

2022 USMA Virtual Open House Speakers

Donald W. Hillger, PhD – President, Metric Today Editor, Scholarship Award Program Chair



Don Hillger is a research meteorologist, now retired from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). With a physics background he has always been impressed that metric units work directly in the equations of physics, unlike non-metric units which often require conversion factors to have the units come out correctly. In the 1980s, Hillger joined the US Metric Association and became its first Webmaster, a role he maintained until becoming USMA President. Under his Presidency, USMA headquarter activity was moved to Colorado, and USMA's *Metric Today* newsletter became primarily an electronic publication, simplifying and lessening the expense of its production. He also is acting editor of *Metric Today*, which helps him keep up with and report on metric activity, consolidating metric-related material provided by USMA members. As a side activity, he has collected and indexed metric resources from around the world, particularly from the many English-speaking countries that transitioned to the metric system over the past 50 years.

Mark Henschel – Central Area Director, Science Fair Award Program Coordinator



Mark Henschel's metric activities began in 1960 when he discovered a USMA brochure written by Louis Sokol titled *Do You Measure Up?* and was convinced the Metric System was the way to go forward in our country and became a USMA member in 1972. Henschel was very active in the era around the passage of the US Metric Conversion Act, providing training sessions for Caterpillar Tractor Company engineers in Illinois, hosting teacher seminars in Chicago, and writing and publishing the "Metric Supplement to Technical Drawing" book (1975). In the 1990s, Henschel collaborated with the NIST Metric Program to promote metric resources at regional conferences and conventions. For over 20 years, Henschel has judged the Illinois Junior Academy of Science Urbana-Champaign Metric Awards and the Chicago Board of Education Science Fair, including self-funding US Savings Bond monetary awards. Henschel has served as a Regional Manager and later Central Area Director. He currently coordinates the Science Fair Award Program and promotes the USMA Blake Family/USMA scholarship awards.

Don M. Jordan, PhD, CMS – Eastern Area Director, Certified Metrication Specialist (CMS) Board Chair



Dr. Don Jordan is a University of South Carolina Center for Science Education mathematics professor. Jordan promotes teaching the metric system beginning in the early grades to achieve greater math fluency. Each year Jordan champions Metric Week promotion in coordination with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Academy of Science and University of South Carolina, Center for Science Education, South Carolina Junior Academy of Science (SCJAS), the South Carolina

Middle and Elementary School Academy of Science (MESAS), and other organizations ensuring classroom activities and resources are distributed to educators across the state.

Henry Knoepfle – Outreach Committee Chair, Metric Week Coordinator, Tucson, AZ Chapter

Henry Knoepfle is an electrical engineer for a Tucson, Arizona aerospace company. His elementary school years coincided with the Ford and Carter Administrations, when the United States was “no kidding” going metric. Consequently, he was never taught US customary units anytime during his elementary, junior high, or high school years. Concurrently, Knoepfle lived in Rio Rico Arizona, 12 km north of the US-Mexico border along Interstate 19, then under construction. I-19 was and is the only Interstate in the United States to be signed in metric. This has always been a point of pride, and seeing non-metric signs along a newly constructed portion of the I-19 / I-10 interchange is what motivated Henry to join the US Metric Association in 2021.

Brian Fleming – Social Media Team



Brian Fleming works in Industrial Purchasing at Nissan where he sees the value in metrication and science education. Fleming contributes by growing USMA's social media presence, especially on Twitter.

Bryce Schuebert – Social Media Team



Bryce Schuebert is a mechanical engineer, recently graduating with a master's degree from the University of Georgia. He primarily focuses on growing USMA's Instagram presence, especially with younger audiences, but he is also working towards amplifying metrication efforts on all platforms.

Varun Varada – Webmaster



Varun Varada is a software engineer specializing in web development, and currently works as a freelancer. He had a bit of a “boomerang” experience with the metric system, having been born and spent his very early life in India, a largely metric country, moved to the US around the time of middle school and brought up most of his life in the US, and then having temporarily relocated to New Zealand a year before COVID-19. It was this experience with commerce, the government, and locals in NZ, a fully metricated country, where he was reacquainted with the simplicity of the metric system and realized its prevalence worldwide. Looking for a metrication plan of the US and not being

able to find one led him to the USMA, where he volunteers his time and technical skills to help improve awareness of the metric system and to ease its adoption.

Elizabeth Benham – Technical Adviser



Elizabeth Benham, Physical Scientist and NIST Metric Program Coordinator, has been a USMA member for 17 years. She currently serves as a USMA Technical Advisor, Blake Scholarship Award Program Judge, and contributes to a variety of ongoing projects, including National Metric Week promotion. She actively engages in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and outreach activities, including the design and delivery of K-12 educator professional development to better integrate metric system (SI) principles into the classroom. Benham was recently recognized as a USMA Fellow Award (2021).