



AIST Young Professionals



Landon Woody

Mechanical Engineer
Nucor-Yamato Steel Co.

What first interested you about the steel industry?

I grew up in a community of steelworkers, but it was not until my junior year of college that I was introduced to the steel industry. A family friend reached out to see if I knew anyone looking for a summer intern spot. I had already accepted a different position for the summer but had a month until my start date. That conversation turned into an opportunity that allowed me to work at Nucor for three short weeks. That short stint started a new chapter in my career path. Growing up, my dad taught me about metal fabrication and the love of being a “maker.” Nucor to me seemed like a playground for an engineer that loved to design, build and install!

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 my B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from Arkansas State University (ASU). The mechanical engineering program was and is a critical part of my journey. This degree really connected the “whys” behind a lot of the design work and allowed me to learn other elements of design. I was able to gain a broader understanding of automation controls, electrical versus hydraulic, and practical ways to find more than one solution. Unfortunately, ASU did not have an AIST student chapter or affiliation, but through my involvement with the AIST Young Professionals committee I am hoping to change that and bring more opportunities to future students.

Have any AIST programs assisted with your career advancement?

AIST has been an invaluable asset to my career, providing incredible networking opportunities and a chance to get involved in educating the industry. The welcoming and supportive community within AIST made it easy for me to join committees and take on new roles. Currently, I serve as the education chair for the Maintenance & Reliability Technology Committee. While AISTech is an amazing event, the relationships I've built and collaboration within the committees have been most impactful in my career.

What has been the biggest benefit (or benefits) you've experienced being involved in AIST as a young professional?

The biggest benefit of AIST would be building community within the steel industry. AIST quickly allowed me the opportunity to connect with a community of other young professionals to see that I am not alone in my career field. The veterans took me in and allowed me to be a part of a committee that sought out my opinions and gave me a voice. This built my confidence and provided a foundation for me to pursue innovative ideas and drive change 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?

There have been several people that have helped develop my career thus far. For me, when I see or meet someone that I would like to learn more from, I tend to ask questions and generate conversations. I think the power in finding a mentor is asking questions and using them as a reference to align my thoughts and talk through ideas.

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

To any student curious about the steel industry, I would say try it out! The opportunities within the industry are limitless. There are so many different and exciting paths from detailed engineering, new technology, robotics and overall process flow. There is such an energy and excitement around steel, which makes each day different than the day before. Every day brings new challenges to tackle, along with a relentless drive to improve safety, speed and efficiency.

What do you find unique and interesting about the steel industry? What do you enjoy the most about it?

The steel industry as a whole is interesting. I often refer to my career as a playground for engineers. I have never encountered an industry that has the resources like we do to pursue innovative ideas. My passion in life comes from building and making things better, and that is my job description as an engineer. Also, it is hard to put into words how impactful the relationships amongst my team have been. The collaboration and camaraderie are something truly special. Being part of a team so dedicated to learning, growing and tackling challenges together creates an energy that is incredibly contagious. ♦



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](https://www.aist.org/membership) or contact Jessica Mortimer at +1.724.814.3070 or jmortimer@aist.org.