

SAME Omaha Post Monthly Meeting – September 4, 2025

Date: 4 September 2025

Time: 12:00 PM Central Time (CT)

Future Post Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, September 9, 2025 – Matt Manning – Chief Water Officer, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
- Tuesday, October 14, 2025 – Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)- Jennifer Prenosil – Agriculture Program Manager at Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
- Wednesday, November 12, 2025 – Omaha Public Power District: Evolving to Meet the Future Demands – Dan Lenihan, Director of Distribution and Transmission Planning
- Tuesday, December 9, 2025 – USACE Omaha District Update

Call to Order- President: COL Robert Newbauer calls the meeting to order.

Roll Call and Determination of Quorum- Secretary: Chris Artz conducted the roll call and confirmed a quorum was present (9 or more from this list).

President: COL Robert Newbauer
 Secretary: Chris Artz
 Treasurer: Brian Schuele
 VP for Service Members and Veterans: Rob Hufford
 VP for IGE: Bobbi Jo Lang
 VP for Resilience: Don Fucik
 VP for Professional Development and Personal Growth: Kandi Srb
 VP for Leadership and Mentoring: Tom Svoboda
 Past President: Stephanie Heibel
 Director for Communications: Jill Zehr
 Director for Awards and Recognition: Laurie Smithers
 Director for Student Outreach: Stephanie Ling
 Director for Young Members: Devin Mueller
 Director for Fellows: Natasha Gromak
 Co-Director for Student Mentoring: Anne Peterson
 Co-Director for Student Mentoring: Bill Glismann

Members at Large in attendance (not counted toward quorum):

Programs: Jake Batenhorst
 Industry Day: Cindy Linccome
 Industry Day: Jackie Olsommer
 Scholarships & Camps: Sean Bayer
 Small Business: Veronica Doga
 Roger Wozny
 Brec Wilshusen
 Chris Langan
 Ryan Watzke

Approval of Minutes – The August 2025 meeting minutes were presented for approval. Motion to approve was made by Jill Zehr and seconded by Laurie Smithers. The minutes were approved without objections.

Reports

President: COL Robert Newbauer – President's message is nearly complete and will be sent to Communications Director. Expressed excitement about upcoming luncheons and presenters. Will assist with the proposed Service Member Transition Workshop.

Secretary: Chris Artz – Demonstrated SAME Engage platform and encouraged board members to use it for accessing board materials and discussions.

Treasurer: Brian Schuele – No report.

VP for Service Members and Veterans: Rob Hufford – Motion to approve a Service Member Transition Workshop as part of Industry Day. Rob Hufford and Aaron Wilt proposed organizing a pre-conference workshop on the same day as the golf outing, including mock and actual interviews. The workshop is intended to augment the national SAME transition event, which is geared toward senior executives, by providing a more accessible option for junior officers and enlisted personnel. Discussions included leveraging existing room reservations to avoid additional costs, collaborating with other SAME posts and TAPS offices for curriculum and instructor support, and coordinating with the Enlisted COI for existing materials. Bobbi Jo Lang offered to connect Rob with the Enlisted COI. Motion to approve the proposal was made by Bobbi Jo Lang and seconded by Stephanie Heibel. The motion passed without objections.

VP for IGE: Bobbi Jo Lang- Reported a continued decline in membership totals and advised that it could be actual reductions members due to DOGE or possible discrepancies in official roster. Invitations to the upcoming public-agency event were distributed, though many addresses bounced back; all board members were asked to forward any updated contacts. A Post member Happy Hour is scheduled for October 9 at Legends.

VP for Resilience: Don Fucik- Initial outreach has been made to Nebraska Task Force 1 in order to explore joint programming opportunities at future membership meetings. It was also noted that the Resilience Committee will convene later this month to finalize plans for the annual emergency-response workshop.

VP for Professional Development and Personal Growth Kandi Srb: Active planning for both industry day and programs continues.

VP for Leadership and Mentoring: Tom Svoboda- Post orientation program planned for October 9th. Coordination underway with committee members.

Past President: Stephanie Heibel- Drafted MOU for Industry Day committee to formalize roles and profit sharing. Working on post assessment with RVP and COL Newbauer.

Director for Communications: Jill Zehr- Posted October and November meetings and news articles. Awaiting President's message and PDH for September meeting.

Director for Awards and Recognition: Laurie Smithers- Tracking student chapter events. Coordinating with Steph Heibel for guidance.

Director for Student Outreach: Stephanie Ling- Scholarship applications for student chapters are due by the end of October. Increased collaboration between chapters is underway, including the development of shared FAQs, general information slides, and consistent presentation materials. The merch store initiative is progressing, with plans to offer embroidered SAME logo apparel through CI Shirts. Discussion included providing a stipend (e.g., \$30) per student to offset merchandise costs, with unique codes for each individual.

Board had no objections to \$1000 deposit into UNL SOFS account to support student chapter operations such as room rentals and event expenses. Stephanie confirmed this is within the annual \$7500 student chapter budget. The board expressed support for this approach, noting it avoids requiring students to pay upfront and seek reimbursement.

UNO is currently seeking a faculty advisor to maintain its chapter's recognized status. Stephanie requested board assistance in identifying potential faculty sponsors.

Director for Young Members: Devin Mueller was not in attendance but communicated in advance that he

received the young members contact list from Bobbi Jo Lang. He plans to introduce himself via email and begin outreach to engage current young members in upcoming events and initiatives.

Director for Fellows: Natasha Gromak- The next quarterly Fellows meeting is scheduled for the end of the month. Natasha has taken over leadership of the Journey to Fellows program for SAME National, a quarterly initiative to educate and encourage members to pursue fellowship. The program was originally established by Jeannie LeBron. Natasha is supported by Bobbi Jo Lang on communications and has assembled a committee of approximately 10 members to assist with program development and outreach.

Directors for Student Mentoring: Bill Glismann- Teacher-mentor orientation is scheduled for tonight at the Scott Conference Center, following a steering-committee meeting held two weeks ago. During that meeting it was noted that high-school participation in the mentoring program has declined in recent years, in part because the ACE Mentor Program has attracted students by offering more and larger scholarships—68 awards over the last eight years. It was also observed that colleges are increasingly targeting middle-school students to promote STEM fields. Attendance at a recent HAL-teachers conference generated interest from one additional high school and two to three middle schools. The current number of participating schools is 15 for the current year. To broaden outreach further, the board suggested exploring JAG-class career talks as an opportunity for mentors to speak directly to students.

Committee Reports

Industry Day: Other Posts have expressed interest in presenting at the Omaha Industry Day event. Potential speakers from the Kansas City Post and the Omaha District have been identified, though final commitments are still pending. The draft Memorandum of Understanding will be sent to the industry committee co-chairs and Ryan Watzke for review. MOU will be sent for signature by the president.

Programs: Jake Batenhorst- Fifty-three in-person attendees are registered for the next lunch-and-learn session, where the State's Chief Water Officer from the Department of Natural Resources will serve as speaker. The Programs Committee will meet later this month to plan winter-season topics and finalize logistics.

Scholarships & Camps: Sean Bayer- Following a smooth transition in committee leadership, student-chapter scholarship applications opened on September 1 and will close on October 31. Discussions with the mentoring directors have begun to raise the visibility of both scholarships and camps. Renewal forms are being updated to require students to list their mentors' names, and historical data on past scholarship disbursements will be compiled for future promotion.

Small Business: Veronica Doga- The NBDC Meet the Buyers event sponsored by the Post on August 28 proved successful, and a second matchmaking session is scheduled for October 9. Sponsor and volunteer confirmations are underway to ensure proper support and attendance.

COL Robert Newbauer had to leave the meeting at 12:20 PM, prior to the Communications report by Jill Zehr. Meeting adjourned by Chris Artz at 1:02 PM.

**Minutes prepared by Chris Artz on September 4, 2025