



AIST Young Professionals



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What first interested you about the steel industry?

As my parents have worked in the steel industry my whole life, I grew up always knowing and appreciating the importance that steel has in our society. Steel plays a huge role in everyday life, and I really enjoy working in an industry that makes a real, tangible impact on the world.

Describe the coursework and degrees that you have obtained. Did you participate in any of AIST's programs or attend AIST events as a student?

I earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Pittsburgh's College of Business Administration, with a minor in economics and

Spanish. During my sophomore year, I had the chance to attend the Steel to Students event at AISTech 2021, which really sparked my interest in pursuing a future career in steel. Participating in that event allowed me to see marketing in full swing at the trade show level, while also learning about steel and the opportunities the industry offers. Looking ahead, I plan to pursue a master's in international business.

Have any AIST programs assisted with your career advancement? What has been the biggest benefit you've experienced being involved in AIST as a young professional?

More than anything, I'm grateful for the sense of community AIST has provided me. Coming from a background in team sports, my biggest concern after graduating college was losing that feeling of belonging. Through the AIST Pittsburgh Member Chapter, as well as attending training seminars and conferences, I've regained that shared sense of purpose and working together toward a shared goal. Beyond the technical knowledge and career advancement opportunities, the people you meet in steel are incredibly welcoming. As a young professional, it's easy to feel uncertain at times, but connecting with other young professionals and AIST members has been invaluable. I recently accepted a board position with the Pittsburgh Member Chapter, and I'm honored to now play a role in bringing people together in the industry.

Have you had any mentors that have assisted with your career development so far? If so, how did you identify them as a mentor, and what impact have they made thus far?

My mentors are, without a doubt, my parents. As cliché as it sounds, they've shaped everything I know — both professionally and personally. Their passion and vision for EAFab have only fueled my own drive to succeed and make them proud. They've given me a level of creative freedom and opportunities that many others in my position might not experience. As "mini steel celebrities," they've introduced me to such incredible people and put me in rooms where I have no choice but to rise to the occasion. Thanks to them, I've had the freedom to grow to my full potential, and am constantly learning and pushing myself.

How has the steel industry allowed you to grow in ways you didn't expect when you first started?

As someone who is very passionate about travel and learning about new cultures, I never anticipated that steel would allow me to build such a diverse, global network. Through AIST, I have connected with individuals from all over the world, each with unique perspectives and approaches. I've had the opportunity to engage with steelmakers from every continent, which has significantly expanded my understanding of various cultures and international markets. This global exposure has also boosted my confidence in navigating international business settings, collaborating more effectively and, most importantly, helping me build relationships that extend beyond borders.

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

My advice to students is simple: Be open-minded. The rhetoric pushed to students that they should aim for these large, glamorous corporations can often leave them feeling unseen and undervalued. In steel, there's incredible diversity in job opportunities, and people who truly care about investing in the future generations. Whether in operations, administration or other areas, there are real chances to make a difference. It's so important to remember that you don't need to have everything figured out for the rest of your life. Let life run its course and remain open to new opportunities; there are so many possibilities in this industry beyond what you might expect. Choose a career that excites you, with people who support you. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty — take a chance on steel! ♦

Are you a steel professional age 35 or younger?

Join the new AIST Young Professionals Membership Committee to expand your network and connect with peers.

For more information, visit AIST.org/membership or contact Jessica Mortimer at +1.724.814.3070 or jmortimer@aist.org.

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