



Chicago Society *for* Coatings Technology

President's Message 2023-2024



The 104th season has come, and I am honored to be leading the society into another year of opportunity and growth. As a 20-plus year veteran in the industry, I have come to value the benefits that local societies provide to their members. I am committed to carry on those benefits by serving with enthusiasm and pride. I am joined by an invaluable team of volunteer board and committee members that keep the wheels of the CSCT moving forward.

Like many, I fell into the coatings industry unintentionally. I have carved out a career that I did not envision as a college graduate with a biology degree. My time spent with Ace Hardware Paint Division, Valspar and now ICL-Halox has been rewarding and challenging. The opportunities for professional development have been many, but the lasting relationships with great people of this industry is what drives me to uphold the values of the CSCT. Progress within the industry is greatest accelerated by professionals collaborating to tackle the challenges that face us. Educational growth and network development are the grass roots activities that support the slow-moving growth in technology and business models. The CSCT provides these grass root benefits for all members to take advantage of.

The landscape of the Chicago paint industry has changed greatly in the last decade, with company mergers, acquisitions, office closures and lab relocations. With those changes has also come a wave of technology that transformed the way we do business. Connections can be achieved with a simple click of the mouse. Meetings can be held on a computer screen instead of in a conference room. We can communicate by phone, text, chat, email, social media, etc. These changes have brought challenges to the society to remain relevant to the shrinking local industry. They have also provided opportunities to deliver member benefits in other ways and emphasize the importance of face-to-face interaction. The society continues to support monthly technical meetings, which provide social and educational opportunities. The Windy City Coatings Course will be offered next in 2025. Social events like the Awards Dinner, celebrating past presidents and scholarship winners, will continue to be held at the end of each season. Expect big changes to the CPCA/CSCT Christmas Party in 2023! The annual golf outing is held in conjunction with CTT, allowing out of town colleagues to join us in a day of fun, which provides funds for our scholarships. The CSCT continues to provide a Merit Scholarship and 4 joint scholarships with the CPCA, supporting the education of our members and their children or grandchildren. We also strive to support local educational institutions that promote polymer or coatings subjects in their coursework. All these activities and benefits are here for the taking, and I encourage ALL of our members to take advantage of these opportunities. See you at the next event!

Michelle Bauer
CSCT President
2023-24

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