



NEWSLETTER

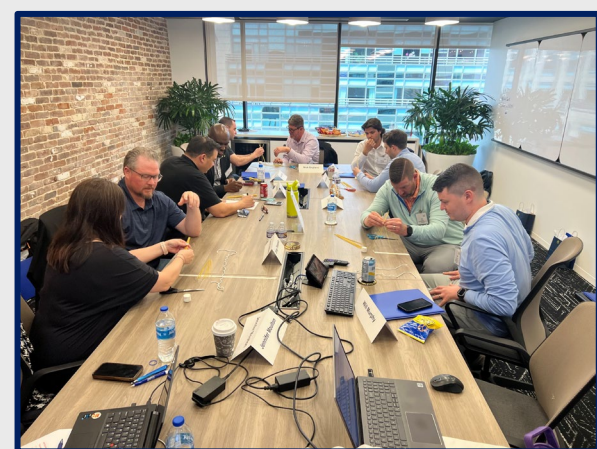
Spring 2025

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NECA Innovation Community,

As we explore May and Mental Health Awareness month, please remember that innovation starts with people. Behind every technological breakthrough, every creative leap, and every bold move forward are individuals navigating challenges, pushing boundaries, and doing their best to build something better. That's why this month, in addition to celebrating the momentum of our community, I encourage each of us to take a moment to advocate for our own well-being and the well-being of those around us. In an industry driven by progress, pausing to reflect, support, and recharge is not just valuable, it is essential.

April was a month of transformation across the NECA community and especially the Innovation Institute. The Franklin Cohort celebrated their Commencement in Washington, DC, a milestone that capped off a year of remarkable growth. These innovative pioneers presented their final Capstone Projects live to their Executive Sponsors and collaborated on real-time business challenges to produce actionable, future-ready solutions. The Galileo Cohort also began their Innovation Institute journey during their Program Kickoff in DC. This dynamic group is already laying the foundation for their year ahead, diving deep into emotional intelligence, design thinking, exploring NECA's policy and political advocacy efforts. They are beginning to build bonds grounded in shared experiences, industry challenges, and the drive to make a difference. The energy and promise of both groups remind us that innovation doesn't just come from technology but also from human connection, empathy, and advocacy.



Meanwhile, the Da Vinci Cohort convened in St. Louis for their second Program Review, hosted by one of NECA's most forward-thinking partners, Graybar. The group explored how Graybar continues to build resilience in its supply chain and implement lean processes to deliver results. They also spent time at Kaiser Electric touring their growing fabrication operations and engaging in a powerful roundtable discussion about operational innovation. Across every session, the Da Vinci Cohort exemplified the Innovation Institute spirit: curiosity, collaboration, and courage to challenge the status quo.

No reflection on current-day innovation would be complete without mentioning the rapidly growing impact of artificial

intelligence. From automating workflows to enhancing project forecasting, AI is no longer a distant concept but instead reshaping how we work today. By embracing these tools, we can boost efficiency, unlock creativity, and elevate our workforce.

But let me be clear: innovation will always be human-centered. And that means your voice, your well-being, and your leadership matter now more than ever. Thank you for being part of this community. The future is being built today, and we want you with us.

Tauhira Ali
NECA Executive Director of Industry Innovation
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INDUSTRY PIONEERS

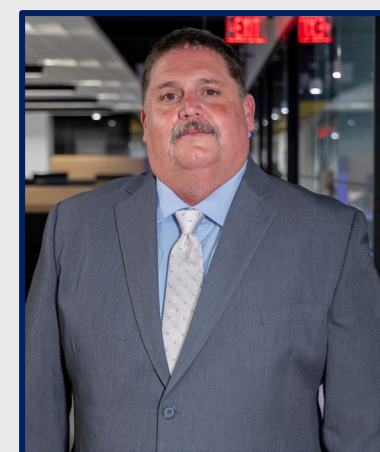


"Innovation is solving problems by coming up with unique ways and ideas to mitigate or lessen these problems."

Heath Blackburn

Operations Manager at
Wheeler Electric

NII Franklin Cohort
2024 - 2025



Click/Scan for more info about
the NECA Innovation Institute



"If you're not innovating and thinking ahead, you're going to be behind the eight ball—and left behind."

Jef Fagan

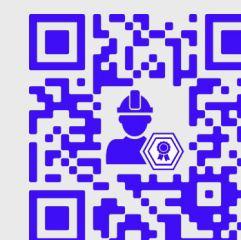
Senior Vice President of
Risk Management and
Labor Relations at NECA



Click/Scan to check out the
Innovation Overload Podcast

Celebrate Your Innovators!

The **NECA Innovator of the Year** is awarded to an industry pioneer from a NECA member contractor who champions innovation and continuous improvement across their company and the entire NECA community.



Click/Scan to nominate an
innovative team member today

AROUND THE INDUSTRY



WHAT WE'RE READING

- [How to build a new culture of mental health in the construction industry](#)
5/2/25, Portland Business Journal
- [6 Ways to Use Data to Optimize the Worksite](#)
5/8/25, For Construction Pros
- [For AI, data is king: FutureTech presenters](#)
5/14/25, Construction Dive



UPCOMING EVENTS

- [ENR GWIC](#)
June 8 – 10 in San Diego, CA
- [E2E Summit powered by NECA](#)
June 16 – 18 in Washington DC
- [2025 National Training Institute \(NTI\)](#)
July 26 – August 1 in Washington DC

