

The Incredible Variety of Resources Found In PMI

By Nate Kogler, PMI Board of Directors President, Bradley Corporation



Nate Kogler

As I complete my year as president of the PMI Board of Directors, I'm struck by the incredible variety of issues and challenges that came my way. Better yet, I'm even more impressed by the resources available within our membership to help us deal with these issues.

2019 was a year of the unexpected. We witnessed a volatile trade environment driven by tariffs, aggressive regulatory activity in many states, and signs of a growth slowdown coming next year. The tremendous resourcefulness of PMI members and staff enabled us to successfully address these challenges and to be in a confident position to deal with whatever comes our way in 2020.

What makes our success even more remarkable is that PMI is an organization of volunteers who share time, expertise and ideas. Our members are bonded together by a mutual concern for the plumbing manufacturing industry, the customers we serve, the people we employ, and the lives our safe plumbing and sanitation practices protect.

Our association is only as strong as our volunteers, and that's why it was especially gratifying for me to see 17 first-time participants at the PMI19 Conference, many of whom were drawn by our inaugural Aspiring Leaders' Program. I thank them for exploring PMI and hope their experience will lead to further involvement and contributions.

To attract more engagement and involvement by employees of our member companies, PMI made excellent strides this year in developing programs of interest beyond our traditional areas of technical and government affairs.

Workforce development is especially important to our members, and thus the development of the Aspiring Leaders' Program and the involvement of multigenerational workforce expert **Lindsey Pollak** and the HR/Workforce Development Panel at PMI19. PMI also created a career page on the

safeplumbing.org website with links to the jobs-related pages of our members and regularly features this page and other career-related information on our social media platforms and PMI@Work blog.

Consumer data privacy is another new issue for PMI. In response, PMI developed a new Privacy Regulations Guidebook and invited Wiley Rein's **Joan Stewart**, who contributed to the book's development, to walk us through it at PMI19.

The list of individuals I have to thank for PMI's accomplishments is too long to mention everyone, but I must acknowledge the PMI Board of Directors, our committee co-chairs and participants, our PMI19 sponsors, and PMI staff and consultants led by our CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole**.

Also, PMI wouldn't be PMI without its allies, many of whom attended PMI19 – leaders such as **Kevin Ernst**, OS&B; **Beth Livingston**, EPA WaterSense; **Billy Smith**, American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE); **Gary Stanley**, U.S. Department of Commerce; and **Ralph Suppa**, Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating (CIPH). And, of course, we appreciate the priceless advice and guidance provided by the PMI Strategic Advisory Council: **Graham Allen**, Sloan Valve Company; **Ken Roberts**, Delta Faucet Company; **Shawn Oldenhoff**, Kohler Co.; **William Strang**, TOTO USA; **Claude Theisen**, T&S Brass and Bronze Works, Inc.; and **Steve DeLarge**, LIXIL.

I try to live by the motto "Leave it better than you found it," and I believe we were able to do that in 2019 by focusing on what is best for all PMI members. I'm grateful for having benefited from the experiences of past PMI leaders, particularly **Pete Jahrling** of Sloan Valve Co., and look forward to our continued investment in education, innovation, and other targeted opportunities that bring value to our members.

With everyone pulling together, I'm sure PMI will continue to manufacture success for all of us under the leadership of our new president, **Joel Smith** of Kohler Co. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

We are Safe, Responsible Plumbing. Always.

By Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE, PMI CEO/ Executive Director



Kerry Stackpole

Always. No matter what, without fail. Which got me to thinking, who else has such a “failure is not an option” everlasting four-word slogan?

The Dollar Shave Club? “Shave Time. Shave Money.” Clever right? I would have gone for “smooth shaves, no nicks.” Verizon? “Can You Hear Me Now?” In today’s world of interactive voice commands for faucets, toilets and mirrors, what question might our industry ask? De Beers: “A Diamond Is Forever.” Perhaps that’s the closest... always and forever.

The reality is these slogans, while witty and clever, do not save people’s lives. They do not deliver the life-giving benefits of water, which humanity cannot live without, or the sanitary solutions to maintain a healthy life, free from the transmission of deadly bacterial disease.

You are the women and men who make a healthy and safe life possible for 329 million people here in the United States and millions more around the globe. That’s a powerful place to be.

Years ago, when **Steve Jobs** was recruiting a Pepsi Company executive to Apple Computer, he was famously quoted as asking the executive, “Do you want to change the world or just sell sugar water for the rest of your life?” I think I know the answer to that question and probably so do you. PMI, in that sense, is our industry’s pathway for changing the world.

So, how can PMI help you?

Convenience. No, we’re not 7-11 or Wawa. We’re more like the 911 of plumbing products — solid insight,

deep dives, and clarity about what comes next. At a time when the all-knowing Google indexes only 4% of the Internet, you need a reliable, accurate source of industry information. PMI is here to provide it. Quickly, accurately, and when you need it.

What’s one good idea worth to you? PMI hosts conferences like PMI19, committee gatherings, and other opportunities throughout the year so you can share and learn from your peers and colleagues. There’s no other place where so many smart, savvy thought leaders and so much manufacturing experience come together than at PMI.

PMI partners with other associations and organizations as well. Next May 12–13, in collaboration with our partners – the American Society of Plumbing Engineers, Alliance for Water Efficiency, and IAPMO – PMI will co-host the Emerging Water Technology Symposium in San Antonio, Texas. You can share insights, meet industry leaders, and connect with others who share your passion. Some say you can get a Ph.D. in water in three days. It’s a great gathering.

As an industry, we need leaders. Women and men willing to step up and take charge of moving the plumbing products industry forward. To help you succeed, PMI is delivering more education and learning opportunities for you and your companies. The “Manufacturing Success” PMI19 Conference, the brand-new Aspiring Leaders’ Program, the PMI online codes and standards courses, and our new executive leadership programs on the horizon for 2020 will help you and others within your company sharpen your skills, gather insights, and expand your leadership abilities.

It’s still all about you. It’s all about people. There are more than 800 people actively participating in PMI events every year. There are monthly briefings by

committees focused on technical issues, commerce, government affairs, water efficiency, and the allied community.

One of the other ways we will engage with you is through your company ambassador. Our goal is to have an ambassador at every member company – someone responsible for promoting intra-company awareness and knowledge about the value of PMI.

What else is to come? As you heard earlier this week, the plumbing products industry has a great story to tell and PMI will be working to strengthen our prominence in the marketplace of ideas. We will bring you more industry-focused resources such as the PMI Market Outlook, the Privacy Regulations Guidebook, PMI white papers, and PMI economic impact data to enhance your knowledge and strengthen your decision-making.

PMI’s commitment is to look beyond the horizon. To be a proactive voice for our industry and to deliver the member value you have come to expect from us. That’s a commitment shared by all PMI staff. I have the great honor and privilege to work with an extraordinary team of women and men who protect your interests and help move the industry’s agenda forward every day. I thank them – **Jodi Stuhrberg, Matt Sigler, Ann Geier** and our newest team member **Candace Spradley** – for their outstanding work. It truly is a pleasure being part of the team. And my thanks to each of you for being part of it.



Aspiring Leaders Learn Creative Strengths

By Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Finding one's creative and innovative self – and using this discovery to make important contributions to workplace teams – was the objective of PMI's inaugural Aspiring Leaders' Program, held on Nov. 4, the first day of the PMI19 Conference.

Eighteen individuals with leadership aspirations participated in the program, held at the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Fla. **Dr. Kim Macuare**, co-director of the museum's Innovation Labs, led a creative thinking workshop and gallery tour focused on leadership. She was followed by **Lindsey Pollak**, a multigenerational workforce expert and PMI19 keynote speaker, who led a career success workshop.

Each program participant completed a FourSight assessment (foursightonline.com), or thinking profile, to determine a personal innovation profile or preference. There are four profiles, each with its own characteristics: 1) clarifiers, who do their homework; 2) ideators, who think big; 3) developers, who get things right; and 4) implementers, who get the job done. Participants learn the superpowers and “watch outs” of each profile, and how each profile fits into the group dynamic. “Managing preferences gains results,” Kim said.

During the gallery tour, Kim used **Salvador Dali's** art to explain different kinds of artistic techniques or principles, such as impressionism, use of color, distortion, creating a visual image or brand, and how an absence can create a presence.

A particularly striking Dali painting, *Gala Contemplating the Mediterranean Sea* which at Twenty Meters Becomes the Portrait of Abraham Lincoln-Homage to Rothko (tinyurl.com/ryu22bd), provided an example of how Dali used multiple optical scales to produce two paintings in one and demonstrated the



The Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Fla., was the setting for our Aspiring Leaders' Program

low quantity of information needed to represent a recognizable human face.

Lindsey spoke to participants about creating their personal brands, telling them that they have more power than they think over their careers. She talked about characteristics associated with leadership, such as presence, attention, posture, a willingness to listen, going beyond what's required, and humility.

PMI CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole** said he was pleased at how the program attracted new participants to the PMI19 Conference – individuals whom he hopes to become active and engaged in PMI activities. Next year, PMI plans to offer the program again as another opportunity to provide experiential learning to members. “Many of those participating in this year's program have already expressed an interest in doing it again next year,” Stackpole said. With San Diego having many suitable resources and venues to explore leadership development, you can count on an Aspiring Leaders' Program at PMI20.



Sustainable Packaging Becomes a Corporate Priority

By Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Movements are driven by faces, stories and emotional connections. At the start of his presentation about sustainable packaging at the PMI19 Conference, **Adam Gendell** of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC) used the example of the iconic crying native American (tinyurl.com/rs7zdpX) to demonstrate today's prevailing view that "waste is bad and has the potential to harm something that we all innately love, our planet, our home."

In a similar fashion, he explained, former vice president **Al Gore** galvanized a large part of our population on the importance of dealing with climate change through the 2006 documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth." And today, a YouTube video featuring a turtle with a straw in its nose (tinyurl.com/ybp5lrr7) has contributed to the creation of the current anti-plastics movement.

Adam said the Ellen MacArthur Foundation has been a driving force behind the mission to transition to a circular economy, in which waste and pollution are designed out of products, keeping goods and materials in use and regenerating natural systems. The foundation has led the adoption of national Plastics Pacts, which are country-specific commitments to design recoverable plastic packaging, increase the recovery rate of plastic packaging, use more recycled content, and get rid of problematic and unnecessary plastic packaging. So far, there are three national Plastics Pacts (United Kingdom, France and Chile), and many more may be on the way, including a U.S. Plastics Pact involving a large number of companies, he stated.

Corporate initiatives are bringing the circular economy to life

In a parallel initiative, the SPC created The Goals Database, which catalogs publicly stated plastics-related commitments from nearly 100 of the largest brands and retailers in nine categories. Adam said there's a lot of activity



Adam Gendell

around increasing recyclability, recycled content and recovery – demonstrating a commitment from industry to bring the circular economy to life.

He added that the SPC is seeing a growing amount of sophistication in industry's execution of their work. For example, in collaboration with Walmart, the Association of Plastic Recyclers, and others, SPC developed practical design-for-recycling guidelines that are distributed to Walmart suppliers when they are asked to align with Walmart's goals on packaging, which aim to achieve zero waste beyond Walmart's own operations and include the company's entire supply chain (tinyurl.com/vqesbkk). SPC plans to eventually create an open-source recyclability playbook for all retailers.

SPC's How2Recycle program has achieved the participation of a half dozen large retailers (including Walmart and Target), Adam stated. These retailers have committed to include the How2Recycle label on 100% of their private label packaging. "The program has nearly 200 participating brand owners and retailers, and that number doesn't even include the hundreds of companies supplying private label brand packaging to the big retailers," he said. How2Recycle is a consistent on-package recyclability labelling system that accurately communicates recyclability.

Through this design-for-recyclability program, SPC also issues around 10,000 recommendations each month, usually related to design characteristics that are within the companies' ability to

control, such as coatings, labels and colors, Adam said. So far, SPC has learned that about 1,000 package designs have been changed based on How2Recycle recommendations. Because not all companies report back, "the real number is undoubtedly quite higher," he stated.

Packaging's circularity and carbon footprint must both be improved

For all this effort to improve the fit of plastic packaging in the circular economy, SPC is seeing undeniable evidence of a total abandonment of plastic packaging, Adam said. "But we have a responsibility to ask: are (packaging materials) more sustainable? And that's where things get complicated. The thing about plastic is: more times than not, it has a really low carbon footprint when compared to its alternatives," he explained.

He said Walmart, which has been a leader in encouraging improvements to the circularity of packaging, is also making waves in the realm of carbon footprint through its science-based target initiative called Project Gigaton. Adam explained that a corporate commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions doesn't make you special anymore, but what makes Walmart distinctive is its decision to include packaging as one of six areas of focus. "That's right, packaging, right there alongside things like agriculture and energy," Adam said. "Packaging. It's a sign of the times. Packaging is part of the conversation when the c-suite talks about sustainability. Now, Walmart also has pledged to reduce plastic packaging, so they are embracing the dissonance. This is what we want to see: simultaneous acknowledgement that we must improve the circularity of packaging and improve the carbon footprint of packaging. No unintended consequences allowed."

PMI members can view Adam's entire presentation at tinyurl.com/wcgdrpp.

Fun, Handy Tools Can Help Members Promote WaterSense

by Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

A new whimsical cartoon showing how easy it is to quickly swap out a showerhead, faucet or toilet flapper. Handy short videos on “bath hacks.” A fun Bingo-like game on water conservation.

These free tools – and many more available to WaterSense partners (tinyurl.com/ustlvyv) – make it easier for PMI members to market their WaterSense-labeled products to consumers, said **Beth Livingston**, brand manager for the EPA’s WaterSense program, during her presentation at the PMI19 Conference on Nov. 6 in St. Pete Beach, Fla. The tools give consumers handy tips on how to save water, make simple plumbing repairs, and design the bathroom of their dreams.

The WaterSense program has helped Americans save 3.4 trillion gallons of water since 2006. By the end of 2018, more than 30,000 products, including toilets, faucets, urinals and showerheads, had earned the WaterSense label. The program has more than 2,000 organizational partners – many of which are PMI members. American Standard, a LIXIL company, and Delta Faucet Company, both PMI members, won 2019 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Awards.

Calendar, games make marketing easy

Beth shared tips on how PMI members can easily incorporate WaterSense promotional tools into their marketing and outreach programs, including using the WaterSense marketing calendar soon

to be available on the public WaterSense website (epa.gov/watersense). The calendar provides monthly themes and key dates for popular programs, such as “Fix a Leak Week” (March 6–20, 2020) and “Flush Away Water Waste” (Nov. 19 World Toilet Day).

Many of the tools are available in English and Spanish, including the WaterSense Challenge checklist, designed to chase down leaks in 10 minutes. Also available is Loteria, a Bingo-like game popular in Mexican communities. The game features colorful cards with water conservation tips and Fix a Leak Week information that is easy to share on social media. All of the tools are available on the partner site (sign-up required) (tinyurl.com/yx4fmob9).

PMI members that are WaterSense partners may be interested in submitting comments about the WaterSense specification review currently taking place, Beth added. The Notice of Specification Review was released last December to let the public know the EPA is evaluating its WaterSense specifications for tank-type toilets, bathroom faucets and faucet accessories, showerheads, flushing urinals, and weather-based irrigation controllers. While the main comment period ended on June 30, 2019, WaterSense partners can still submit comments, studies and information to watersense-products@erg.com.

After gathering all feedback, the EPA plans to announce later this year which specifications, if any, should be revised. Stakeholders, including program partners, will have the opportunity to provide feedback on proposed changes, she said.

What’s in store for the WaterSense program in 2020?

Beth discussed plans for revamping the WaterSense Labeled Homes Program to address changes in the housing industry. It will allow flexibility for various



EPA WaterSense Brand Manager Beth Livingston presents at PMI19

home certification programs, encourage broader participation in the certification process, and better leverage the existing certification structure in green building and energy efficiency, she said.

The revised program will require homes to be 30% more water-efficient than typical new construction and will allow home certification organizations to propose methods to meet the new efficiency target. Homes will need to meet all elements of a new mandatory checklist to be WaterSense-labeled, including requiring WaterSense plumbing fixtures and testing for leaks.

Low flow rates continue to be an issue, especially in California, which recently reduced the flow rate for some plumbing products to below WaterSense requirements, Beth said. “Since there are no required minimums in standards, this trend will likely continue,” she added. “How low can these products really go and what will consumers expect from products at lower flowrates?”

Beth urged PMI members and manufacturers to share any data they may have that can shed light on the issue by emailing the WaterSense team at watersense@epa.gov. PMI members can review Beth’s entire presentation at tinyurl.com/wcgdrpp.



Beth Livingston with Shahn Moinian, ICC-ES, 2019 chair of PMT’s Allied Member Committee

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Finding Opportunity in Manufacturing and the Skilled Trades

by Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Successfully managing millennials and a new LIXIL study on plumbing careers were among the hot workforce development topics covered at the PMI19 Conference. Speakers and panelists discussed how PMI members can develop opportunities with their companies and the skilled trades for people of all generations.

New York Times best-selling author **Lindsey Pollak** kicked off the conference on Nov. 5 with a keynote address on “The Remix: How to Lead and Succeed in the Multigenerational Workplace,” featuring advice and tips from her book of the same title.

Lindsey discussed today’s workforce challenges, including managing Millennials – the largest generation of the five generations currently in the workforce. This combination of five generations has resulted in “unprecedented mixing,” causing situations that rarely occurred in the past, she said. For example, Lindsey cited that 38% of Americans today work for a boss who is younger than they are. “This adds a level of nuance to how we need to train people in management skills,” she said.

Every new generation has had to put up with negative stereotypes – from Gen Xers who were called “slackers” to Baby Boomers considered to be the original “Me” generation. However, “with the rise of the Internet and the explosion of social media, no generation has been as stereotyped and criticized as Millennials,” Lindsey said.

Because each generation has its own experiences, expectations and strong points, she suggested that companies “remix” the best of each generation’s practices – the classic and the new – to create a more successful and inclusive workplace for all.

Lindsey proposed rethinking the generational profiles of the people companies



PMI19 keynote speaker Lindsey Pollak

recruit for certain roles. She gave the example of a community pool in Galveston, Texas, that solved a lifeguard shortage – caused by fewer teens working in summer – by promoting lifeguarding jobs to qualified retirees who wanted to return to work.

Lindsey also discussed the return of apprenticeships as a great way to help new workers learn the ropes at a company. A couple ways to encourage learning included offering mixed-level office seating and multigenerational project teams, and sharing and collecting examples of “This is what excellence looks like...,” she said.

Another important area of focus is to offer employee benefits according to what employees of different generations value. For example, Lindsey reported that some companies offer student loan repayment as a benefit – a perk valued especially by Millennials.

Following Lindsey’s address, a panel of human resources experts discussed how to develop opportunities for diverse workers while adapting to the changing manufacturing environment, which requires new sets of technical and leadership skills.

LIXIL study explores attitudes about plumbing careers

The Human Resources and Workforce Development Panel, sponsored by PMI member LIXIL, was moderated by **Troy Benavidez**, vice president of public affairs for LIXIL. Participating on the panel were **Keith James**, founder of

Keith James PLLC; **Gretchen Morgan**, director of human resources for Kitchen & Bath Americas Kohler Company; **Dawn Rowley**, executive and leadership coach and founder of BenchStrength Coaching, LLC; and **Cindy Sheridan**, chief operating officer for PHCC Educational Foundation.

Troy shared results from the LIXIL Americas – Plumber Careers Study, which captured insights from consumers and plumbers, examining various elements to understand and help identify solutions to solve the plumbing industry’s labor shortage.

Some of the myths he discussed included the following: 78% of people believe plumbing is “grueling or messy work”; 49% of people believe plumbers don’t make a lot of money; and only 17% of people believe a career in plumbing offers advancement opportunities.

He said the facts, however, paint a very different picture: 87% of plumbers are satisfied with their salaries; 25% of plumbers know their work prevents diseases and keeps people healthy; and plumbers experienced 16% job growth from 2016 to 2026 – a much higher growth rate than average. In addition, 90% of plumbers are satisfied with their careers.

Troy outlined solutions to boosting interest in plumbing careers, including providing plumbers with a platform to share their stories of success and the benefits of their careers, such as no student debt, a good salary, job security, flexibility, and a sense of pride. Solutions also included amplifying these stories to young adults, women, military returning from duty or anyone planning to change careers.

PMI members can view Lindsey’s and Troy’s presentations here: tinyurl.com/wcgdrpp.

PMI Extends Active Government Affairs Agenda into 2020

By Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Federal and state legislative and regulatory issues impacting PMI members in 2019 will continue to require attention in 2020, according to three speakers addressing advocacy and government affairs topics at the PMI19 Conference.

PMI Government Affairs Consultants **Jerry Desmond** and **Stephanie Salmon** joined **Gary Stanley** of the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration (ITA) in presenting information about the federal budget, EPA WaterSense program, Lead and Copper Rule, United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), and various other activities relating to sustainability, water efficiency, consumer privacy, plastic packaging, lead removal, water reuse, and more.

Significant activity at both local and national levels

Jerry and Stephanie touted successful efforts to influence lawmakers' decisions with the assistance of PMI members. For example, in Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous county, PMI's California Task Group influenced the county to back away from an across-the-board 20% reduction in plumbing product flow rates. The county board of supervisors is expected to approve this measure to be effective on Jan. 1, 2020.

In Washington, D.C., PMI and coalition partners again successfully secured report language from both the House and Senate Interior-EPA Appropriations Committees that preserves and maintains funding for WaterSense in the fiscal year 2020 budget. The report language was in response to the Trump administration's proposed elimination of the program. House and Senate support is crucial as Congress negotiates the final federal budget.

Other issues looming large over the short term are tariffs, with the trade war with China remaining unresolved, and the USMCA, which PMI hopes will

gain Congressional approval soon. PMI and several member companies testified and submitted comments in opposition to the tariffs earlier this year. PMI also actively participates in Americans for Free Trade, a coalition of more than 160 business organizations that has highlighted the adverse impact of tariffs on the economy, including the housing, construction and plumbing manufacturing industries.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau via Tariffs Hurt the Heartland, the tariffs have cost U.S. corporations more than \$34 billion. In August 2019 alone, Americans paid \$6.5 billion in tariffs, a 48% increase from same month last year. JP Morgan projects the tariffs will cost American households up to \$1,000 per year.

PMI and allies push for USMCA approval

Active in the USMCA Coalition, PMI supports USMCA because it updates and improves NAFTA. Key provisions include the maintenance of tariff-free access to Mexico for American exporters and to Canada for the current tariff-



Advocacy/Government Affairs Committee Co-Chair Lowell Lampen, Kohler Co., with PMI Government Affairs Consultants Jerry Desmond and Stephanie Salmon, and 2020 PMI Board Member Michael Martinez, Delta Faucet Company

free access for 99% of U.S. products. USMCA includes intellectual property protections and incentives to grow digital trade, extends copyright protection from 50 to 70 years, improves transparency in import and export licensing, and includes various other labor, environmental and agricultural provisions.

PMI called the EPA's long-awaited proposed revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule "an important step forward." The revisions were announced by EPA Administrator **Andrew Wheeler** during an October event in Green Bay, Wis. The proposed rule represents the first major overhaul of federal protections for lead in drinking water in two decades. The rule would require community water systems to take new actions regarding lead service line replacement, corrosion control, sampling, and testing for lead in schools and day care centers.

ITA works to make American products competitive globally

Gary provided an overview of the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration, with a focus on how the ITA's teams and experts help to strengthen U.S. industry competitiveness abroad. He provided data on the total annual U.S. exports of plumbing products, including an explanation of



Gary Stanley of the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration

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PMI19 Presentations Posted for PMI Members

PMI members can view presentations from the PMI19 Conference, as well as an attendee list, and speaker bios at tinyurl.com/wcgdrpp.

Thanks to all those who attended the conference and our sponsors!



Happy Holidays!

Thank you for your continued support of PMI and industry initiatives. We look forward to serving you in 2020!

The PMI office will be closed from December 24, 2019, through January 1, 2020.

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the plumbing sub-sector concordance list, which is developed with the input of PMI member companies.

He said 70% of U.S. plumbing products exports cross either our north or south border. "This is not a coincidence," he said. "It is a combination of a lot of factors including the low tariffs and work done by people such as **Ralph Suppa** (president and general manager, Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating) to harmonize our codes and standards so that plumbing products are interchangeable across the 49th parallel and south of the Rio Grande."

He pointed out that the Middle East is the fastest growing area in the world for U.S. building products, including plumbing products. "Most of the reason for this is because this particular area of the world has a preference for high quality products, and no one manufactures higher quality products that perform at the highest thresholds of global standards and codes than we do right here in the United States," Gary stated.

He said the trade deficit with China continues to be a challenge. "We are importing more than we are exporting," he explained. "Trade deficits unduly restrict the commerce of the United States, and put the commerce of the United States at a disadvantage compared to that of foreign countries." He encouraged PMI members to provide input on ways the U.S. can close this trade gap.

PMI members can access presentations at tinyurl.com/wcgdrpp.