

## Maximizing Momentum and Moving Forward into the New Year

By Fernando Fernandez, 2015 PMI President and Director of Codes and Standards, TOTO USA



Fernando Fernandez

Momentum is defined as the impetus gained by a moving body. As a trade association, PMI reflects this concept. Brainstorming, strategic planning and deliverables in 2014 were brought about not only by member input and participation but by a diligent effort from key individuals within the organization and bolstered by an experienced and dedicated network of consultants.

Let's take a moment to give credit where credit is due. **Matt Sigler**, whose role as Technical Director inherently brings with it an array of responsibilities, successfully coordinated a research project with **Gary Klein** which has allowed us to bring forth critical comments in our reply to the CEC pre-rulemaking process in California. **Ray Valek** of Valek and Co., along with the focused effort of our CEO/Executive Director **Barb Higgins**, strongly supported PMI's water efficiency position effort with an Op-ed article in the *Sacramento Bee* newspaper rightfully exposing the pitfalls of rushing to lower water consumption values. Also, the literature produced recently by Ray Valek with input from the Advocacy/Outreach group will be instrumental moving into 2015, as well as our social media campaign spearheaded by **Dawn Robinson**, PMI Communications Manager. All of these activities are backed by the relentless administrative support of **Jodi Stuhberg** and **Shirley Havel**. Moreover, both of our lobbyists **Stephanie Salmon** and **Jerry Desmond** have elevated PMI's presence at the State and Federal level like never before. Notwithstanding, I would like to also thank the Strategic Advisory Council (SAC) for their valuable input at our Board meetings. Our interaction with them has helped provide valuable direction.

In looking forward to 2015, it is my vision as President that PMI continue to move forward with these accomplishments

in mind and leverage them into additional, useful tools and strategies to increase PMI's presence and influence in various roles. As a new Congress takes shape, it is vital for us to make an impact early on and make our freshman legislators aware of our presence, our passion, and our positions. Our PMI CEO/Executives will meet with principle legislators during our Washington D.C. Spring Fly-In to communicate PMI's priorities and initiatives. The effectiveness of this face time is immeasurable. I also encourage you to invite legislators to visit your facilities and to start thinking about what you can do to leave an impression on them. Stress how your companies have taken tremendous strides as stewards of water efficiency, not only in the products you make but in the practices you employ at your factories. In my eyes, I think we all deserve a commendable acknowledgement because we have come a long way in the last ten years in greening up our industry.

At the state level, we have been challenged with much misinformation and speculation from the California Investor Owned Utilities that, if taken lightly, could change the course of water efficiency forever. The saying, "As goes California so goes the rest of the country," comes to mind, so we must be resolute. Furthermore, issues related to Prop 65, CalGreen, and materials impacts from California's Department of Toxic Substances Control continue to take center stage in California. This activity has forced us to dedicate more time and effort in this area and this focus has served to make us more efficient as a whole. We have initiated the California Task Group – a sounding board and vetting committee of members who queue up the hot topic items for the Technical Committee to provide input and direction on. I look forward to this group's continued involvement in the coming year.

Our 2015 Board consists of a dedicated team of individuals who believe in our collective vision. They have been tasked with providing the strategic input to better balance our outreach and lobbying activities. As we look at forming a proactive offense and let others know we are the leading resource for our industry, we must convey that message with conviction. Through our members, both Manufacturing and

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# Strength in Numbers: The Power of our Association

By Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Barbara C. Higgins

Late last year, PMI Association Manager **Jodi Stuhrberg** and I were invited to attend, as guests, the annual conference of the Irrigation Association (IA).

With 'water' as our common focus, the similarities and synergies between our two organizations are many. Like PMI, the IA is working to reinforce its position as a reliable resource and industry partner. I had the opportunity to share some of our strategies as well as the collection of collateral recently developed to tell our story.

The incoming 2015 IA president **Aric J. Olson**, CSSBB, CPIM, CSCP, CAIS, CID is the President of Jain Irrigation, Inc. in Fresno, CA in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley which is home to more than 200 water-related companies. (Given the wonderful presentation he made, and the number of acronyms following his name, Mr. Olson is clearly a significant figure in the irrigation world.) He is also clearly a true believer in the importance of industry associations and the work we do. Here (with permission from the IA) is an excerpt of his address:

*"... The past few years have been difficult, what with the global economic recession, and growing attacks on the irrigation industry, and of course the historic drought in California. The fact that our organization has survived, and thrived, proves the value of what IA does, and the importance of a healthy irrigation industry for everyone. Yet, there is a lot of misinformation out there. You know, we understand that health and human safety is and should remain the number one use for water..."*

*"... Our membership is mostly made up of small companies and individuals. Alone, we could never craft the message and tell it to a wide audience. Alone, we couldn't hire lobbyists, track new standards and codes, sit in on regulation meetings at every corner of the country. Alone, that's just not possible. We can only really get this done as a group, a collective voice, all shouting the benefits and telling the story, together. And IA is the vehicle by which we do that!"*

*Either we're going to be involved in the process or someone else is going to set the rules of how we use water. We need to stand together and make sure that we're communicating the right message for our industry. There are so many positive solutions that we can provide. Green irrigation systems, the right amount of water and fertilizer delivered at a low cost, precision agriculture, smart controllers on agriculture and landscape. Advocacy, for our industry—that's one reason why IA is so critical... **You can't just bring California solutions to Texas. My IA membership helped me gain that understanding.**"*

And Mr. Olson continues: *"Once I saw the value of IA, I decided to get involved, to volunteer, and I've gotten so much more out of the organization than I've put in—through networking, building business relationships, and a deeper understanding of the significance this industry provides."*

*While IA has an experienced, professional staff, we are essentially a volunteer organization. Right now, today, I'm asking you to become a volunteer. Invest in the association and industry that has invested so much in you. Get involved, give your feedback, play a part in the solutions for our industry going forward. However you'd like to volunteer, your time and efforts will be appreciated and our staff will find a position for you. If you need*

*some ideas of what you can do now, please consider one of these three areas:*

1. *Participate in your state government affairs program.*
2. *Volunteer to help draft and work on IA's public affairs campaign. Spreading the "benefits of irrigation" message is so important and it will be a major focus of our work moving forward. If you're good with words, understand the media, have contacts with the press, love Twitter or other social media outlets, this may be the right volunteer activity for you.*
3. *If your position in your company is technical, or if you have a technical expertise, please consider helping review changes in standards and codes."*

Significantly larger than PMI, the IA has 16 full-time and three part-time employees plus two interns with an annual budget is \$3.5 million. IA Ambassadors and IA professional staff made over 50 trips, travelling the country this year, sharing the message of the benefits of irrigated agriculture and a managed landscape. But, as noted, the similarities are remarkable. Like IA, PMI monitors changes to standards and codes around the country. We work with regulators and other government agencies to be sure our industry has a seat at the table and a voice in the process whenever water rights or irrigation restrictions are discussed. We represent the interests of our members and as Mr. Olson says "... the interests of anyone who values and has a vested interest in the efficient use of water... which is all of us!"

Here's to a productive and successful 2015. Thank you to all members for your continued support of PMI and our industry's critical initiatives!

# Meet the President! Getting to Know Fernando Fernandez

By Dawn Robinson, PMI Communications Manager

In 1991, **Fernando Fernandez**, took an internship at McDonnell Douglass, a then thriving aerospace company, hoping to establish a long-term career. Two years later, just prior to his graduation from California State University Long Beach, the industry took a sudden and sharp nose dive. Looking to build a future in a new industry, Fernando, answered an ad for a test engineer at a plumbing lab and was hired on the spot. A year later, he transitioned to TOTO USA where he was able to establish a long-term career in plumbing.

With his 20 year anniversary at TOTO USA fast approaching, Fernando takes it as a positive sign that many of the people he met at the start of his career are still working in the industry today. One of those people is PMI's CEO/Executive Director, **Barbara C. Higgins**. Fernando recalls the first time he met Barb, he was exhibiting toilet flushing capabilities at the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show when Barb walked up and introduced herself. Fernando recalls reaching out to shake her hand when they both realized his was wet from the toilet demonstrations; he was surprised and impressed that she shook it anyway.

Now the Director of Codes and Standards at TOTO USA, Fernando continues to strengthen his roots in plumbing and build lasting and true connections within the industry. A long-time participant in PMI, Fernando will serve as the association President throughout 2015. He brings with him all the knowledge and experience he has gained over the



*Fernando with his wife Farah (right) pose with their children (l/r) Aubrey, Kayla and Cathryn.*

years, his own unique style, and his openness. Fernando notes that he is a firm believer in leading by example, and remaining flexible to various group dynamics and situations to tailor his approach to each situation. When asked about his secret(s) to success, Fernando didn't hesitate to say that you have to remain open, don't pigeon hole yourself into a specific area—this lets you be creative in your thought process and helps you evolve and earn your stripes. He went on to note five core pillars that he has lived by:

1. Education: Having a solid education gives you the foundation you need to catapult you forward
2. Strong Work Ethic: Taking ownership and being accountable is vital
3. Self-Improvement: Never stop learning and evolving
4. Results: Sooner or later, we all have to show tangible results from our efforts
5. Balance: Life is not lived in a vacuum, balancing work and home life is key to success and happiness

Fernando credits his wife, **Farah**, with helping him develop the fifth pillar. Fernando notes that family is the root of our influence at any stage of life and helps develop who we are. As we get older, he says he feels family becomes a motivator driving us to grow and progress as a person. He notes that the people who impact you that way affect not just your mind but your heart as well. He and Farah were married in 2004 and have a son **Aubrey** (18) and two daughters, **Kayla** (10) and **Cathryn** (8).

Fernando has spent all his life living in and around the Los Angeles, CA area and enjoys planning the family getaway trips to nearby spots in Arizona and the California Bay area. On his bucket list is a trip to Cancun, Mexico and he also hopes to visit Istanbul, Turkey one day to experience the city's rich history.

Fernando recalls one of the best trips he's ever taken was a family vacation to Mexico City, two years ago. A lover of history, Fernando was awed by local sites such as the pre-Aztec era pyramids, the religious sites of Guadeloupe, and Chapultepec Castle, home of Mexican **Emperor Maximillian I**, as well as the homes of **Frida Kahlo** and **Leon Trotsky**.

The non-stop learning, and seeing the way various cultures developed struck a chord with Fernando and made a lasting impression. He relates this appreciation to his personal heroes, **Ronald Reagan** and **John F. Kennedy**, who each faced unique challenges to remove barriers and settle tensions in the world. "If you have a passion in life, pursue it. If you have a goal to attain, then reach it. If you have conflict, resolve it." In recognition of those great leaders, Fernando appreciates the rich, political history of Washington D.C.



Fernando says he is looking forward to serving as PMI President, to building on our strengths and getting PMI's message out in full swing to legislators and to finding a balance between technical and advocacy/outreach. He anxiously awaits an exciting and successful year of growth for PMI.



*Fernando and daughters Kayla (left) and Cathryn (right) in front of Mexico's pre-Aztec era pyramids*



## On the Road with PMI's Technical Director Matt Sigler

PMI's Technical Director **Matt Sigler** has been crossing the country visiting PMI members since he joined our organization in April, 2014. So far he has visited an impressive 16 member companies! These visits help strengthen the relationship between PMI and its members and helps us understand the needs of members, while providing members with insight into the benefits PMI provides for everyone within a member company. If he hasn't been to see you yet, hold tight... he's on his way!

Members Visited in 2014: Bradley Corporation; BrassCraft Manufacturing Co.; Delta Faucet Co.; Dornbracht Americas Inc.; Duravit USA, Inc.; Fisher Manufacturing Co.; Fluidmaster Inc.; HOLDRITE; InSinkErator; Kohler Co.; KWC America, Inc.; Lavelle Industries; Moen, Inc.; Pfister; Sloan Valve Co.; T&S Brass and Bronze Works, Inc. and TOTO USA.



*Matt Sigler, PMI Technical Director, visits BrassCraft Mfg Co. in Michigan with Product Engineer, Ron Green (center) and Director of Technology and Engineering, Mahesh Cheerla (right)*

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Allied alike, PMI contains a wealth of knowledge and information. We are the clearinghouse for information and will continue to tell the PMI story about our industry's accomplishments. This means our focus on Advocacy and Outreach will increase in 2015. The opportunity is here. There has never been a better time than now to roll this out. In closing, I enthusiastically look

forward to working with the Board and having the continued participation of you, our members, in our technical and marketing forums. You will see some new touches to enhance our value to you early on in this New Year and you can bet that our CEO/Executive Director Barb Higgins will continue that momentum forward with her tireless dedication to PMI.

## PMI's "Gung-Ho" Attitude Bodes Well for Communication Success

**By Ray Valek, Public Relations, Valek & Co.**

Since starting my working relationship with PMI in September, I have been impressed with the urgency and professionalism demonstrated by team members. This "gung-ho" attitude heralds continued success into the new year.

Working with **Barbara Higgins** and **Stephanie Salmon** on the "WaterSense® is Common Sense" communication was my introduction into PMI's advocacy for legislation and regulations that allow plumbing products to do their wonderful, water-saving work. The "Myths and Realities" booklet we developed further enables PMI to make this case. For 2015, we look forward to working with the EPA's WaterSense® staff and other advocacy

partners to communicate more about how to save water through the use of innovative plumbing products.

The presentations at PMI's fall conference were very interesting and informative, even for one relatively new to the plumbing manufacturing industry. PMI leadership and members were welcoming and helpful as we began work on PMI's Strategic Communication Plan, which we presented in early December 2014.

In November, I worked with Barbara, **Jerry Desmond** and **Matt Sigler** on communications designed to influence the California Energy Commission's rules on water flow rates. This work, which resulted in Barbara's *Sacramento*

*Bee* op-ed piece, "Let Water Flow in Bathroom Faucets," is a great example of the kind of local, on-the-ground communication we hope to do more of in 2015. The Commission acknowledged the article, both through person-to-person communications with the PMI team and through a letter to the editor published in the *Bee*.

Encouraging the engagement of PMI members, partners and audience members in our initiatives is a primary goal for 2015. Read Barbara's *Sacramento Bee* article today, and show your support by commenting, sharing and liking on social media. <http://goo.gl/KtDO8Q>

# PMI Welcomes Its Newest Manufacturing Member

PMI is proud to welcome our newest manufacturing member, **Similor AG**. A leading manufacturer of taps in Switzerland, Similor AG produces exclusive Arwa, Similor Kugler, Sanimatic, and Laufen brand taps for washbasins, bidets, bathtubs and showers that are sold all over the world. Similor AG representative, **Holger Ferholz**, Head of Product Management and R&D, Laufen, recently attended the 2014 PMI Fall Conference as a prospective member to see the benefits of PMI membership in action.

Look for more details about our newest member in an upcoming issue of Ripple Effect, and visit them online at [www.similor.ch/en/brands](http://www.similor.ch/en/brands).



*PMI CEO/Executive Director Barbara C. Higgins with Klaus Schneider, President of Laufen and President of the European Valve Association (CEIR) with Yvonne Orgill, Chief Executive of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA)*

## IETS 2016 Issues Call for Abstracts

The bi-annual International Emerging Technology Symposium (IETS) presents a unique opportunity to address an audience comprised of representatives from across the plumbing and mechanical industries in North America. Convened by nine key industry associations, including PMI, this two-day event scheduled for May 2016 provides participants with an opportunity to view presentations and engage in timely discussions on critical topics. We will explore how emerging technologies have provided solutions to challenges throughout industry segments including plumbing, mechanical, HVAC, utilities, water efficiency-focused organizations, manufacturing, and industry trade associations. Visit <http://goo.gl/Lizrgi> for more details.



## Congratulations to Vitra On EBAE Management Award

Vitra, an Eczacıbaşı Company (Turkey), was awarded the European Business Award for the Environment (EBAE) for management on December 1, 2014, during the 17th Forum on Eco-innovation. Vitra has been a member of PMI since 2005. Other winners were: Daimler AG (Germany) for process; EcoNation (Belgium) for product and services; Interface Nederland BV (Netherlands) for international business cooperation; and Red Eléctrica de España (Spain) for business and biodiversity.

Kitchens and Bathroom News UK reported **Dr. Erdal Karamercan**, President and CEO of the Eczacıbaşı

Group, as noting, "Sustainability is an integral component of Eczacıbaşı Building Products' corporate culture. This is the context in which we developed Blue Life as the driver of our design, production and management processes. Jointly developed and implemented by all our employees, from purchasing officers to R&D experts and production planning personnel to product managers, this management system ensures that we take integrated steps in all matters."



*Dr. Erdal Karamercan, President and CEO of the Eczacıbaşı Group (parent company of Vitra USA)*

# Many Thanks for Many Great Years and a Job Well Done



All of the PMI Staff and its members, but most especially the Technical Team, want to send heartfelt and sincere thanks to **Jim Galvin** for his many years of service to PMI. Jim has been serving as a Senior Technical Advisor for PMI for just shy of four years, and has done a truly fantastic job! His history with PMI goes back 28 years to 1986 during his tenure with Symmons Industries. Jim leaves us to enjoy a well-deserved retirement and we wish him all the best.

“It has truly been a pleasure working with Jim and we wish him all the best in the years ahead,” noted Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/Executive Director.

We'll miss you and best wishes!

*PMI Staff and Members*

**The 4th Quarter CEO Report for 2014 is online.**

Visit <http://goo.gl/QaX8JJ> to read the latest highlights from PMI.

## Same Faces, New Emails

### *Leaving Lasting Impressions with Safe Plumbing*

With the launch late last year of the new website, PMI has combined on a single platform our [www.pmihome.org](http://www.pmihome.org) and [www.safeplumbing.org](http://www.safeplumbing.org) websites. The move was made to strengthen the branding between the two sites and strengthen the link between PMI and our Vision: Safe, Responsible Plumbing. Always.

In addition, we have also updated our staff emails to match the new URL. The suffix [@pmihome.org](mailto:@pmihome.org) has been replaced by [@safeplumbing.org](mailto:@safeplumbing.org).

The new addresses make it clear to everyone what our organization is about and helps spread our message in new ways. We ask that you please update your contact lists to reflect this change; the old addresses will continue to function in the meantime but by using [@safeplumbing.org](mailto:@safeplumbing.org) you will help us spread the message of our organization of safe plumbing for all. Please remember to change your SPAM filter 'permissions' to allow PMI emails to get through

### **PMI Staff email addresses:**

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## You Control Your Member Profile

Updating your member profile on the PMI website [www.SafePlumbing.com](http://www.SafePlumbing.com) is in your hands! By logging on to our site and updating your information you provide us with tools we need to stay connected and ensure you receive the information you need.

### **To update your profile:**

1. Visit [www.safeplumbing.org/pmi/members/](http://www.safeplumbing.org/pmi/members/)
2. Login using your username and password.
3. Click on your name in the Welcome box or top right corner.
4. Make any necessary changes to your information, including Subscription Options.
5. Click “Update Profile” to save your changes.

Stay connected and visit our website today to be sure your information is up-to-date!

# Meet Frederick Desborough, PMI's New Technical Consultant



Please join us in welcoming our new Technical Consultant, **Frederick Desborough**, to the PMI team.

Frederick started his career in the

UK as an apprentice plumbing and heating engineer, later to become a Master Plumber and Hydraulic Systems Design Specialist. In 1980, Frederick moved to Switzerland and joined KWC where he worked his way up in the company, including being responsible for the Sales and Technical Marketing for most of the English speaking countries world-wide.

In the mid – late 1980's he was a partner as Technical Sales Director at Saniwa Ltd responsible for product design, engineering, production of faucets and accessories as well as Hospitality Export sales to world-renowned hotels.

Frederick moved to the United States in 1993, and went on to work for American Standard in New Jersey as a Marketing Manager for the Ideal Standard Division USA. In addition he also served as Commercial Product Manager and finally as Corporate Trainer Faucet Programs for American Standard World-Wide Fittings Group.

Frederick's career path took him north to Mississauga on the west side of Toronto, Canada where he was the National Sales and Marketing Manager at Tempress Ltd, a subsidiary of Friedrich Grohe and Grohe America where he was responsible for OEM sales of pressure balanced valves world-wide.

In December 2000, Frederick returned to the USA to join California Faucets Inc. in Huntington Beach, CA as the Chief Operating Officer. After many years of building and structuring the company's back end, he also served in

multiple capacities and finally as Vice President of Commercial Business.

In June 2013, Frederick Desborough founded Flex-Fluss as an Independent Manufacturers Representative and Plumbing Industry Consultant for North America. He plans to utilize his vast knowledge, experience and in-depth understanding of the plumbing industry including product design, manufacturing, sales, marketing, education and technical product training. Frederick has also been deeply involved

for over 25 years with plumbing codes and standards world-wide.

Frederick represents a few select European companies and products for the North American Market. He is also honored to join PMI as a Technical Consultant and work together many of his industry colleagues.

Based in California, Frederick has been working closely with the PMI since October 2014 on issues surrounding the California and west-coast regions.

## Letter of Thanks from PAMCANI



603 ROGERS STREET, SUITE 2, DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS 60515 PH. 312-563-9526 / 630-960-3970 FX. 630-960-5487

November 25, 2014

Barbara Higgens  
CEO/Executive Director  
Plumbing Manufacturers International  
1921 Rohlwing Road, Unit G  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Dear Barb,

Many thanks for allowing PAMCANI's continuing education sessions to be held in your classroom on November 20th.

From Shirley being there when we arrived, to the cleaning crew coming practically "on cue" as we were getting ready to depart, and even your follow up soon after just to see how it all went – everything worked out very well, and we are extremely grateful for your hospitality, generosity and cooperation.

The space fit our needs perfectly, and it turned out to be a convenient and practical location. PMI deserves credit for providing yet another appreciated service and a "good deed" for our industry! Please let us know if we can reciprocate—even if it's just to use our conference room for a meeting if the need arises to be out here in the far western suburbs.

Thanks again!  
S. J. Peters  
Executive Director

Barbara Bigelow  
Administrative Assistant and Event Planner



## PMI Staff, Consultants and Friends Enjoy Holiday Cheer

PMI extends a warm thank you to its team of consultants. Pictured here are PMI's accountants, IT representatives, public relations expert, graphics and web designer, press, legal counsel, app developer, statistical consultant and community leaders. Featured in the front row are (l/r) **Conor Cuneen**, recent PMI conference motivational speaker, and PMI staff members **Jodi Stuhberg**, **Matt Sigler**, **Barbara C. Higgins**, **Dawn Robinson** and **Shirley Havel**.



## Join the Discussion Today!

All employees of both Manufacturing and Allied Member companies of PMI are invited to join us on our weekly **Tech Talk** calls, and monthly **Advocacy/Outreach** and **Government Affairs** calls. These calls take place via conference call and often feature a web-link via JoinMe.com so call attendees can view the related materials.

Each conference call is designed to address issues faced by each committee and serve as a forum for PMI and its members to engage in real-time on the important issues affecting our industry. Go to [www.safeplumbing.org/pmi/members](http://www.safeplumbing.org/pmi/members) to sign-up.

Join us during the 2015 KBIS/IBS Industry Show in Las Vegas, NV

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## 2015 PMI LEADERSHIP

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President

**Paul Patton, Delta Faucet Company**  
Vice-President

**Peter Jahrling, Sloan Valve Company**  
Treasurer

**Tim Kilbane, Symmons Industries**  
Immediate Past President

### DIRECTORS AT LARGE

**C.J. Lagan, American Standard Brands**  
(1/13-12/15)

**Scott McDonald, Fluidmaster**  
(1/14-12/15)

**Rick Reles, Kohler Company**  
(1/15-12/16)

**Nate Kogler, Bradley Corporation**  
(1/15-12/16)

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