum. All member companies annually pay dues and contribute to the finances of the DCA through various means such as sponsorships, labor trusts, auction proceeds, and participating in association events.

CONTRACTOR MEMBERS

Any contracting firm engaged in the construction and maintenance of distribution pipelines and underground utilities that has established a reputation for skill, integrity, and responsibility, may apply for Contractor Membership in the Association.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Any individual, firm or corporation engaged in the business of manufacturing or selling equipment, materials, supplies, insurance, or other services for the construction or maintenance of gas distribution and other pipelines, horizontal directional drilling and underground utilities may apply for Associate Membership.

INDUSTRY MEMBERS

An individual who is retired from a member company, regularly employed as a consultant, an employee, officer, director, or elected official of any corporation or governmental unit engaged in the distribution industry, and not deemed eligible for Contractor or Associate membership by the Board of Directors, can apply. An Industry Member may also be a widow/widower of a deceased member, or a current or former officer or employee of affiliated associations as selected by the Board of Directors.

HONORARY MEMBERS

Individuals that have performed distinguished service for the DCA or the distribution construction industry are eligible for nomination and election as an Honorary Member. Honorary Members and their spouse/guest shall be exempt from meeting registration fees at Association meetings.



TOTAL NET -7



LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP



DCA LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Distribution Contractors Association is a membership-based trade organization with a Board of Directors, Leadership Council, Standing Committees, Working Committees and Special Committees comprised of grants and trusts that plan, execute and manage its business.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs and management of the Association shall be conducted by the Board of Directors composed of:

- Ten (10) Contractor Members (elected by Contractor Members)
- Immediate Past President
- Past President Director (appointed by the Past Presidents).
- Director at Large (appointed by the Nominating Committee)
- Two (2) Associate Member Directors (elected by Associate Members).
- Executive Vice President (serves as Chief Operating Officer)

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Leadership Council is made up of the elected chairs and vice chairs of each of the committees, the President and Vice President of the Board, and the Executive Vice President. The purpose of the Leadership Council is to coordinate the strategic direction of the DCA as directed by the Board of Directors. Each committee chair and vice chair will lead their committees in the tactical implementation of the strategic plan.

WORKING COMMITTEES

The Working Committees of DCA are committees that meet several times a year and whose mission is to work on initiatives to improve the operations and membership value of the organization. They are the following:

- Government Relations Committee
- Future Leaders' Committee
- Membership Committee
- Safety/Risk Management Committee
- Trenchless Committee
- Workforce Development Committee

STANDING COMMITTEES

The Standing Committees of DCA are committees that meet as needed for a specific purpose and not an ongoing project. They are:

- Associate Member Nominating Committee
- Contractor Member Nominating Committee
- Convention Planning Committee
- Executive Committee.
- Executive Finance Committee
- Strategic Vision Committee

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees oversee the scholarships and grants. They are:

- DCA-Curtis H. Allen Scholarship.
- DCA-Dale R. Michels Endowed Scholarship.
- DCA-Lyons' Family Grant.
- James R. Upton Scholarship.

TRUSTS AND FUNDS

- DCA Advancement Fund – International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)
- IUOE National Training Fund
- Laborers – Employers Benefit Plan Collection Trust (LEBPCT)
- LMCT/DCA Trust - Laborers' International Union of N.A. (LIUNA)
- National Distribution Pipeline Industry Communications and Productivity Fund (NDPIC&PF) – United Association (UA)

LABOR COMMITTEE

The Labor Committee serves DCA in negotiating collective bargaining agreements with three labor unions: United Association (UA), Laborers' International Union of North American (LIUNA), and International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE). The committee serves independently of the Board of Directors and does not report to the Board or leadership of DCA.

From its inception in 1961, the Distribution Contractors Association has been committed to progress. This year, as in years past, DCA members will lead the way in the use of the latest technologies, equipment, and safety issues. DCA members remain at the cutting edge of a constantly changing and vibrant industry.



DCA-DALE R. MICHELS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

DCA founded the DCA-Dale R. Michels Endowed Scholarship in 1998 to encourage students considering careers in construction. Over the years, the annual distribution has grown from \$5,000 to \$15,000. For the 2024-25 academic year and beyond, the amount distributed to deserving candidates will be based on a portion of the association's auction and investment income proceeds and is estimated to be over \$100,000.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

- **Cameron Adams**, National Equipment Dealers
- **Ashlyn Clarke**, Miller Electric Mfg.
- **Colin Everett**, Caterpillar, Inc.
- **Matthew Finley**, K. R. Swerdfeger Construction, LLC
- **Alanna Fitzgerald**, Hallen Construction Co., Inc.
- **Ian Glashagel**, Michels Corporation
- **Andrew Goodwin**, Michels Utility Services Inc.
- **Rowan Hayes**, Grace Industries LLC
- **Britta Pohlman**, Mears Group, Inc.
- **Shawn Roberts**, Miller Pipeline
- **Daniella Villalobos**, Grace Industries LLC



CURTIS H. ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP

The Curtis H. Allen Scholarship was created by Bentonite Performance Minerals (BPM) in honor of Curtis H. Allen. BPM contributes \$2,500 annually to the fund, an amount matched by DCA. For the 2024-25 academic year and beyond, the amount distributed to deserving candidates will be based on a portion of the association's auction and investment income proceeds and is estimated to be over \$30,000.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

- **Edmund Bentley, Michels Corporation**
- **Tanner Moles**, Ditch Witch
- **Blake Nordlund**, Michels Utility Services Inc.
- **Caden Schwerdfeger**, H.L. Chapman Pipeline Construction Inc.
- **Carston Sechser**, Bentonite Performance Minerals LLC
- **Mackenza Spangler**, ECI Contracting
- **Josiah Vos**, Vermeer Corporation
- **Lawton Webb**, InterCon Construction, Inc.



JAMES R. UPTON SCHOLARSHIP

In memory of DCA former managing director James R. Upton, the DCA Board of Directors annually distributes \$3,000 to provide scholarship opportunities for students of the Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Two annual scholarships are awarded to graduates of Sequoyah High School in Tahlequah. The recipients are selected by and based on criteria established by the Cherokee Nation.



DCA-LYONS' GRANT PROGRAM

The DCA-Lyons' Grant Program honors the memory of DCA past president and honorary member Bob Lyons, who was known for his commitment to community service, education, charitable causes, and the association. Bob was instrumental in establishing the DCA annual auction in 1991, which to date has raised over \$11 million for the scholarship program, Safety Congress, and association administrative expenses. The grant program was established by Jan Lyons, Bob's widow, and a strong supporter of DCA, with a five-year pledge of \$25,000 from the Lyons Family Foundation. While there are no specific grant requirements, it is expected that candidates be strong emerging and/or established community leaders recognized for their personal service and advocacy. Grants are directed to individuals or organizations that do not receive significant financial assistance from governmental or large charitable groups. In Bob's words, "It's all about those that have been blessed with the understanding of what it is to give back." An additional \$5,000 from the auction is added annually to the fund.



2023 DCA ARTHUR T. EVERHAM SAFETY AWARD

Safety excellence was recognized by several DCA contractor members for the effectiveness of their respective programs in 2023. The DCA established the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award in 1986 to recognize contractors with exceptional safety programs. The revised and updated judging criteria includes: the number of OSHA lost workday cases, number of OSHA restricted duty days, number of fatalities, the presence of a documented safety management system (SMS), the use of a drug-testing program, and the company's root cause analysis (RCA) system.

The award is highly coveted as recipients are recognized and honored by competitors. For 2023:

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Under 200,000 Hour Category:

- **First Place – (a 3-way tie)**
 - Eastern Utilities Services, Melville, NY
 - Hanging H Companies, Burlington, WA
 - Michels Pacific Energy Inc., Santa Clara, CA
- **Second Place** – Hydro Excavators II LLC, Big Bend, WI

201,000 Hours to 800,000 Hours:

- **First Place** – Teichert, Sacramento, CA
- **Second Place** – AGI Construction, Smithfield, RI

801,000 Hours to 2 Million Hours:

- **First Place** – Michels Utility Services Inc., Brownsville, WI
- **Second Place** – The Hallen Construction Co. Inc., Plainview, NY

Over 2 Million Hours:

- **First Place – (a tie)**
 - ARB Inc., Lake Forest, CA
 - Q3 Contracting Inc., Little Canada, MN
- **Second Place** – Price Gregory Int'l Inc., Katy, TX

SAFETY DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

AND THE WINNER IS...

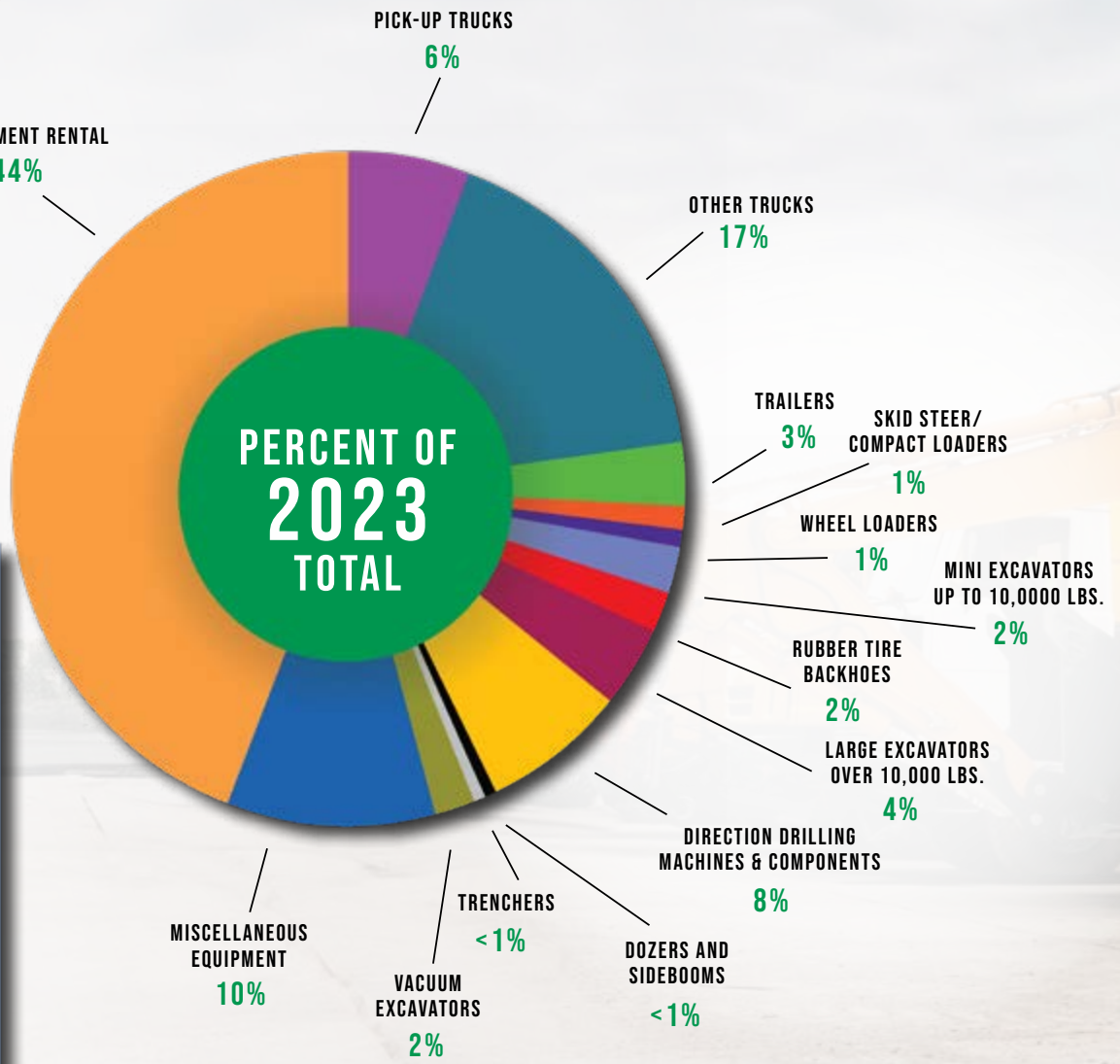
The Safety Director of the Year Award recognizes the achievements of a safety director whose initiatives and programs have enhanced the overall safety program of a member's company. Award recipients also participate in DCA's Safety Congress. The annual award includes a \$1,000 cash prize. The 2023 recipient was **Tim Schmitt** of Michels Utility Services, Inc.

SAFETY PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

AND THE WINNER IS...

The Safety Person of the Year Award is given to an individual who has gone beyond the call of duty in any area of company service. It can be a lifesaving event, monetary savings to the company, etc. The recipient can be employed at any level in the company and will receive a plaque and a \$1,000 cash prize. The 2023 the recipient was **Dewayne Ward** of InfraSource LLC.

EQUIPMENT SURVEY



CAPITAL EXPENDITURES:

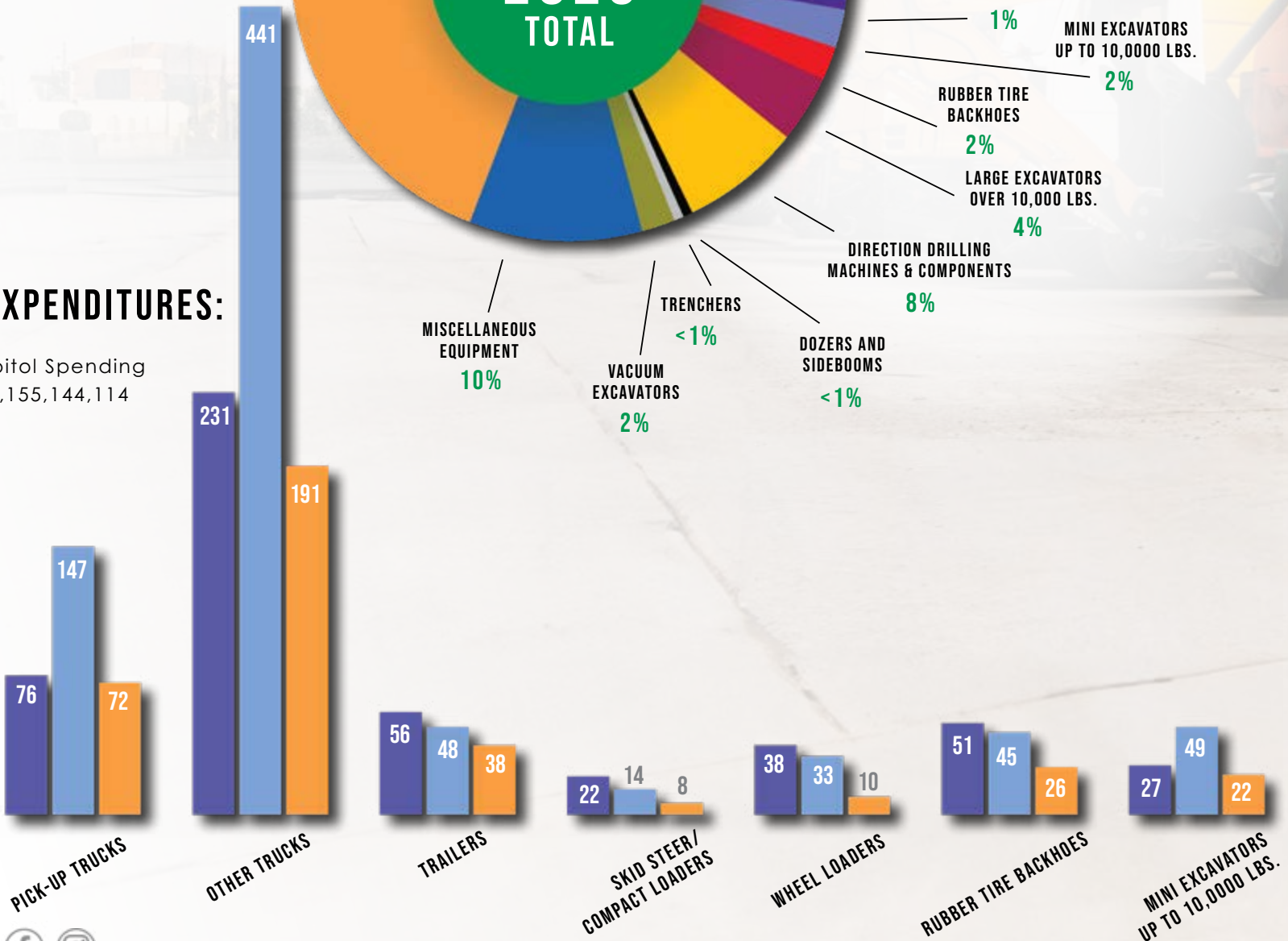
2023 Total Capital Spending (Estimated) \$1,155,144,114

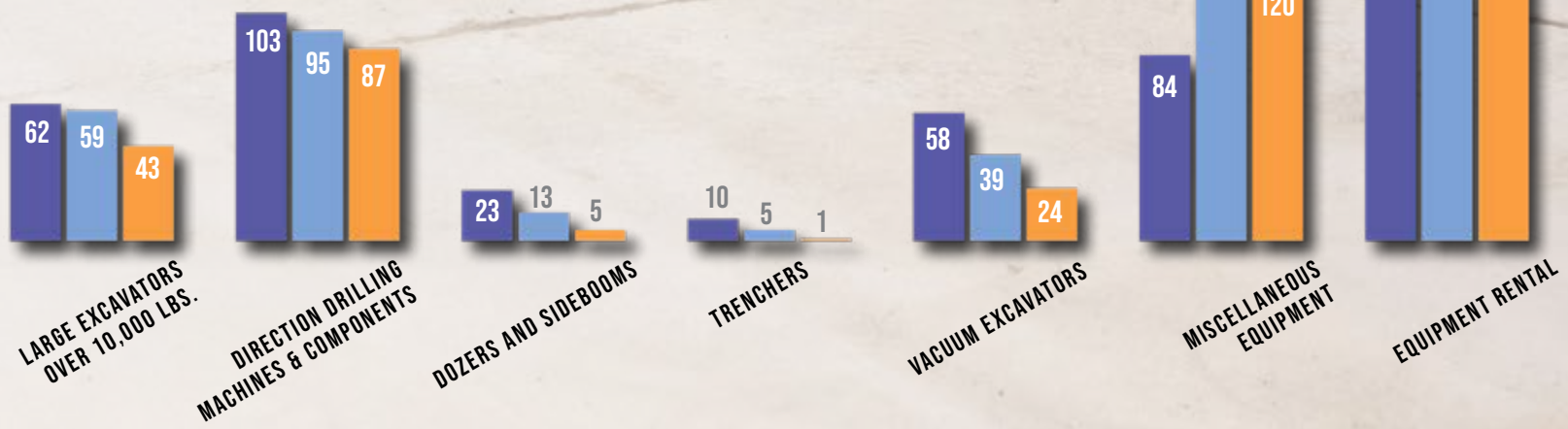
COMPARISON

- 2021
- 2022
- 2023

14

\$MM





DCA 2023 FINANCIALS

REVENUE:

2023

2022

Meetings:

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Convention Registration | \$665,851 | \$498,305 |
| Convention Sponsorship | 184,000 | 158,315 |
| Mid Year Registration | 302,640 | 290,255 |
| Other Meetings | 307,550 | 210,800 |
| Total Meetings | \$1,460,041 | \$1,157,675 |

Member Dues:

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Contractor Member | \$418,750 | \$359,000 |
| Less: Contributions Credit | (9,000) | (7,500) |
| Associate Member | 268,333 | 226,375 |
| Total Member Dues | \$678,083 | \$577,875 |

DCA Auction*:

| | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| | \$600,655 | \$581,245 |
|--|------------------|------------------|

Other Income:

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| I.U.O.E. Industry Fund | \$9,123 | \$8,299 |
| Management Fees | 131,363 | 261,688 |
| Grants | 1,525,000 | 1,525,000 |
| Net Unrealized Gain (Loss) On Investments | 417,841 | (704,784) |
| Interest | 127,258 | 77,143 |
| Total Other Income | \$2,210,585 | \$1,167,346 |

Total Revenue

| | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | \$4,949,364 | \$3,484,141 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|

Expense:

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Convention | \$1,225,557 | \$1,256,266 |
| Mid Year Meeting | \$297,326 | \$270,256 |
| Other Meetings | \$281,187 | \$192,475 |
| General & Administrative | 1,864,702 | 1,671,763 |
| Scholarships | 137,700 | 137,600 |
| Special Projects | 314,799 | 513,488 |
| Total Expense | \$4,121,271 | \$4,041,848 |

Excess Revenue Over Expenses:

| | | |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
| | \$828,093 | \$(557,707) |
|--|------------------|--------------------|

Assets:

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Liabilities: | \$6,024,094 | \$5,196,237 |
| Member Equity: | \$1,555,374 | \$1,555,610 |
| | \$4,468,720 | \$3,640,627 |

INDUSTRY TRUSTS & FUNDS

TOTAL 2023 CONTRIBUTIONS

\$867,627

LiUNA/DCA Cooperation Trust

A joint labor-management cooperative trust was established in December 1990, under the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act, between DCA and the Laborers' International Union of North America to:

- Improve communications
- Expand work opportunities
- Promote safe, efficient work conditions
- Sponsor seminars, conferences, and meetings concerning the industry
- Facilitate a network for the exchange of information
- Resolve problems
- Advance mutual interests relating to the industry

Governing the trust is a Board of Trustees appointed from labor and management. The executive vice president of DCA serves as executive director of the trust, and trustee meetings are conducted on an annual basis. The LiUNA Cooperation Trust of DCA provides financial support to the Association for use in publications, the annual convention, and industry relations.

\$583,418

National Distribution Pipeline Industry Communications & Productivity Fund (NDPIC & PF)

DCA and the United Association reached an agreement in November 1990 to establish a joint labor management cooperative trust to:

- Improve communications and the collective bargaining relationship between labor and management
- Study ways of eliminating potential problems that reduce competitiveness and inhibit the economic development of the distribution pipeline industry
- Engage in public relations and public education programs
- Research and develop programs to improve the distribution pipeline industry

The executive vice president of DCA serves as executive director of the trust to govern the fund. The NDPIC & PF provides funding for DCA publications, the annual convention, and industry relations. Gary A. Pasternak, Cartmell, Pasternak & Associates, PC, Carrollton, Texas, is the administrator of trust collections.

\$263,009

Distribution Contractors Industry Advancement Fund

The DCA and the International Union of Operating Engineers reached an agreement in June 1999 to establish an industry advancement fund. The fund is designed to advance the interests of the distribution construction industry by:

- Establishing good public relations and market development
- Engaging in public relations and public education programs
- Negotiating fair and equitable collective bargaining agreements with representatives of employees engaged in the industry
- Encouraging and developing industry safety standards
- Providing educational opportunities for those engaged in, or connected with, the industry
- Encouraging the use of union contractors for the construction of all distribution pipelines
- Improving communications between labor and management

WORKING COMMITTEE CHARTERS

18

DEANES-PA



SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT



www.dcabesafe.com

Chair (Contractor) – Randy Bunch, Eastern Utilities Services

Chair (Contractor) – Caleb Scheve, Price Gregory, International Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

Review safety related information provided by DCA members/associates and hold open discussions at meetings on safe jobsite practices. Oversee the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award, assist with the Safety Director and Safety Person of the Year Awards, and the annual Safety Congress.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Implemented the updated the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award Questionnaire.
- Maintained the 4 categories of the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award.
- Maintained 40 percent participation of member contractors from 2022 to 2023.
- Attracted 60 registrants to the Safety Congress held in New Orleans, LA.
- Had 5 nominees for the DCA Safety Director of the Year Award and 5 nominees for the award Person of the Year Award.
- Eric Giguere convention presentation.

2024 GOALS & INITIATIVES:

- Promote the 2024 DCA Safety Congress to new and existing Members / Associates.
 - Continue to bring quality presentations and speakers that increase attendance
 - Attract “field” employees, not exclusive to “safety” professionals
- Promote the DCA and encourage attendance and participation for events.
- Continue promoting the Arthur T. Everham award with higher participation from members.
- Recognition program for foreman safety performance.
 - Frontline are the true safety professionals
 - Recognition of exceptional foreman will reinforce quality safety practices and encourage the next generation.
 - Identify up and coming field employees (future foreman) and recognize/support efforts
- Continue promoting submission of safety statistics with higher participation from members.
 - Focus on safety leading indicators
 - Leadership engagements
- Promote the development of innovative safety practices.
 - Energy-based safety hazard recognition practices
 - SIF (STKY) focused mitigation practices
 - Identify SIF hazards and mitigation common to our industry
- Continue to have high quality speakers that will benefit all attendees.
- Continue growth by fostering safety/risk mitigation within the DCA functions.

20

DCAWEB.ORG



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



www.dcaletsgettowork.com

Chair (Contractor) – Stephanie Krabbe, InfraSource LLC

Chair (Associate) – Matt Dvorak, Groebner

MISSION STATEMENT

Utilize DCA resources, relationships, and membership to execute multiple initiatives that help promote, recruit, and retain the best possible talent for DCA contractor and associate members.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Completed the development of the Workforce Development (WFD) Leadership Development Program.
- October 2023 - Held the DCA's very 1st Leadership Development Program (LDP) in Dallas Texas with 24 participants.
- Scheduled 2nd Leadership Development Program to be held in Dallas in Feb/March of 2024.
- Facilitated a WFD panel discussion at the annual DCA/AGA conference.
- Continue dialog and Board participation with CEWD, panel discussion at the DCA Mid-Year Meeting.
- Worked with high school career fair counselors to heighten awareness and encouraged DCA member companies to participate.
- Promoted local SkillsUSA involvement.
- Promoted the use of the DCA's "Success Looks like This" video series. To view the video series, visit www.letsgettowork.com or our YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/user/dca1961pipelines>.

2024 GOALS & INITIATIVES:

- Hold two LDPs in 2024, Spring and Fall .
- Evaluate current LDP and determine if a 2nd level program needs to be developed. If yes, develop that program, prepare to launch the new program in spring of 2025.
- Facilitate a WFD panel discussion at the DCA/AGA annual session.
- Engage with CEWD to determine the capacity for a workforce share pilot program.
- Encourage engagement and local support for the SkillsUSA
- Promoted the use of the DCA's "Success Looks like This" video series.
- Encouraged DCA member companies to participate in local high school job fairs.

MEMBERSHIP



Chair (Associate) – Scott Cooper, Caterpillar Inc.

Chair (Associate) – Brad Everett, Caterpillar Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

Actively solicit and evaluate potential DCA contractor and associate members and make recommendations on member programs and awards. Additionally, work to assure new members are integrated into the association and getting value from their membership and attendance at the conferences.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Contractor Membership – (2023) 84.
- Focus on getting existing members to participate in all DCA functions and meetings.
- Execute “Recruit, Retain, Regain” strategy.
- New members – Proactively engage with first time attendees, with the help of mentors, to increase engagement and gain feedback after their first meeting.
- Continue membership sub-committee analysis of member involvement (meeting attendance), dropped and inactive member list, and exit survey results to refine and improve DCA member value message.
- Restore Co-chair cadence and rotation (2-year term, staggered between chairs, 1 contractor, 1 associate).
- Support membership luncheon at annual meeting.
- Utilize “Value” marketing materials and membership survey to increase membership levels.
- Prioritize, evaluate, and implement initiatives set by the Strategic Vision Committee.

2024 GOALS & INITIATIVES:

- Continued focus on “Recruit, Retain, Regain” strategies for the DCA.
- Monitor Contractor and Associate roll-up for retention.
- Identify and engage at-risk members who have not participated in the past year.
- Implement initiatives to engage new, younger members such as the Future Leaders’ Program.
- Introduce new education, training, workshops, and conferences like the Leadership Development Conference.
- Reach out to contractors and associates who dropped membership within the last five years due to various reasons including Covid, financial constraints, or perceived lack of value.
- Target contractors and associates who have never been members before.
- Enhance the onboarding process for new members and encourage their active involvement in the association.
- Maintain the “Red Badges” system to identify first-time attendees at events.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



www.dcagovrelations.com

Chair (Contractor) – Andy Miller, Alex E. Paris Contracting Co. Inc.

Chair (Associate) – Brad Burris, National Equipment Dealers

MISSION STATEMENT

Target specific regulatory and legislative items and report their findings through the Legislative Watch section of the DCA News and DCA website. Present to the Board of Directors those issues we believe our members would benefit from through advocacy for or against.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Led the construction industry in developing and implementing preliminary legislative strategies for pending pipeline safety reauthorization legislation.
- Prepared and released letters and multi-industry press releases initiating advocacy efforts upon introduction of the Promoting Innovation in Pipeline Efficiency and Safety (PIPES) Act of 2023.
- Formed an ad hoc industry coalition to support language calling for increased use of GIS in the pipeline industry in the PIPES Act of 2023.
- Participated in several “stakeholder calls” with congressional staff and industry representatives during development of the 2023 PIPES Act.
- Assisted with development of and participated in the “Celebration of Construction on the National Mall” event, hosted by the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM).
- Maintained involvement in several coalitions and working groups, including: Energy Equipment Infrastructure, Common Ground Alliance (CGA), Pipeline Construction SMS Coalition, Construction Industry Safety Coalition, Construction Industry Drivers Coalition, and PHMSA Damage Prevention State Grant.

2024 GOALS & INITIATIVES:

- Initiate advocacy efforts of DCA’s newly formed Regional Advocacy Teams and conduct several regionally targeted Washington “Fly-In” events in 2024.
- Continue to lead the construction industry in advocacy efforts related to the PIPES Act of 2023.
- Support legislation that will promote pipeline infrastructure while deploying carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) and hydrogen efforts as funding from the bipartisan infrastructure law continues to be rolled out.
- Expand DCA influence in the Pipeline SMS Industry Team through increased participation in the team’s contractor assessment program, participation in safety culture surveys, and other team efforts.
- Work with the Gas Bans Coalition to successfully enact “fuel choice” legislation and defeat harmful legislation at the state level that would restrict access to natural gas through banning natural gas and/or mandatory electrification.
- Plan, promote and coordinate DCA participation in the 2025 “Celebration of Construction” event on the National Mall.

FUTURE LEADERS



Chair (Contractor) – Elizabeth Michels, Michels Corp.
Chair (Associate) – Sarah Mahlik, TT Technologies Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the DCA Future Leaders Committee is to cultivate and engage a community of emerging leaders within the gas distribution industry. Through networking, outreach, and professional development opportunities, we aim to equip our members with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their current roles and advance their careers, as well as advance the culture of the DCA.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Encouraged young potential leaders to become aware of DCA through the Fall LDP.
- Encouraged new attendees to join and engage in the working committees.
- Had an open panel discussion targeting 1st and 2nd time attendees at the July Mid Year Meeting in Vermont.

2024 GOALS & INITIATIVES:

- Press existing members to consider succession planning on who they would have attend.
- Encourage long-time attendees to attend a committee meeting to have discussions on the need for engaging junior managers and any concerns they have around that.
- Determine who would be a 'good' attendee fit from a position standpoint.
 - Encourage people who are closer to the field operations to attend.
 - 'Junior' managers in the industry
- Have an open meeting at the mid-year meeting and thereafter.
- Engage the newer members at First Timers lunch and function as unofficial ambassadors.
- Reach out to first time attendees along with the Membership Committee prior to meetings to welcome and encourage engagement and share soft-skill expectations.
 - More on the individual-basis
- Create a LinkedIn page for DCA Future Leaders, not website.
- Encourage first time attendee leaders to attend the annual, Mid Year, and Fall meetings.



**DCA
FUTURE
LEADERS**

MEMBERS

CONTRACTORS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

CONTRACTOR MEMBERS

Aaron Enterprises Inc.

Aecon Industrial Management Ltd.

AGI Construction Inc.

Alex E. Paris Contracting Co. Inc.

Appalachian Pipeline Contractors LLP

ARB Inc.

Atlas Trenchless LLC

B&H Construction LLC

Blackeagle Energy Services

Bond Civil & Utility - Trenchless Div.

Brothers Pipeline Corp.

Brotherton Pipeline Inc.

Carson Corporation

Centuri Group Inc.

D.R.S. Enterprises Inc.

Discovery Hydrovac LLC

Duke's

Eastern Utilities Services

ECI Contracting

Elecnor Hawkeye LLC

Feeney Brothers Utility Services

Flatirons Drilling Inc.

Gabe's Construction Co. Inc.

Global Underground Corp.

Grace Industries LLC

H.L. Chapman Pipeline Construction Inc.

Hanging H Companies LLC

Henkels & McCoy Inc.

Hydro Excavators II LLC

InfraSource LLC

InfraSource Services LLC

InterCon Construction Inc.

J. F. Kiely Construction Co.

K.R. Swerdfeger Construction LLC

Loy Clark Construction

MasTec North America Inc.

Maxx HDD LLC

Meade

Mears Group Inc.

Mears Holdings LLC

Mersino Dewatering Inc.

Michels Corporation

Michels Pacific Energy Inc.

Michels Utility Services Inc.

Mid America Energy Services

Mid-Ohio Pipeline Company

Midwestern Contractors

Miller Pipeline

MP Technologies LLC

Nash Brothers Construction Co. Inc.

Network Infrastructure Inc.

Niels Fugal Sons Company

North Country Directional Drilling LLC

Northern Clearing Inc.

NPL Construction Co.

Otis Minnesota Services LLC

Pe Ben USA Inc.

Peak USG

Pipe Strong LLC

Precision Pipeline LLC

Pretec Directional Drilling LLC

Price Gregory International Inc.

Primoris Distribution Services Inc.

Primoris Services Corporation

Q&D Construction LLC

Q3 Contracting Inc.

R&R Pipeline Inc.

R. L. Coolsaet Construction Co.

RLA Utilities

Roberts Pipeline Inc.

SiteWise, LLC

Team Fishel

Teichert Pipelines Inc.

The Hallen Construction Co. Inc.

The HDD Company, Inc.

Turner Underground Installation Inc.

U.S. Pipeline Inc.

Underground Construction Co. Inc.

Utility Line Services Inc.

Vector Force Development

Veteran Pipeline Construction

Wright Traffic Control

WSB



ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

AIS Construction Equipment

ALLU Group Inc.

American Augers Inc.

ASTAR Inc.

Badger Infrastructure Solutions

Bentonite Performance Minerals LLC

Border States

Brandt Industries USA Ltd.

Bridgewell Mats

Brooks Tractor Inc.

Case Construction Equipment

Caterpillar Inc.

Century Products Inc.

CETCO

Challenger Services

Consolidated Pipe & Supply Co. Inc.

Continuum Capital

Core & Main LP

CRC Evans Pipeline International Inc.

Cross Country Infrastructure Services

Darby Equipment Company

Derrick Corporation

d'Escoto Inc.

Digital Control Inc.

Ditch Witch

Ditch Witch Mid-States

Ditch Witch Midwest

Ditch Witch Undercon

Ditch Witch West

Drilling Mud Direct

ELM Utility Services

ENERGY Worldnet Inc.

EPIC Insurance Brokers & Consultants

Express 4x4 Truck Rental

Fabick Cat

Finn Corporation

FMI Corporation

Footage Tools

Freight North Logistics

GF Central Plastics

Groebner

HammerHead Trenchless

Herrenknecht Tunnelling Systems USA Inc.

Hobart Brothers Co.

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ISCO Industries

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JAN X-Ray Services Inc.

Jeff Martin Auctioneers

John Deere Construction & Forestry Division

KERAMIDA Inc.

Komatsu America Corp.

LaValley Industries

McElroy

Melfred Borzall Inc.

M-I SWACO

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Miller Electric Mfg.

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National Equipment Dealers

National Trench Safety

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PipeSak Inc.

PSS Industrial Group

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RDO Equipment Co.

Reed Manufacturing Co.

Right Turn Supply

Ring-O-Matic Inc.

Ritchie Bros.

Rockford Riggin, Inc.

Roland Machinery Co.

Sharewell HDDLLC

Signature Systems

Specialty Polymer Coatings Inc.

Stratatech Education Group

Subsite Electronics

Sunbelt Rentals Inc.

T T Technologies Inc.

The Lincoln Electric Co.

Underground Magnetics Inc.

United Rentals Inc.

USI Insurance Services

Vacmasters

Vacuworx LLC

Vermeer All Roads

Vermeer Colorado

Vermeer Corporation

Vermeer Iowa & N. Missouri

Vermeer Midwest Inc.

Vermeer Mountain West

Vermeer of Indiana Inc.

Vermeer Texas - Louisiana

Vermeer Wisconsin Inc.

Viking Mat Company

Volvo Construction Equipment

Weiler Abrasives Group

West Side Tractor Sales

Worldwide Logistics

Wyo-Ben, Inc.

YAK ACCESS

Ziegler Cat

MEETINGS

Each year, the DCA holds major meetings to discuss issues vital to the



■ ANNUAL CONVENTION

(FEBRUARY OR MARCH)

The Annual Convention is held in a warm weather location in the US or internationally and is designed for members and their spouses/guests. At this annual meeting of the membership, DCA holds elections for the Board of Directors. A key feature of the convention is the annual auction, which has grown over the years and is the primary fundraiser for the operations of the DCA. The week-long event is supported through the generous sponsorship of our associate members and features first-rate speakers at business sessions, networking events, and local activities. Recipients of the scholarships and the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award are announced at the convention. The final board meeting of the outgoing president and the first board meeting of the new president are held at the convention. A Leadership Council meeting is held, as are meetings of the committees. The general meeting of the membership is the DCA Town Hall, where leadership provides an update on association proceedings and where the members can dialog with leadership.

■ DCA & AGA UTILITY CONTRACTOR WORKSHOP

(MARCH OR APRIL)

The DCA and American Gas Association (AGA) partner to produce a workshop aimed at increasing communication and cooperation between gas distribution utilities and the contractors who work for them. The event attracts about 130-140 attendees representing gas utilities, contractors, manufacturers, labor unions, industry experts and federal government officials.

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

SPRING



■ SAFETY CONGRESS

(MARCH OR APRIL)

DCA's Annual Safety Congress is becoming a "must-attend" event for safety professionals each year. The two-day event attracts safety professionals from across the country and industry to discuss different challenges and problems utility contractors face, from creative training ideas to managing a safety culture within your company. The Safety Director of the Year and the Safety Person of the Year are awarded at the Congress.

association and the industry, as well as smaller committee meetings throughout the year.



MID YEAR MEETING

(JULY)

The Mid Year Meeting has grown over the years from a summer board meeting to a family networking event with business session speakers, committee meetings, a board meeting, and a leadership council meeting, as well as the DCA Town Hall. Each year many activities are planned with DCA member families in mind.



FALL MEETING

(OCTOBER OR NOVEMBER)

The Fall Meeting is a members-only event with a board meeting, leadership council meeting, committee meetings, and a networking social event. The Executive Finance Committee meets at this event to review the operations of the staff.



FALL

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

(SPRING AND FALL)

DCA partners with ATW Training Solutions to offer a Leadership Development Program that is suitable for managers, project managers, and emerging leaders within DCA member companies. It is aimed at professionals working in the distribution contracting industry who want to enhance their leadership abilities and advance their careers in the field.

DCA ONLINE:

www.dcaweb.org, www.dcaletsgettowork.com, www.dcatrenchless.com, www.dcacgovrelations.com,
www.dcabesafe.com, www.oqip.org

The DCA website is a state-of-the-art tool that gives access to DCA publications, members, and facts with the click of a mouse. It provides members with password protected access to news, committee updates, and association newsletters, as well as wage rates for the three labor unions that DCA has agreements with. The website has been enhanced to include five auxiliary microsites related to the association committees. The microsites grant access to a wealth of underground industry resources from a single, user-friendly location. The sites provide education, training and jobseeker/recruitment tools and opportunities aimed at getting people back to work in a richly rewarding industry.

DCA NEWS

DCA News is a bi-monthly publication that keeps members up to date on the latest in industry and regulatory news. Topics include legislation and government regulations, association activities and meetings, industry issues, and safety updates. DCA News also provides a forum for company and personnel news.

DCA E-NEWS

DCA members are also informed of late-breaking industry news, regulatory matters, equipment developments, and upcoming meeting information through the monthly DCA e-News. This digital publication brings the latest industry news to DCA members through direct links to informational resources.

DCA DIRECTORY

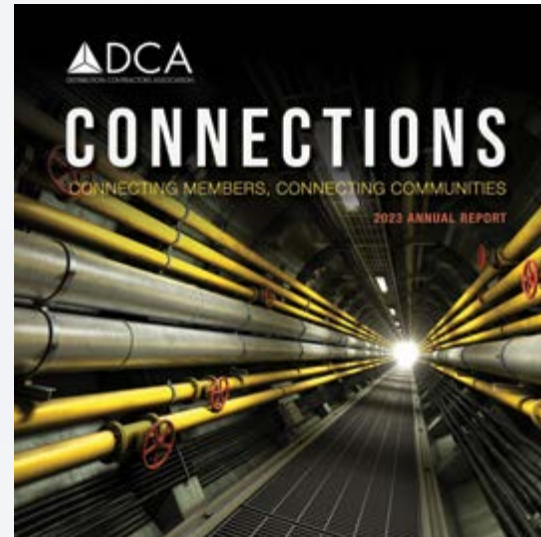
DCA, through our industry partner, Gulf Energy Information, publishes a nationwide membership directory each year that lists all companies, with their officers and specialties. The directory, a “Who’s Who” in utility construction, is distributed to members, prospective members, utility companies, equipment manufacturers, vendors, suppliers, labor representatives and government officials.

CONNECTIONS

The 2023 edition of *DCA CONNECTIONS* offers a concise and meaningful look into DCA’s current operations, leadership, and organizational outlook, as well as its future initiatives. If you have any questions about DCA or its activities, please contact us at 972.680.0261 or info@dcaweb.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



www.dcaweb.org





MOMENTUM

32

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MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Rob and Sheri Darden

GAINING MOMENTUM

If you can recall, my letter last year was titled “The Great Comeback;” a fitting tribute to a momentous year in 2022 that saw DCA climb out of the ditch that Covid dug for everyone and get back to our normal business of meeting in person and trying to change the underground construction industry for the better. With our footing regained, 2023 was poised to be an especially productive year, and it didn’t disappoint. Member enthusiasm remained high, creative minds were firing, and DCA embarked on some new projects that will have far-reaching consequences for our future.

SOLIDIFYING OUR FOUNDATION

Much of our focus and energy in the last few years has gone into how to understand, relate to, and recruit the Gen-Z generation looking for an alternative to college, showing them the great options we have in the construction industry to achieve stable jobs and financial security. That effort continued in 2023 as DCA’s “Success Looks Like This” campaign hit the road with the videos developed by BuildWitt as the latest tool in its toolbox. The videos are quickly becoming invaluable for connecting with students as we attend events like SkillsUSA, a national conference of school counselors, or the “Celebration of Construction” on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. We have also continued to collaborate with organizations like the American Gas Association (AGA) and the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD) on their workforce development projects that complement our own.

In addition to shoring up our members’ stables, DCA is shoring up our own as well. Working to address issues identified by the Strategic Vision Committee, the Membership Committee has adopted a “Regain, Retain, Recruit, and Engage” strategy to recover members we have lost and to strengthen ties with those who may be teetering on the edge. Efforts to reach out to lapsed members, expand the number of DCA contacts within a company, and mentor new members are showing great promise, and the committee is actively seeking input on what motivates members to get involved to help it generate new ideas.

Perhaps most exciting, the Mid Year Meeting in Vermont saw the inaugural gathering of the Future Leaders Committee, chaired by Elizabeth Michels of Michels Corp. and Sarah Mahlik of TT Technologies. Its primary goal is to find ways to get newer and younger members involved in the day-to-day business of the DCA—joining committees, volunteering for events, working on projects—and get them in the pipeline for leadership as the generations ahead of them prepare to retire. In a few short months, this group has become a vibrant hotbed of discussion and ideas that will likely bear fruit in the near future.

The Workforce Development Committee also worked with ATW Training Solutions to launch the DCA’s new Leadership Development Program in October. The program consists of a multi-session training course for employees of all levels to learn leadership skills and strategies and prepare them for greater responsibility. The first class to complete the course gave it strong reviews, and two additional sessions are scheduled for 2024.

INCREASING OUR VALUE

As the committees go about their work to build the membership, the DCA staff have been staying busy working on new ways to serve the members. You may have noticed some differences in this annual report, which was previously called *Benchmarks*. We are also currently developing a new, searchable directory of members to replace the old, printed version which was obsolete as soon as it was printed. We have added two more microsites to our website—DCA Government Relations and DCA Be Safe—to provide more detailed information on our legislative activities and better access to safety training, guidelines, and resources. The main DCA website will be undergoing a design refresh in the upcoming year.

DCA also reached out to help the people of Hawaii this past year after the devastating fires in Lahaina, Maui. DCA has held numerous conventions in the state of Hawaii, including the most recent one on the Big Island in February. The DCA – Lyons' Grant committee approved a \$10,000 donation to the Hawaii Community Foundation for the relief and rebuilding efforts, with one hundred percent of the proceeds being used for those in need in Lahaina.

PUSHING THE ROCK

In 2018, DCA established an SMS Task Force and worked with other construction contractor organizations to develop a template or framework for contractors to utilize when implementing a pipeline safety management system (SMS) or to improve existing SMS programs. In 2021, DCA was invited to participate in the Pipeline SMS Industry Team based on API's RP1173 and DCA was instrumental in developing the Industry Team's "Contractor Guidance" related to SMS. This document was based largely on the template developed by DCA and was officially adopted by API.

The Operator Qualification Integrity Process (OQIP) pilot programs in several states continue to go well. Contractors in Michigan, New Mexico, and Washington have been steadily testing different aspects of and approaches to the process, offering a detailed report on their findings to date at the Annual DCA & AGA Workshop in Chicago last March.

The Government Relations Committee conducted another successful Washington, D.C. fly-in, where members met with numerous lawmakers and staffers to discuss the language and implications of the still-developing PIPES Act. Our own Dr. Sam Ariaratnam also continues to serve as a public representative on the Gas Pipeline Advisory Committee (GPAC), which reviews the regulatory initiatives undertaken by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

In May, DCA participated in the "Celebration of Construction on the National Mall" (CCNM) hosted by the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). Several DCA contractors and associates volunteered their time to host booths and display equipment at the event, which saw an excellent turnout from the public.

With the DCA Convention in Hawaii fresh in our minds and a full slate of events and meetings ahead, DCA has a lot of irons in the fire for 2024. If the atmosphere at the convention is any indication, the energy is there to keep them hot and add more to the fire as we face yet another consequential election year.



Rob Darden
Executive Vice President

DIRECTORS | STAFF



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Jeri Lamerton

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Washington, D.C. Representative
Wyman Associates

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DCA would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of its volunteers and leaders. Without the expertise, resources, and talents of those who support DCA, the accomplishments and activities that occurred in 2023 would not have been possible. We are excited about 2024 and look forward to working with you to make it another year of progress and achievement.





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