

SME Chief Manufacturing Officer Appointed to America Makes Executive Committee

Industry leader and additive manufacturing expert Dr. Brett Conner will help guide strategy and accelerate U.S. manufacturing innovation during two-year term

SOUTHFIELD, MI, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- SME Chief Manufacturing Officer Dr. Brett Conner has been appointed to a two-year term on the Executive Committee of America Makes, the nation's leading public-private partnership for additive manufacturing (AM). In this role, he will help shape initiatives that advance additive manufacturing adoption, workforce development and manufacturing innovation across U.S. manufacturing.

Conner, who joined SME in 2025 as the nonprofit's first-ever chief manufacturing officer, will help guide America Makes' strategy, policy and advocacy efforts as part of a leadership group representing government, academia, nonprofits and industry. Through the appointment, Conner will contribute SME's perspective to initiatives focused on accelerating additive manufacturing adoption and helping build the skilled workforce, industry-accepted credentials and partnerships with state, regional and national stakeholders needed for sustained success.

America Makes also recently recognized Conner with a Distinguished Collaborator Award during its annual Members Meeting and Exchange in Youngstown, Ohio. The award recognizes Conner for his contributions to advancing AM technology and strengthening collaboration within the AM ecosystem.

"It is a tremendous honor to join the America Makes Executive Committee and contribute to efforts that advance additive manufacturing across the United States," Conner said. "America Makes and SME have worked closely together since the organization's founding in 2012, and I am excited to build on that longstanding relationship while helping drive innovation and growth throughout the manufacturing industry."

Conner brings years of both industry and academia experience with additive manufacturing to the role, having previously served as director of the Advanced Manufacturing Research Center at Youngstown State University and as co-founder of the additive manufacturing startup Freshmade 3D, among other roles prior to joining SME. He is also a U.S. Air Force veteran and holds a Ph.D. in materials science and engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"SME and America Makes share a commitment to strengthening U.S. manufacturing through the adoption of advanced technologies like additive manufacturing," Conner said. "Serving on the Executive Committee provides an opportunity to help align our efforts, foster greater collaboration and advance innovation across the industry."

SME and America Makes have partnered on initiatives and programs over the years, such as developing the first additive manufacturing certification and delivering additive training online to companies during COVID. Earlier this year, America Makes' Spring Technical Review and Exchange (TRX) conference took place in conjunction with SME's RAPID + TCT industrial additive manufacturing event for the second time, providing attendees of both events with valuable opportunities to network and build relationships across the industry. America Makes will co-locate its Spring TRX in Detroit again in 2027 alongside RAPID + TCT.

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About SME

Established in 1932 as a nonprofit organization, SME represents the manufacturing industry, including manufacturers, academia, professionals, students, and the communities in which they operate. We believe manufacturing holds the key to economic growth and prosperity, and champion the industry's potential as a diverse, thriving, and valued ecosystem. SME accelerates new technology adoption and builds talent and capabilities to advance manufacturing and drive competitiveness, resiliency, and national security. SME designs new ways to understand and solve problems, and our solutions advance the next wave of growth in manufacturing. Learn more at [SME.org](https://www.sme.org).

Brie Smith

SME

+1 2487981995

[email us here](#)

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