




**Get to Know Your AISTech
2024 Goggle Person:
Sabra Serino**

by Lauren Veltre





Each year, AIST chooses a representative of the steel industry to serve as the identity of AISTech. The “Goggle Person,” as they are known amongst AIST staff, helps define each year’s AISTech marketing efforts, serving as the face of the conference and exposition. The 2024 Goggle Person was Sabra Serino, caster area manager with CMC Steel Texas.

Iron & Steel Technology caught up with Serino about her experiences as Goggle Person and her career in the steel industry. She started as an intern with CMC Steel Texas 10 years ago, began working with them full time upon graduation and has grown her career at the company ever since.

She has been a frequent AISTech attendee and told us she was looking forward to the technical papers at AISTech 2024, especially the ones focused on infrared technology and robotics. “The progress that has been made in those areas has come really far in the last 5 to 10 years, so I’m looking forward to hearing what the next chapter is,” Serino said. “I’m also looking forward to seeing some really good friends and faces that I haven’t seen in a while. AISTech is the one time a year we all get to come together — it’s an awesome opportunity to learn, but it’s also just really fun!”

Now it’s your turn to get to know the woman who was the face of AISTech 2024!



○ **What have you thought of all the AISTech marketing materials this year? How has it been, seeing your face on AIST’s magazine, on our website and in the promotion emails hitting your inbox?**

It has definitely gained me a lot of notoriety! The magazines were distributed to nearly the entire company through their mailboxes, and coworkers have constantly been bringing them around — I’ve been asked to sign that AISTech section of *Iron & Steel Technology* a few times now. But it has been fun! My mom is probably the person who’s most excited about it. When she found out that there was going to be a magazine cover, she essentially just put it all over Facebook. It felt a little bit like being 5-year-old again, but my mom’s proud, so I’ll let her have that moment.



○ **That's really neat, and you should be proud! Can you share the story about how you began your career in the steel industry?**

My career started when I was in college. I went to Texas State University, and there was a foundry program there. The key professor there, at the time, was the one who introduced me to Material Advantage and really got me started in metal casting, which is where it all began. Initially, I had a focus in non-ferrous metallurgy, but after getting involved in a couple of programs within AIST, I became wrapped up in the family of the whole organization and had a lot of mentorship. That segued me away from non-ferrous and into the steel industry. I give my professor, Dr. Laura Bartlett, a lot of credit for that as well because her guidance helped push me out of my comfort zone and is really what initiated me stepping into an internship with CMC. Working at CMC as an intern was an experience that I wasn't expecting; it was way better than what I had hoped for it to be. I joined this group of strangers essentially that welcomed me as family — they were always kind about guiding me and about sharing information; about teaching me; and just helping me navigate

being a young professional in the industry itself. The family that I have here is really what cemented me into the industry.

○ **It's really nice to be working in an industry that motivates you and that excites you, but it's also important to enjoy the people that you work with, so you feel motivated to connect and collaborate with that team. It sounds like you have the best of both worlds at CMC.**

You became involved with AIST as a student, which redirected your path into the steel industry. Can you shed any more light on the different programs that you were involved in within AIST as a student, or what really made the difference for you to pursue steel?

Looking back, it was actually at AISTech 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio, that was a big turning point for me and my career. That year, I entered the Undergraduate Student Presentation Contest. The work that I did toward that project in collaboration with another CMC intern really helped cultivate my presentation skills. The conference experience itself was also an amazing opportunity to network. It was my first AISTech, so it was my first time branching out and connecting with people outside my company. There were several conversations and opportunities throughout the conference that helped solidify my decision to stay in the steel industry and secure full-time employment after graduation.

Some of the memories that stick out to me include going to see specific sessions and technical presentations that sparked my interest or were recommended by my boss at the time. I was also a student session chair at AISTech that year. Stepping up for this role gave me the chance to meet a bunch of students involved in Material Advantage programs at other universities, so it was wonderful to network with them and build relationships with peers as well. In fact, I'm still good friends with some of the students I met that year, so that turned out to be a great opportunity to develop connections!

- **That's really wonderful to hear — so this AISTech will be somewhat of a full-circle moment for you! AISTech 2015 was a turning point early on in your career and now to see your face on all the marketing of AISTech 2024 must feel very rewarding!**

What do you enjoy most about working in steel?

First and foremost, I enjoy the people that I work with! They're a very fun group of people that are tenacious and just really get after it. If we ever face an issue, the problem-solving skills and the methods we use to overcome obstacles are unique and help make the job fun. We work together well and always make sure to laugh along the way, and I love the positive energy!

The second thing I like about working in the steel industry is that it keeps me on my toes, since there's always something new happening. The industry is constantly innovating, so there's always opportunities to learn how to work with different systems and learn about new technologies. One of the best parts of this job is that it's never stagnant — a career in steel will never leave you questioning, "what am I doing with my life;" instead, it's an environment that excites and motivates you to show up to work every day!

My third favorite thing about working in steel is obviously the liquid steel itself! I'm a meltshop person through and through, so there is nothing that makes me happier than watching a furnace arc or seeing full ladles of steel at the caster.

- **You started at CMC as an intern — what would you tell students today considering a career in steel?**

If you're considering a career in the steel industry, know that every day that you step into your role as an intern, a co-op or part-time in the steel mill, it is an interview. Always put your best foot forward because you never know what opportunities may come from it! ♦

