

FOREWORD

Our industry continues in an era of consolidation and change, and as a steelmaking society we have appropriately evolved into a solid and supportive group; a group that is AIST.

These Conference Proceedings include numerous technical reports, discussions and investigational material to foster common knowledge and understanding. The enclosed material includes support from over 200 companies representing North American steelmakers, as well as significant contributions from international steelmakers. This reflects AIST's focus of embracing the worldwide economy that we live in today.

AISTech 2006 is the forum for these Proceedings. For 2006, Cleveland, Ohio hosts the Third Annual Exposition. It encompasses the many aspects of learning, including technical presentations, displays of products and services, as well as significant opportunities for networking as led by example from our industry executive leadership.

As part of this conference, we are privileged to have the J. Keith Brimacombe Memorial Lecture presented by Dr. John Stubbles entitled "The Mini-mill Story." Plant tours of both Timken and Mittal Cleveland are available. As an industry exclusive, AIST is proud to present the Town Hall Forum, featuring interesting exchanges from key executives, including: John H. Goodish, Chief Operating Officer, United States Steel Corp., Rauke Henstra, Executive Director, Corus Strip Products Division, Malay Mukherjee, Chief Operating Officer, Mittal Steel Co., Joseph A. Rutkowski, Executive Vice President-Business Development, Nucor Corp., Stephan H.J.V. Weber, General Manager-Technology and Operations, HIsmelt Pty. Ltd., Mark Millett, Vice President and General Manager, Steel Dynamics Inc. Flat Roll Div., and Vice President, Iron Dynamics Inc., John F. Kaloski, Senior Vice President-Operations, AK Steel Corp., as moderated by John D. Callaway. Finally, AISTech includes the Material Advantage program, a student program co-hosted with TMS, ASM International and ACerS.

Exposition excellence is not a matter of luck, rather it is an outcome of countless endeavors. AIST's Board of Directors guided the Conference Planning Committee to focus their diverse skills to craft this event. As a means to thank their efforts and contributions, we individually recognize the members within the Proceedings.

Co-anchoring the Exposition is the Exhibitor Committee, whom we also thank and individually recognize within these pages.

Working together, steadily in support is the AIST staff led by Ron Ashburn. The contributions of Bill Albaugh, Gerry Kane, Shannon Kiley and Stacy Varnecky as well as many others deserve special thanks for their professionalism and quality work.

Operating Committees and Member Chapters are the grassroots foundation in which every member can participate. The quality of their extensive and on-going contributions provides the inherent value of AIST, and this world-class exposition fittingly reflects this quality.

On behalf of everyone involved, I hope you enjoy AISTech 2006 with '*Carpe Diem*' enthusiasm. AIST provides avenues to learn; it provides the chance to exchange ideas through personal and professional association; and most importantly, it provides the tools to grow. AIST — If you work in steel, there is no other place to be!

Kevin J. Bertermann, *Chair*
AISTech 2006 Conference Planning Committee