

Industry Chair Report | April 2022



Hello members,

Spring has sprung in Minnesota, at least on the calendar! Dare I say that it looks like we are finally coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic and things appear to be slowly getting back to normal. If you are like me, it is a very welcomed change and I look forward more in person activities in 2022!

A lot has gone on since my last report. We had an in person Annual Conference with and outstanding vendor show. After several date changes, in October we held a great SNIP conference with Think 3D taking the group through some great learnings. I need to thank the SNIP conference committee for managing through several date changes and delivering one of the best SNIP conferences we have ever held.

Under the great leadership of MSNA President Carrie Frank, the Executive Board has really flourished and is working on some important projects to take MSNA to another level and to reenergize our partnership! One of the key elements this year is to have Industry connect more with the MSNA members – once or twice a year at a conference is not enough! So, this year please look for more events to bring the groups together. Our first event will be on May 19th at Feed My Starving Children in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. Industry and School Food Service folks will be partnering to pack meals to help feed needy children around the world. Industry members, be on the lookout for other exciting Sponsorship Opportunities this summer and fall.

Membership renewals were sent out and I want to thank all those who have renewed for 2022. Our membership is critical to the success and future of the MSNA. As of April 1st, if you haven't renewed, your membership has lapsed, and your company's information has been removed from the MSNA website. However, you can still renew. Your information will be added back to the website, and you will still be eligible for your industry level's benefits.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to be the Industry Chair the past few years. It has been one of the most rewarding and educational roles in my career. Later this summer, we will be looking for my replacement and will have other opening on the Industry Advisory Board (IAB). **If you have ever thought of joining or have questions, please reach out to me or one of the IAB members. This is a great way to get involved and help guide the relationship with MSNA.**

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't address the elephant in the room! Supply chain has been a mess during the pandemic and will continue to be a challenge as we finish the school year and into the fall. On behalf of my Industry colleagues, I want to say "Thank You" for your patience and understanding! We know it hasn't been easy, but you have handled it with grace and compassion and continue to do whatever is necessary to feed kids! The term "Hero" is often tossed around and given to athletes or celebrities. However, over the past few years no one has exemplified the term Hero more that the School food service employees. You have done and continue to do amazing things every day!

Have a great rest of the school year and summer, and I hope to see all of you very soon.

Steve Martel

MSNA Industry Chair