



American Welding Society Pittsburgh Section

JANUARY 5, 2026

SPARK UPDATE

2025/2026 NUMBER 5

Chairman's Announcement

The Pittsburgh AWS Section is proud to present a full line up of plant tours and technical presentations for its members for the 2025– 2026 year.

I hope that you will find these scheduled meetings of interest and plan to attend. If you have any ideas for our chapter or suggestions for a future meetings or plant tours, please contact any of our Board members.

Thank you,

Huck Hughes - Chairman, Pittsburgh AWS

hhughes@parkwaywest.org

January Meeting: Annual Past Chairmen's Night Tuesday January 13, 2026

The American Welding Society Pittsburgh Section will be hosting this annual event to recognize the current and past chairmen of the Section

Topic: Weld Failures Involved in Pipeline Girth Welds

Speaker: Matt A. Boring, P.E., CWEng, CWI, DNV - Welding Technology Group

There have been several recent pipeline failures that have associated with what would otherwise be acceptable pipeline girth welds. The welds were considered acceptable because they were deposited by qualified welders following API 1104 qualified welding procedures and were nondestructive inspected and considered acceptable. Until recently the cause of these weld failures was not well understood. Failure investigations have determined that primary contributing factors of these weld failures have been heat-affected zone softening and weld metal undermatching. These two phenomenon are independent but often occur in the same girth weld significantly under-minding the integrity of the pipeline. This presentation will describe the how "good" welds can result in failures by describing the factors causing heat-affected zone softening and weld metal undermatching as well as current industry approaches to minimizing the problems in the future.

See additional information on page 2
(Click on Learn More)

About the Speaker: Mr. Boring is the Group Lead of the Welding Technology Group within the Incident Investigation Section in DNV's Energy Systems Group in Dublin, Ohio. Prior to joining DNV, Matt was a Principal Welding Engineer at Kiefner and Associates, Inc. and a Senior Welding Engineer at The Edison Welding Institute. He has developed expertise over the last 25+ years dedicated to pipeline welding and in-service pipeline welding (hot-tapping). In addition to his welding consulting support Mr. Boring is heavily involved with welding and pipeline repair standards including API 1104, ASME Section IX, And ASME PCC-2. Matt holds a M.S. in Weld Engineering from Ohio State University and is committee member of API 1104, ASME PCC-2 including sub-committee chairman, ASME Section IX, ASME B31.4 and B31.8. He has additionally authored many articles and presentations for various publications and conferences.

Cost:

Members - \$45.00

Non-Members / Guests - \$50.00

Students - \$25.00

Please RSVP by Sunday January 11, 2026 to: [AWS Pittsburgh Section Annual Past Chairmen's Night Tickets, Tue, Jan 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Meeting Date: Tuesday January 13, 2026

Meeting Time: Doors open 5:30; Meet & Greet (Cash Bar) 5:30-6:30 PM with 6:30 dinner followed by acknowledgments / presentation.

Meeting Location: LeMont Restaurant
1114 Grandview Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15211

We hope to see you there.
Huck Hughes - Chairman, Pittsburgh AWS

Next Meeting – February Technical Meeting
Date: TBD
Location: TBD
Details will be announced in the February issue of "Spark"

AWS Seminars & Exam Schedule

The Pittsburgh Section hosts several Certified Weld Inspector (CWI) seminars & exams in 2026. Location and registration information is available on the AWS.org website.

TYPE	SEMINAR	EXAM DATE	SITE CODE
CWI Seminar	2/1 - 2/6, 2026	2/7/2026	PA00726
CWI 9 Year Seminar	2/22- 2/27, 2026	2/27/2026	YS01426
CWI Seminar	5/31- 6/1, 2026	6/2/2026	PA05026
CWI 9 Year Seminar	6/7- 6-12, 2026	6/12/2026	YS05726

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ELECTIONS:

The Pittsburgh Section Nominating Committee has presented the following Regular Nominees for the upcoming election of The Section Executive Board. The nominees are as follows:

Chairman – Huck Hughes

1st Vice Chairman – Ray Knobbs

2nd Vice Chairman – Justin Sciulli

Secretary – Don Stoll

Treasurer – Ray Knobbs

Past Chairman – Don Stoll

Carry Over (Candidates serve 2 years)

Member at Large 1 (2025-2027) – Roger Hilty

Member at Large 2 (2025-2027) – Jim Sekely

Member at Large 3 (2025-2027) – David L McQuaid

Carry Over (Candidates serve 2 years)

Member at Large 4 (2026-2028) – Charles Stella

Member at Large 5 (2026-2028) – Kevin Kalamasz

Member at Large 6 (2026-2028) – Bill Kashin

Nominations by Petition may be submitted by members for election of any of the above positions aside from Member at Large 1-3. Submittals may be made by formal request to Don Stoll (724) 544-7326 or stoll10@comcast.net and **must be received by February 24, 2025**

SCHOLARSHIPS

The American Welding Society provides students with access to over \$1 million annually in scholarships extending from the National, District, and Section levels. **The deadline for these scholarships of March 1, 2026** is fast approaching.

Application to any of these available scholarships may be made by accessing the link: <http://www.aws.org/career-resources/students/scholarships/>

WELDER TRAINING

Scholarships are available for students seeking welder training in a certificate program less than two years in length. Applicants will be eligible for attendance at a trade school, community college or other facility providing welder training. These scholarships offer a minimum \$1000 paid to the institution for books, tuition, fees, or supplies required for the course. These awards are distributed on a rolling basis throughout the year. **Applications are accepted throughout the year ending November 30, 2026** and may be accessed at [AWS Welder Training Scholarships | Fast-Track Your Welding Career](http://www.aws.org/career-resources/students/scholarships/)

AWARDS

There are many awards that are offered throughout the American Welding Society. Unfortunately, many of these awards go unfilled due to lack of nominations. We would like to offer these awards to individuals that you may feel deserve recognition. These awards are presented at various levels of the Society.

Awards are offered at the National Level, District Level, and Section Level.

The **National Level** covers the entire country comprised of 22 Districts. These Award nominations require submittal by August 1 of year prior to the year of recognition.

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The **District Level** (07) in which Pittsburgh Section lies, comprises of Sections from Pittsburgh, Johnstown-Altoona, Wheeling, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, and Johnny Appleseed (Indiana), Mid Ohio Valley, and Tri-State.

The **Section Level** (Pittsburgh 003) comprises of Pennsylvania Counties Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Fayette, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland.

Awards available include:

Howard E. Adkins Instructor Membership Award - recognizes high school, trade school, technical institute, or junior college instructor whose teaching activities are considered to have advanced the knowledge of welding to students in their school(s). This award has the same guidelines for each level of award, and one application can nominate the candidate for all three levels.

Private Sector Instructor Award - Honors educators in the welding community teaching in private facilities. Awardees are selected by the AWS National Awards Committee, who, in their opinion, have advanced the knowledge of welding to their students through apprenticeship programs, internal corporate training programs, and similar nonpublic educational activities.

Dalton E. Hamilton Memorial CWI of the Year Award – Recognizes AWS members participating in the CWI Program whose inspection, Society, and civic activities are considered to have enhanced public awareness and opinion of both the Society and the CWI Program or otherwise have made an outstanding contribution to the science of welding inspection. One application can nominate the candidate for only District or Section Levels as the National Award is nominated by District Director.

Distinguished Welder Award – This is a National Level Award established to recognize the industry's outstanding welders.

Counselor Award - Election as a Counselor of the Society is demonstrated as evidenced by Leadership of or within an organization that has made a substantial contribution to the welding industry. The individual's organization shall have shown an ongoing commitment to the industry, as evidenced by support of participation of its employees in industry activities, or Leadership of or within an organization that has made a substantial contribution to training and vocational education in the welding industry.

Fellow Award - Election as a Fellow of the Society is based on the reputation and outstanding accomplishment of the individual. Such accomplishments will have advanced the science, technology, and application of welding in specific areas such as research and development, education, manufacturing, design, and other areas the Society may determine, as evidenced by:

Sustained service and performance in the advancement of welding science and technology.

Publication of papers, articles, and books, which enhance knowledge of welding.
Innovative development of welding technology.

Society and Section contributions.

Professional recognition.

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Excellence in Welding Award - The annual Excellence in Welding Awards, created by WEMCO, honor individuals and organizations that elevate the image of welding and bolster the industry. Celebrating dedication to enhancing welding's reputation within communities, the awards span nine categories which include: Individual, Educator, Educational Facility, Small Business, Large Business, Distributor, AWS Section, Media, and Veterans.

Meritorious Awards – Meritorious Awards are given to recognize AWS members who have performed some definite or outstanding service to a Section, District, or to the Society. From these exemplary activities, the member has made outstanding contributions to the enhancement of the art and science of welding. This award is presented at the District Level. Nominees not receiving the District Award will automatically receive the Award at the Section Level.

Section Appreciation Certificate – Recognizes outstanding Section Officers / Members with a certificate expressing the Section's appreciation.

Industry Sponsor Recognition Certificate – Recognizes a Section's local industry sponsor(s) whose company's support the Section's activities, either financially or in other ways.

AWS Distinguished Member Award – Recognizes outstanding service and commitment to the Society and the welding industry.

A more comprehensive listing and descriptions of awards given by the AWS, along with links to applications and nomination forms may be found at <https://www.aws.org/About/Awards/>

Should you wish to nominate an Officer or Member of the Pittsburgh Section for an award, have any questions, or need assistance in completing a nomination form, you may contact Ray Knobbs, the Chairman of the Awards Committee for the Pittsburgh Section, at rayknobbspe@gmail.com

AWS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS:

AWS provides Educators and rising leaders who commit to taking action to lead and drive impact at their Section and District levels, or even more so, the Society.

The Instructor's Institute provides welding instructors, one per District, an opportunity to enhance and strengthen their teaching skills, experience hands-on learning of new teaching techniques, and learn more about programs and resources AWS offers tailored to support educators. Expenses are covered by AWS and involves a 7 day program in Miami (July 19 - 25, 2026) for additional information access: <https://events.aws.org/event/instructorsinstitute/summary>

The Leadership Symposium is offered with 2 per District. Expenses are covered by AWS and involves a 4 day program (July 26 - 29, 2026) in Miami that enhances the abilities and understanding of effective leadership qualities providing the successful operation of the organization. Many previous candidates have expressed extreme gratification upon completion of the symposium. Deadline for the District Representative is February 28, 2026. Information / Application can be obtained at: <http://www.aws.org/community-and-events/conferences-and-events/leadership-symposium/>