



July 2026

RMMI Post Conference Newsletter

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A Message from Our President

Jessica Wilzcek, Core Natural Resources



The 2026 Rocky Mountain Mining Institute (RMMI) Annual Conference, held this June, was an outstanding success, bringing together industry leaders, technical experts, regulators, advocates, educators, and mining professionals. The conference once again demonstrated why RMMI remains one of the most respected and influential gatherings in the mining sector.

As always the event provided a valuable forum for meaningful conversations about the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of mining.

A highlight of the conference was the continued commitment to supporting the next generation of mining professionals through the awarding of scholarships to outstanding college students pursuing mining-related degrees. These scholarships recognize academic achievement, leadership potential, and a passion for advancing the mining industry. This year we recognized eight recipients with \$32,000 in scholarships and 8 renewals. To date RMMI has awarded over \$1,080,000. We congratulate each recipient and look forward to seeing the meaningful contributions they will make throughout their careers.

The Mine Rescue Contest was one of the most anticipated and inspiring events of the 2026 Rocky Mountain Mining Institute Annual Conference. RMMI hosted eight teams who showcased the exceptional skill, teamwork, and dedication of mine rescue teams who stand ready to respond in emergency situations and protect the lives of miners. Participants demonstrated their expertise through realistic emergency response scenarios, first-aid challenges, firefighting exercises, and technical problem-solving events that tested their preparedness under pressure. The contest highlighted the mining industry's unwavering commitment to safety and served as a powerful reminder of the professionalism and courage displayed by mine rescue personnel. Congratulations to all participating teams for their outstanding performances and for exemplifying the highest standards of safety, service, and operational excellence.

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As we reflect on the tremendous success of the 2026 Rocky Mountain Mining Institute Annual Conference, we are already looking ahead with excitement to next year's event. The strength of RMMI comes from its members—the dedicated professionals, companies, educators, students, and industry partners who contribute their expertise and passion to advancing the mining industry. We encourage current members to share the value of their RMMI experience with colleagues and peers and invite new professionals to become part of our growing community. By increasing membership, we can expand our educational programs, strengthen industry advocacy, support more student scholarships, and create even greater opportunities for collaboration and professional development. Together, we can continue building a vibrant and sustainable future for mining while making next year's conference our best yet.

<https://rockymtnmining.org/member-new/>

Jessica Wilzcek



A Note from Judy Colgan, Executive Director

I wish to thank you all for your continued support of RMMI. We couldn't do it without you. For those of you who registered as non-members for the conference, we encourage you to join us as a member. RMMI does not have corporate memberships, they are all individual, so each and every membership counts toward helping us achieve our goals. We appreciate the companies who continue to sponsor and donate items for the silent and live auctions.

Our golf tournament in Gillette is Friday, July 24, and we celebrate our 9th year of this successful tournament. We have been fortunate to sell out this tournament for the past several years, and this helps to provide opportunities for scholars, and helps us promote advocacy for the industry. We will be planning a fall meeting for early September, details to come soon. Thank you for supporting the industry that supports you!

Technical Program

RMMI was pleased to provide a great group of speakers, with the most up to date information on the industry. We sincerely thank them for their time and efforts, and willingness to bring their expertise to the group. You should have received links to the presentations in a separate email.



Mike Nasi

Jackson Walker, LLP

“Rebooting Policy as the Grid Meets the Machine: Regulatory Reforms in the New Digital Age”



Matthew Babcock

Navajo Transitional Energy Company

“Renewing Coal: Meeting Rising US Demand Trends”



Justin Ganschow

Caterpillar Safety Services

“Better Together: Creating Connectivity in a Divided World”



Jacquie Fidler

Core Natural Resources

““Strengthen the Core: Our View on Sustainability in the Age of Energy Dominance””



Ryan Sistad

Better In Our Back Yard

“Better In Our Back Yard”



Rebecca McGrew

NAACO Natural Resources

“Unlocking the Future of Coal: The Next Era of Energy”



Christian Palich

Eagle Summit Resources, LLC

“Coal Policy & Midterm Election Outlook”



Matt Vincent

Montana Mining Association

“Industry Updates from the Land of Oro y Plata: A Report from the Montana Mining Association”



Randy Eminger

Energy Policy Network

“State and Regional Actions & Impacts on Coal Power Plants”

Welcome Reception

The Welcome Reception is the official kick-off of the annual conference, and we had a wonderful setting in the Pavillion at the Omni Hotel. It's an opportunity to connect with old friends and new colleagues that is enjoyed by all attendees. Thank you to **Komatsu** and **Trapper Mining** for sponsoring the event.



Scholarship Luncheon

One of the highlights of our annual conference is the Scholarship Luncheon. A big thank you to **Morgan Malkowski** for his efforts in reviewing the applications and interviewing all our scholarship applicants. We were happy to have 5 of our scholars join us in Broomfield this year. The patron donations and auction proceeds go toward providing their scholarships and the funds to bring them to the annual meeting. We sincerely appreciate all who contribute to this most important cause, and the encouragement offered to our scholars during the meeting. Thank you to **Peabody Energy** for sponsoring the luncheon.



Safety Awards

The Rocky Mountain Mining Institute presented safety awards to both coal and metal/non-metal companies this year.

Jessica Wilzcek, RMMI board member, collected the data which compared companies for the prestigious award using incident rate data including Non-Fatal Days Lost (NFDL) and No Days Lost (NDL) rates as reported to the Mine Safety and Health Administration, a division of the U.S Department of Labor whose mission is to foster safe and healthy workplaces in U.S mines. We thank Jessica for her efforts in presenting the safety awards.

We congratulate all the awards winners for their outstanding safety performances!



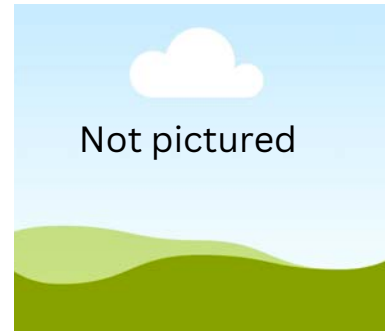
Large Surface Mine
Eagle Butte Mine
Eagle Summit Resources



Small Surface Mine
Buckskin Mine, Kiewit
Mining Group



Large Underground Mine
Wolverine Fuels
Skyline Mine



Small Underground Mine
King II Mine,
GCC Energy



Large Underground Mine
Sisecam Wyoming, LLC
Big Island Mine



Small Underground Mine
Resolution Copper



Mine Rescue Evaluation

The Rocky Mountain Mining Institute was proud to have eight teams participate in the 34th Annual Mine Rescue Safety Training & Evaluation during the 122nd Conference and Annual Meeting. This year the training included two days of training at West Metro Fire Department Training Center. This facility has been beneficial to the training, as it provides many scenarios that provide a realistic rescue situation. On Monday, there was a competition and training classes for the teams to participate and families to observe.

We sincerely thank **Todd Olmstead** for coordinating the event.



Coteau Freedom Mine



NTEC- Navajo Mine



NTEC- North



Solvay



Talen Energy



Thunder Basin Coal Co



Westmoreland- Canada



Westmoreland- San Juan &
Rosebud



We also sincerely thank the evaluators for their efforts in sharing their safety knowledge. The evaluators included: **Matt Breininger, Bonner Butters, Josh Dokken, Chris Kankelfritz, Doug McElmury, Mike McReynolds, Gerald Polacca, Mark Rickbiel, Stormy Tucker, Tracy Welder, and Andrew Williams.**

Competition Winners were:

1st Place - **Thunder Basin Coal**; 2nd Place - **Westmoreland Canada**; 3rd place - **Westmoreland US**
 Best Captain- **Megan Bloxom**, Best Rescuer -**Derek Choma**, Best New Rescuer-**Ethan Spang**
 David Evans Award for Safety & Excellence - **Todd Olmstead**



Golf

68 golfers enjoyed a perfect Sunday morning at the Omni Golf Club. A big thanks to **Big Horn Tires** for the tournament sponsorship **North Star Strategies, LLC** for the golf balls and **McLanahan** for the drink cart sponsorship.

The winners were:

1st Place

Rio Franzman, Todd Parks, Cody Harrod,
Kenny Kuhn

2nd Place

Tom Gorton, Danny Helwig, Dalton
Castagno, Matt Estes

3rd Place

Seth Puls, Gary Scott, Trent Johnson,
Solomon Figueroa

Closest to the Pin – Rio Franzman
Longest Drive – Mike Nasi

Thank you to those who donated prizes:

Arnold Machinery
Big Horn Tire
DSS/Wyoming Machinery
KC Harvey
McLanahan
NTEC
Rango Mining



Thank you to the hole sponsors:

Blg Horn Tire
BKT Tires
Liebherr
McLanahan
NTEC - Antelope Mine
NTEC - Cordero Rojo
NTEC - Navajo Mine
NTEC - Spring Creek
Stout Excavating
Utah Mining Association
Weir/ESCO
Wyoming Machinery/DSS
Yokahama

Monday Night BBQ

The Monday night event was held at the Pavillion at the Omni Hotel. We always enjoy having our families join us for this evening during our conference, and to celebrate being together. Special thanks to **Liebherr** and **WEIR/ESCO** for sponsoring the event.

The **Jeff Goodwin & The Front Range Cowboys** provided entertainment, and we had face painting and balloon animals for the kiddos.



Patron Auction

We sincerely appreciate the people who participate in both the silent and live auctions. It is a critical part of providing our scholarship and education programs. A big thank you to **NTEC** for sponsoring the auctions. This year, we had a professional auctioneer, **Jeff Martin**, with Jeff Martin Auctioneers. Jeff included the students, which was very entertaining. The live auction donations were provided by **Arnold Machinery, Flexco, Komatsu, Liebherr, Wagner Equipment, Wyoming Machinery/Dragline Service Specialties**. Companies purchasing these services included **NTEC, North American Coal-Coteau, Trapper Mining, and Westmoreland Mining**. These donations and purchases are extremely generous and vital to our success. We raised just over \$86,750 this year on the live auction, and \$4,560 in the silent auction.



Silent Auction Donors

Barr Engineering
Laura Beverage
Dyno Nobel
Empire Machinery
Epiroc
McLanahan
Ken Miller
Navajo Transitional Energy
Company
Omni Resort & Hotel
Seth Puls
Rimpull Corp
Trapper Mining
Wagner Equipment
Wyoming Machinery/DSS

A huge thanks to CMC for donating safety items for our third annual Mine Rescue silent auction.

Silent Auction Winners

Shane Adams
Brian Balo
Ivan Benally
Paula Brown
Dino Brunson
Dalton Castagno
Josh Chandler
Matt Cook
Marcos Drummond
Wendell Koontz
Morgan Malkowski
Katie Ocana
Tonia Perkins
Seth Puls
Robbie Nieman
Jordan Niggemyer
Chris Nyikos
Matt Vincent
Casey Renner
Braiden Serna
Scott Sturm
Duncan Swart
Bryan Walther
Michelle Walther

Passing the Gavel & Save the Date

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of **Jessica Wilzcek**, who served as our Board of Directors President this year. Jessica is also the head of the Safety Committee and gathers the data for the RMMI Safety Awards.

Morgan Malkowski will be the President for 2026-2027, and we look forward to his leadership. Morgan also heads the Scholarship Committee and processes all of the scholarship applications.



RMMI 2027 Annual Conference

OMNI INTERLOCKEN

BROOMFIELD, CO | JUNE 27-29, 2026

Thank you to Richard Orf, Chelsea Thomas, Chelsey Voglewede
and Charitie Whitman
for their administrative efforts during this year's conference.

Thank You to our Event Sponsors

