

## From the Desk of Ron Chelack— Director of Marketing and Business Development

### **SMI Update: Strengthening Masonry Across Saskatchewan**

The past few months at SMI have been dedicated to championing masonry throughout the province. With the steadfast support of our masonry partners, we've successfully engaged key construction professionals—those who shape material choices in their projects.

We're witnessing a promising shift: an increasing preference for Canadian and Saskatchewan-made products in purchasing decisions. This resurgence aligns perfectly with SMI's mission to sustain and grow the local masonry industry. Beyond keeping construction investments within the province, masonry offers unmatched advantages: durability, cost-effectiveness, and long-term structural integrity.

Additionally, load-bearing masonry—using readily available materials—can, in many cases, replace foreign-manufactured structural steel components. This not only strengthens local construction sustainability but also reinforces our industry's commitment to resilient, homegrown solutions.

### **Recent Activities**

#### **SaskBuilds Engagement**

The Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO) has strongly endorsed the benefits of masonry construction in schools. Likewise, insights from the Local Bricklayer and Allied Craftworkers Union have provided valuable perspectives on the employment landscape for masonry technicians.

Armed with these insights, we held a highly productive meeting with SaskBuilds, resulting in firm commitments to integrate masonry into school construction projects. This marks a significant step toward ensuring Saskatchewan's educational institutions stand the test of time.



## **SASBO Trade Show**

On May 7, 2025, SMI attended the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials Trade Show at the Delta Hotel in Saskatoon. As this was our first time at the event, we were eager to gauge its value for both SASBO delegates and SMI.

The outcome exceeded expectations. Delegates—school board officials from across Saskatchewan—expressed overwhelming support for masonry in schools. Not a single negative comment surfaced. Many praised the masonry's enduring value, with one delegate even highlighting their century-old school that continues to serve its community flawlessly. This raises an essential question: Why consider any other building material than masonry when constructing durable, generational structures?

Thanks to Jamie Windjack for assisting at the SASBO Trade Show.

## **Maintenance Study of Alberta Schools**

Over the past few months, we've conducted an extensive review of Alberta government RE-CAPP reports, analyzing the conditions of **80** school facilities. These RECAPP reports outline each school's current state along with estimated expenditures required for continued functionality.

Our focus is on exterior and interior wall performance. Now, with data collection complete, we are preparing a comprehensive report that will outline best practices for school construction. By highlighting the long-term impact of material choices on future repair costs, we aim to provide valuable guidance for building schools designed for lasting success. Preliminary data review is putting masonry in an extremely favourable position.

## **SMI's Annual Golf Tournament**

**Mark your calendars!**

Planning is underway for SMI's Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, July 21, 2025  
at Riverside Country Club.

Enjoy a BBQ lunch, an afternoon on the course, and a relaxed reception in the clubhouse afterward. Whether you're swinging for par or just along for the ride, it's sure to be a memorable day. We look forward to seeing you on the green!

***Registration forms will be sent out soon!***

## 2025 Provincial Skills Competition—Bricklaying

On March 28, 2025, Skills Canada Saskatchewan hosted its Provincial Bricklaying Competition in Saskatoon, SK, where union apprentices demonstrated their craftsmanship and precision. Competitors were challenged to complete a masonry project according to detailed construction drawings, applying both the technical training and on-site experience they've gained throughout their apprenticeships.

We are proud to announce the medalists:

- **Gold Medal** – *Kyler Nieman*, Union Apprentice with Brxton Masonry
- **Silver Medal** – *Joshua Bradley*, Union Apprentice with City Masonry Group
- **Bronze Medal** – *Daylon Schrader*, Union Apprentice with Brxton Masonry

Each medalist received a Rona gift card generously donated by SMI. Congratulations to all participants and winners for showcasing the high standards of skill and professionalism in Saskatchewan's masonry trade!

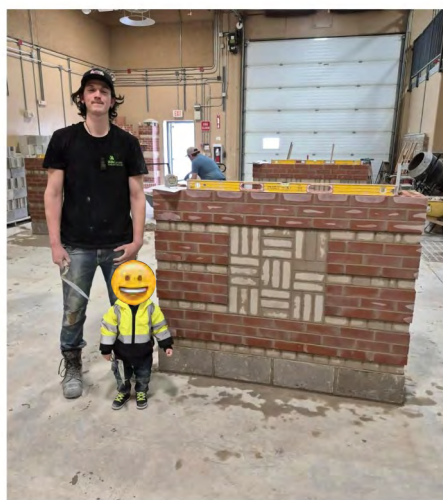
Kyler Nieman will move onto the National Competition in Regina, SK being held on May 28—31, 2025. Good luck, Kyler!

For more information on bricklaying, please see the link below:

<https://www.skillscanadasask.com/skills-profiles/construction/bricklaying/>



Gold Medal— Kyler Nieman, 3rd  
Year Apprentice, Local 1SK  
(Brxton Masonry)



Silver Medal—Joshua Bradley,  
2nd Year Apprentice, Local 1SK  
(City Masonry)



Bronze Medal—Daylon Schrader,  
1st Year Apprentice, Local 1SK  
(Brxton Masonry)

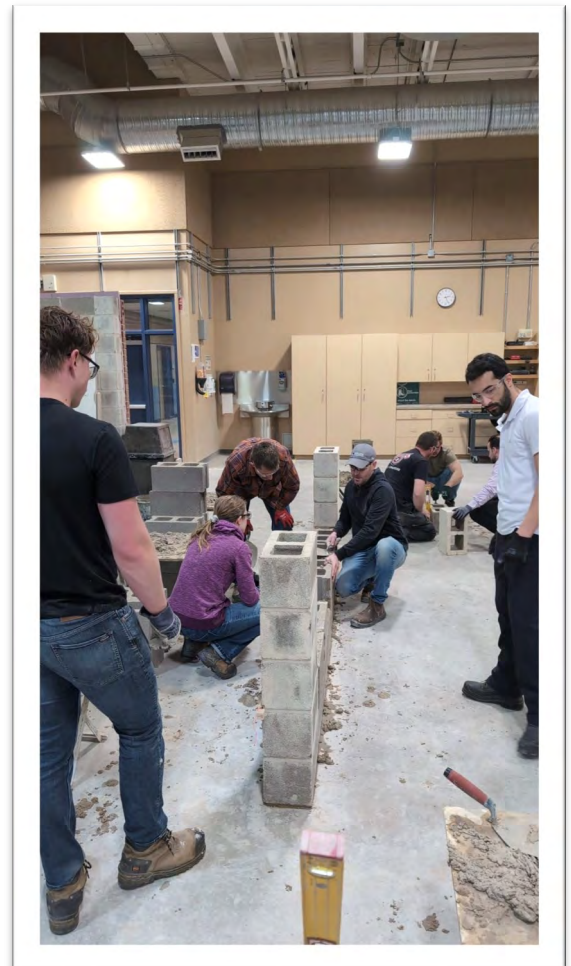
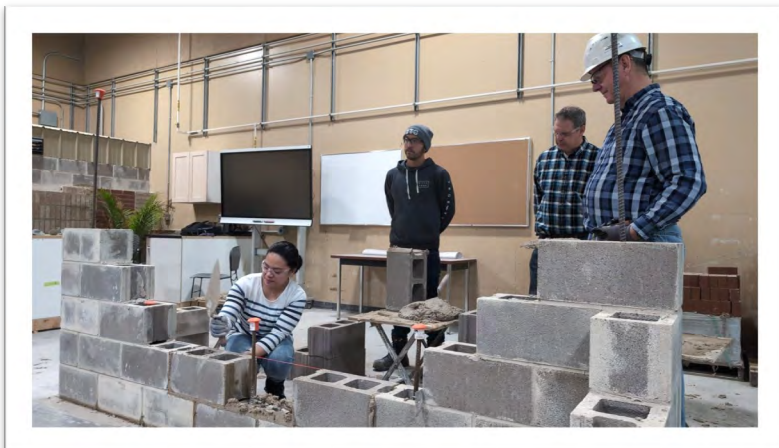


## First Saskatchewan EMDC Course Successfully Concludes

The first Saskatchewan edition of the Engineering for Masonry Design Course (EMDC) concluded on December 20, 2025. A key highlight of the program was a hands-on demonstration conducted by Saskatchewan Polytechnic on November 27, where engineers gained practical experience using a trowel and laying masonry units—an exercise designed to underscore the craftsmanship behind masonry construction.

This unique integration of practical skill-building with rigorous technical instruction provided participants with the tools necessary to design masonry structures effectively and efficiently. The course demands a significant time commitment and challenges engineers through assignments, a design project, and a take-home exam.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all the engineers who took on this challenge. Congratulations to each of you for your dedication and successful completion of the program!



## CMDC is Here to Help

### Send Us Your Technical Questions



Whether it be for engineers, architects, masonry contractor members, or researchers, CMDC offers complimentary, informed, expert advice on everything masonry. We are here to help ensure you feel comfortable, informed, and educated about your masonry projects.

CMDC is funded by our member contractors, however, our engineering staff are here to provide objective and technically accurate advice to all eligible parties. CMDC does not, however, provide engineering consulting services, but rather, will work with designers and contractor members to resolve technical challenges, interpret standards clauses, handle unique detailing challenges, mitigate possible job site conflicts, or otherwise share our wealth of expertise in masonry materials, design, and construction.

CMDC engineering staff are located in offices around the country and are available through phone, video call, email correspondence, or site visits when necessary.

<https://www.canadamasonrydesigncentre.com/contact-us/>



### **Upcoming Important Dates**

- \* CMCA's Annual Masonry Conference in Ottawa, ON - May 31 - June 3, 2025
- \* 15th Canadian Masonry Symposium in Ottawa, ON - June 2 - 5, 2025
- \* SMI's Annual Golf Tournament - July 21, 2025

**Saskatchewan Masonry Institute Inc.**

300 - 701 Broadway Ave.

Saskatoon, SK S7N 1B3

Phone: (306) 665-0622 Fax: (306) 665-0621

[info@saskmasonry.ca](mailto:info@saskmasonry.ca) [www.saskmasonry.ca](http://www.saskmasonry.ca)