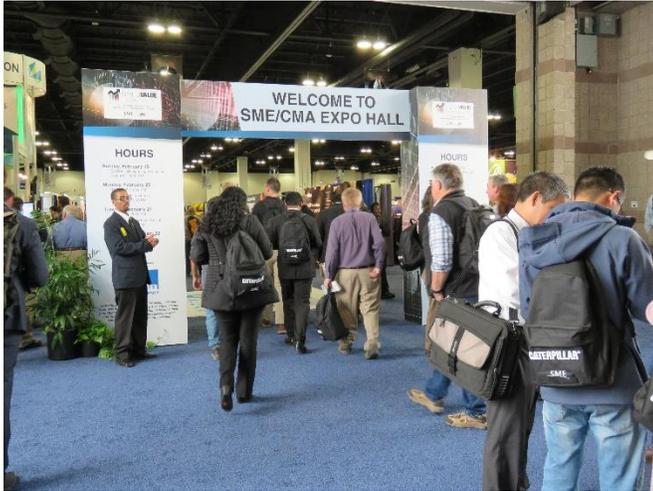


SME Annual Conference and Expo Draws Over 5,500 Attendance



SME Exhibit Entrance



Belt Conveyor Guarding



Kim Cranmer and John Stankus, Jennmar



AMR PEMCO

The 2017 SME Annual Conference and 119th CMA National Western Mining Conference was held February 19-22 in Denver, CO. with an attendance which exceeded 5,500.

The meeting began with a keynote address from Doug Silver. Silver is portfolio manager for Orion Mine Finance, a private-equity fund focused on providing funding to advanced-stage base and precious metal projects. His presentation on the Monday, "When are commodity prices going to rebound?" was the second time he has presented the keynote to address to SME, the first was in 2008. In his 2017 address, Silver looked back on the previous 10 years and the massive contraction of the global economy that resulted from the great recession that began in 2008.

Commodity prices suffered as manufacturing stalled and China's economic growth slowed. The minerals industry still suffers from poor prices, a lack of investor interest and a general economic malaise. Silver said there are many causes for this downturn but the future of the industry depends on understanding and predicting the catalysts of change that will improve commodity prices.

Speaking of the future, Silver said the trends show that most commodity prices have hit historic low points and that the trends indicate metals are beginning to bounce back. He said the next mining cycle will be driven a supply shortfall and that is now a good time to begin building mines, While that was good news for more than 5,500 attendees of the SME Conference, Silver also noted that there remains significant challenges ahead for the global mining sector including an aging workforce and an insufficient number of replacements in the pipeline.

The objectives of the Coal and Energy Division of SME are:

1. Provide a means for cooperation and communication among professionals interested in coal and energy.
2. Promote the use of coal as a major source of energy.
3. Advance technologies in coal exploration, mining and utilization through meetings, programs, publications, and education.
4. Create student interest in the coal and energy industries as a career opportunity.

At the Coal and Energy Division Luncheon awards presented were:

Distinguished Service Award: Thomas A. Gray

Past Chair Award: Robert P. Kudlawiec

Howard N. Eavenson Award: John C. Stankis

Erskin Ramsey Award: Vladislav Kecojevic

Stefanko Best Paper: Bill Kendall, Jim Noll, John Organiscak, Dave Yantek

J.W. Woomer Young Engineer Award: Nikil Gupta

The 2017 SME Annual Conference ran for four days with 120 technical sessions and more than 750 companies exhibiting. The 2018 SME Annual Conference & Expo will be held February 25-28 Minneapolis, MN.



Phoenix Conveyor Belt Solutions



Judy Colgan, Bob Burnam, TBA, RMCMC



Nexans AmerCable



Joy Global



Heintzmann



GMS Team with Susan Bealko and Lester Tupper



Andy Schissler



Joe Street, West River Conveyors



Matrix Design Group



LIEBHERR Sarita Scott



Howden, Mark Sanders and Team



Caterpillar