



## Introducing NECA Officers

The profiles that follow introduce the officers being elected at the Board of Governors meeting in San Diego, CA on September 28, 2024. These **unopposed** candidates will be **elected** that day and include the following:

Terms of office will begin on January 1, 2025, and are two-year terms.

- **Steven M. Petri, Sr.** will continue as **District 2 Vice President**
- **Sara Dinkel Smith** will be the new **District 4 Vice President** replacing David M. Washebek
- **Mark Walter** will continue as **District 6 Vice President**
- **Nathan W. Wickizer** will be the new **District 8 Vice President** replacing Craig Clark
- **Steve Lindley** will continue as **District 10 Vice President**
- **Charles W. Fairchild II** will continue as **Vice President of Integrated Systems Contractors**

## INTRODUCING STEVEN M. PETRI SR., VICE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 2 NOMINEE



*Steven M. Petri Sr.  
President  
Deca Inc.  
Baltimore, MD  
Maryland Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Petri began his electrical apprenticeship in Baltimore in 1980 upon graduation from high school, becoming a journeyman wireman in 1984. Throughout his career, Petri moved up the ladder becoming a foreman on a service truck and later an estimator and project manager, earning his Master Electrician License in MD, DC and West Virginia. In 2019, Petri was appointed to the Maryland State Board of Master Electricians.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

Founded in 1967 by Petri's father, Wendell and a friend, Deca has grown from installing industrial power and controls along with commercial retail power to performing specialty work for mechanical systems power and building automation controls at federal, state, and private facilities. Deca's headquarters are in Baltimore, MD and they perform installations all around the continental US and beyond, with projects in Puerto Rico, Romania, Guam and Okinawa. The annual revenue for Deca, Inc. has grown to approximately \$16 million.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

Deca joined NECA and the Maryland Chapter in 1978. Petri joined the chapter's executive board in 2010 and served as Chapter President from 2014 to 2018. He served as Chapter Governor from 2018 to 2021 and also served on the Chapter's Negotiating Committee. Petri served on NECA National's Safety Task Force in 2017 and 2018 and still serves on the Maryland Chapter Board.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Petri notes that developing and retaining talent is now more difficult than ever. We must all work together using the resources and knowledge of National NECA, Local NECA Chapters, NECA Contractors and the IBEW to build and strengthen our workforces. With the Electrification of America, these are times that our industry has never seen. Seizing these opportunities is crucial for the present-day and for the future of our businesses.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Petri married his wife, Stephanie, in 1983, having met her when he was 15 years old at a skating rink where his band was playing. They have two children; a daughter and son, as well as a son-in-law, daughter-in-law and four beautiful granddaughters. Petri enjoys spending personal time with family and friends, boating, crabbing, fishing, and playing his piano.

## INTRODUCING SARA DINKEL SMITH, VICE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 4 NOMINEE



*Sara Dinkel Smith  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sycamore Engineering  
Terre Haute, IN  
Central Indiana Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Smith earned her degree in Mechanical Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis. She started as a design engineer with HVAC and plumbing systems. As her skills developed, she added electrical design along with project engineer and project management titles. Smith has been with Sycamore Engineering for 24 years and has developed a strong grasp of each management role.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

Sycamore Engineering was founded in 1960 by the Dinkel family who has owned and operated the company since inception. The company has grown to include complete electrical, mechanical, and service-related activities. Their mechanical and sheet metal fabrication shops provide in-house service for mechanical construction projects as well as stand-alone projects. Sycamore offers Electrical, Mechanical, Sheet Metal, Building Solutions, Engineering, and a full-service fleet. Servicing commercial, industrial, and healthcare clients in West Central Indiana and East Central Illinois with annual sales volume of \$40 million.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

Sycamore Engineering joined the Central Indiana Chapter in 1966. Sara started as the Primary Contact in 2001 and has held various positions with the chapter since including Division Chair, Board Member, Health and Welfare Trustee and Negotiating Chairman. She served as Chapter President for three years and is currently the Chapter Governor. She has been on the Management Development Committee since 2023 and also contributes to Women in NECA. Additionally, she serves on the Board of Directors for Union Health System and the Terre Haute Chamber.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Smith believes that being involved is not an option, but a duty to improving the outcomes of the community. Do not be afraid to be curious and ask the questions, you will learn something new every day.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Sara's proudest achievement is her family. She and her husband, Jeff, have been married for 24 years and have three children. Their son Hudson is studying at Indiana State University; their son Oliver is a senior in high school and their daughter Vivienne is a freshman in high school. For fun Smith enjoys golfing, playing pickleball and tennis, traveling, and spending lazy weekends at the lake with her family.

## INTRODUCING MARK WALTER, VICE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 6 NOMINEE



*Mark Walter  
Chief Executive Officer  
Christenson Electric, Inc.  
Portland, OR  
Oregon-Columbia Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Mark grew up in a small farming community in North Central Washington and received a degree in Electronic Engineering. In 1987, Mark began his career at Christenson Electric and worked in the Utility and Industrial Group for 5 years. He then took advantage of a management opportunity with Power City, a Spokane based contractor, where he worked as their HV Division Manager and then was promoted to Operations Manager. Mark returned to Christenson Electric as President in 2003. After making corrections to stabilize and balance the organization, Mark purchased Christenson Electric in 2008.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

Christenson Electric was founded in 1945 on the premise of providing exceptional customer service and “Building Long-Term Relationships through Trust and Performance.” Christenson Electric employs over 400 people both locally and nationally. Christenson performs electrical construction, renewable energy, A/V and security, utility substation and outside line work. Although most of Christenson’s work occurs in Northern Oregon and Southwestern Washington areas, renewables and energy work are performed across the entire United States.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

Mark has been active with NECA since the mid-1990s. He has held board positions and served as Governor for the NECA Northwest Line Constructors Chapter as well as with the Oregon-Columbia Chapter. Mark has been a member of the Political Leadership Council since 2020. He has been active on the Council of Industrial Relations since 2018 and is currently serving as co-chair of the council. In 2019, Mark received the Comstock Award for his contributions to labor relations and was inducted into the Academy of Electrical Contractors.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Technology has been the largest-scale change Mark has seen since joining electrical construction. The improvement in technology has changed the way the industry communicates and allows for complete connectivity among the workforce, projects, and customers.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Mark and his girlfriend, Nerissa, have five adult children, four grandchildren and two dogs. In the fall and winter, they enjoy chasing birds, hunting and camping. In the summertime, you will find the couple boating at Mayfield Lake with family and friends. A year-round favorite activity for Mark and Nerissa is hosting Sunday family dinner and spending time with their family and friends.

## INTRODUCING NATHAN W. WICKIZER, VICE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 8 NOMINEE



*Nathan W. Wickizer  
President  
Cache Valley Electric  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Intermountain Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Wickizer attended college on an athletic scholarship before entering the industry in 1997. In his three decades at CVE, he's held a number of different positions—everything from HR to safety to operations. He was appointed as Chief Operating Officer in 2001 as CVE expanded both its technological and geographic reach and, in 2019, became the company president.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

Cache Valley Electric was founded in 1915 in Logan, Utah as an early electrical contractor and purveyor of auto parts and electrical appliances. This focus was soon honed, however, into the burgeoning electrical construction industry. They are proud to hold the oldest electrical contracting license in the state of Utah. Cache Valley Electric works all across the US with permanent offices in Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, Texas and Arkansas with an annual sales volume of around \$1 billion.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

Cache Valley Electric joined NECA and the Intermountain Chapter in 1959. Wickizer was instrumental in building a low voltage training program and bringing systems integrations to the forefront in District 8. He has served as both the Chapter President and Governor since 2023 and has been a member of the Technology Systems Integration Task Force since 2019.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Wickizer believes people should stay open to innovation. By exploring new ideas, methods and technologies, it will give your company stability in an industry known for its cyclical nature. He says not to forget the simple things, like delivering excellent customer service and providing consistent, quality work. Many underestimate the compounding power of these foundational principles.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Wickizer admits to being a tech geek and loves all things audio-visual. He and his wife, Heather, have four children plus a daughter-in-law and a son-in-law. Several of them are proud USU Aggies and they enjoy attending all sorts of sporting events together. They also love traveling to new and off the beaten path destinations.

## INTRODUCING STEVE LINDLEY, VICE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 10 NOMINEE



*Steve Lindley*  
*President*  
*Hooper Corporation*  
*Deforest, WI*  
*Missouri Valley Line Builders Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Lindley graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in Accounting and received his CPA certification in 1991. Lindley joined the electrical construction industry in 1993 and became Vice President of Operations in 2009, where he managed the electric power division's core functions: operations, fleet management, business development, as well as financial and administrative functions. Lindley became President of Hooper Corporation in 2019.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

Founded in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1913, Hooper Corporation began as a mechanical contracting company. Hooper expanded to electrical contracting services as REAs formed in the 1940s. Specializing in outside line work, Hooper performs overhead and underground distribution and overhead transmission to 500kV. Hooper is a full-service substation construction and maintenance contractor as well. These services are provided from Hooper's corporate headquarters in Wisconsin, as well as offices in Florida, Ohio, Michigan, and Colorado.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

Hooper Corporation has been a NECA member since 1958. Lindley got his first industry experience attending a District 10 conference which motivated him to learn more about NECA and get involved. Lindley was Governor of the Missouri Valley Line Builders Chapter from 2021 to 2023 and had served on the Board since 2012. Lindley has also served on the Missouri Valley JATC Board of Trustees since 2012.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Lindley believes high-tech industry disruptors can change the industry overnight. An example of change is the significant consolidation of customers as well as contractors; closely held private companies now consist of larger firms with multiple companies. This growth reflects projects increasing in scale. Outside line electrical contracting has evolved from regional-based to national-based, with contractors working in much larger portions of the country. For these reasons, NECA is even more important on a national level and having one district for all outside line work is a tremendous benefit for contractors and the industry.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Lindley's proudest accomplishment is being able to work and succeed for his family. He and his wife, Mary, have two children—a daughter who works for Kohler as an Accountant in their Corporate Accounting group and a son who is a Senior in college. Lindley spends his free time with his family at the lake in the summer, where they go boating and fishing. Other activities throughout the year include hunting and snow skiing.



## INTRODUCING CHARLES W. FAIRCHILD II, VICE PRESIDENT OF INTEGRATED SYSTEMS CONTRACTORS NOMINEE



*Charles W. Fairchild II*  
*President*  
*Fairchild Communication Systems, Inc.*  
*Indianapolis, IN*  
*Northern Indiana Chapter, NECA*

### **BACKGROUND**

Fairchild has been an IBEW Local 481 Low Voltage Technician in good standing since 1985 and holds multiple industry and manufacture training certifications, including BICSI RCDD, AVIXA CTS, CTS-I, and CTS-D. Fairchild started his career in 1981 with AV Repair Company as an equipment repair technician, then moved on to sound and video installation at Custom Sound & Engineering. In 1986, Fairchild joined Electrical Equipment Company, where he worked for fifteen years and added sound and video experience to its life safety systems offering.

### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

After twenty years of experience in the industry, and the support of his family, Fairchild founded Fairchild Communication Systems in 2001. He started with only a van and some tools, but the company grew significantly and was recognized by the local business publication's list of the fastest-growing privately held companies in central Indiana. Fairchild attributes this success to a focus on working hard and treating people well. The company now has teams working in four office locations, serving education, healthcare and other markets with design, sales, installation and service of most low voltage, optical and wireless systems. Fairchild Communication Systems operates throughout Indiana and Northwest Ohio with some national accounts out of state, and an annual revenue of \$22 million.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH NECA**

In 2003, Fairchild Communication Systems joined NECA, where the company benefited from the wealth of experience and best practices available from NECA, its staff and members. Fairchild has served on the Central Indiana Chapter's Board since 2018. Fairchild is also a member of the NECA IBEW Indianapolis Telecom Apprenticeship Sub-Committee and the Indiana Statewide Telecom Agreement Negotiating Team. Fairchild Communications also has memberships in the Northern Indiana and Ohio/Michigan Chapters of NECA. Fairchild sees educational opportunities, collective bargaining experience and advice, and government relations as NECA's key services, and values the peer networking opportunities. Pleased to serve as NECA's first VP of Systems Integration for the 2023-2024 term, representing member systems integrators and electrical contractors with systems divisions.

### **INDUSTRY OBSERVATIONS**

Fairchild recommends embracing and adapting to the fast pace of change, particularly in Division 27 and 28 Systems. He has observed how technology changed the way we design, estimate, sell, manage, install, track, test and commission construction work. He notes that the low voltage portion of the electrical package has increased significantly in terms of contract value and installation hours, as well as quantity and types of systems.

### **AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

Chuck and his wife, Luanne, have been married for 39 years and have four sons. Their family has grown over the years, and they now have three daughters-in-law and three grandchildren. He enjoys the outdoors, off road motorcycles and ATVs. The family has restored a 1954 18-foot Chris-Craft mahogany powerboat, owned since 1983, and plan to return it to the lake soon. Fairchild enjoys visiting Colorado, as well as historic and patriotic locations. Chuck received the Governor's Distinguished Hoosier Award for community service to Scouting, in recognition of his commitment to leading approximately 70 youth (including all four of his sons) to the rank of Eagle Scout over twenty years of service. He is currently the President of the Board for the charter organization that supports four active scouting units.

**NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION**

1201 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

SUITE 1200

WASHINGTON, DC 20004

[www.necanet.org](http://www.necanet.org)

