

**Ron Palmerick  
SMACNA President  
Partners in Progress – Opening Session  
April 4, 2008**

**Good morning. Welcome to the 2008 Partners in Progress Conference. Congratulations are in order. Thanks to YOU both this conference has already broken records and we've barely gotten started. Our attendance has topped 570 with an almost 50/50 split between labor and management. These numbers prove to me that we acknowledge the fact that our industry has problems, and that we have come to this conference to work together to solve them.**

**If you are on the labor side, I hope you are here with your management partner. If you are management, I hope your labor partner is here. Let me encourage you to attend the sessions together, sit together and compare notes. Eat lunch together. Eat dinner together. Socialize together. You get the picture.**

**More importantly, keep the partnership alive when you return home. If your partner's not here, take notes and call them up when you get home and suggest a meeting to tell them what you've learned.**

**While you're here look for new programs and practices to take home. Make a list of things you want to change. It should be mandatory that everyone attend the regional breakouts tomorrow. There you can write a market plan for your area.**

**Throughout this meeting, I encourage you to speak up. Ask tough questions and seek solutions from everyone – young and old, labor and management, speakers and staff.**

**Take advantage of all of the resources here. Get some one-on-one time with Mark Breslin or Robert Wendover. Consider getting the speakers at this meeting to help you when you return home.**

**I challenge you not to take the easy way out. Roll up your sleeves and attend every session with your partner.**

**I challenge you to think big and act boldly. I truly believe that our association and our union can be greater. With all of the brainpower and talent in this room, TOGETHER we hold unachieved promise. It is up to us as partners to harness it for our greater good.**

**Change, however, is hard. We must dig down deep to become greater. Many of us may have come to this meeting searching for specific paths that will lead us to success. We may need to say goodbye to some old ways of doing things. We may need to adopt new practices. I challenge us all to open our minds, use common**

**sense. . .and most of all we must streamline and simplify our businesses and unions.**

**Perhaps some of you came to this meeting to complain and get some things off your chest. This meeting's the place to face our mistakes in order not to make them again. I encourage you to focus on the positive and put the negative behind you.**

**One more item on my agenda here today. I would like to introduce SMACNA's new executive vice president Vince Sandusky. I want our labor partners to know that when we were looking at candidates to fill this important leadership position finding someone with the experience and proven track record in union construction was important to us. Even more important was that person's experience and commitment to furthering our labor/management partnership. Vince Sandusky is someone we know who possesses the leadership skills, talent and commitment to help us grow our partnership with you. . .and take it to the next level.**

**Vince may look familiar to some of you. That's because he worked at SMACNA national from 1980 to 1987 in labor, legislative, member services and operations. In addition, he brings to us a wealth of experience, working with several union construction labor/management partnerships as well as telephone industry entrepreneurs.**

**There may be a new leader at SMACNA national but we want you to know our commitment to our partnership is as strong as it's ever been.**

**Vince, please stand up. Thank you. Nice to have you here. Welcome.**

**In closing, I thank you in advance for your participation in our partnership program. Being here shows you care and are interested in shaping your future.**

**Like our conference theme says: We're here to Face Challenges and Create Solutions. . .Together as partners.**

**Have a great meeting.**