

# Former Mayor Now Leads DASMA

## An Interview With Chuck Miller

### Every DASMA president brings something unique to the position. What's unique about your background?

I bring a long history of service on nonprofit boards. This is my 25th year of involvement in NAGDM and DASMA. Besides that, I've spent considerable time in civic organizations.

Among other nonprofit experiences, I served two terms as president of a large and active Rotary club, and I spent six years on a city council and two years as mayor of that city. That experience helps me see the importance of listening to other people's opinions.

When you're mayor of a city or president of an organization like DASMA, you have a real responsibility to make sure that everybody gets their voice. You have to learn how to build consensus and how to compromise.

That's something I hope I can bring to DASMA: finding common ground and building consensus to strengthen both DASMA and the industry.

### What else do you bring to this job that we haven't seen before?

It might be my background as an associate member as well as an active member. We've probably never had a president with experience in a supplier company.

For about half of my professional life in NAGDM and DASMA, I was an associate member from Collier Industries (a maker of garage door hardware, springs, and roll-formed products). I know how important associate members are to DASMA, and I know the benefits of DASMA to associate members.

By participating in DASMA, associate members have a unique opportunity to meet with customers—not just the purchasing people, but the top executives as well. At DASMA meetings, associates can build customer relationships that you may never develop when a salesperson talks to a purchasing agent.

*Editor's Note: On Jan. 27, 2010, Chuck Miller of Overhead Door became DASMA president upon the completion of Bob Cookson's two-year term. We spoke with the new president about his unique background and objectives for the next two years.*

### What are your top priorities for DASMA for the next two years?

We need to continue to leverage the technical abilities of DASMA in developing and influencing codes. We've done some tremendous work through Joe Hetzel and our technical committees, and we need to keep that going and growing. This year, budgetary constraints forced us to eliminate the LEED engineer, but I hope that we'll be able to fund that position before the end of my two-year tenure.

A second objective is membership and membership involvement. Members are the lifeblood of the association. We need more dues revenue to make progress with our technical and marketing projects.

Our associate membership is down to 26. As I mentioned earlier, they are important to DASMA, and we bring a lot of value to these supplier companies. We need to grow the number of associate members to triple digits.

### Do you have some thoughts about how to increase membership?

I expect to work closely with Ken Martin and the Membership Committee to see what we can do to increase membership. I'd like to take a little different approach when we talk to prospective members. Instead of telling them why they need to belong, I want us to ask them, "Why don't you belong?"

Instead of talking, we need to do more listening. A good salesperson listens to the customer's needs. We need to understand why they're not members and build a plan to address what we see as the biggest issues limiting membership.



I know that financial reasons may be behind some decisions not to belong. To some degree, I think that's an excuse. In the grand scheme of things, if you are convinced that DASMA delivers real value to your company, you'd find that money.

**I know that you'd like to see us develop stronger standards.**

Yes, I'd like to see DASMA put some teeth into our standards and consider making some of them mandatory instead of voluntary. If all these DASMA standards and technical data sheets are really important, and I believe they are, why are we spending all these hours of time and resources in committee meetings to create standards that are purely optional?

I think companies should join DASMA, contribute to the development of these standards, and then comply with them. If you don't, then at the very least you should not be allowed to put the DASMA logo on that product.

I think now is a good time to build the process. Within a couple years, we can strengthen the industry by making some standards mandatory. The transition may be a struggle, but in the end, I think the consumer wins, and the industry wins. ■

## Chuck Miller Profile

### Door Business Experience

- Overhead Door Corporation (1999-present) *Vice President Sales Centers Eastern Region, Vice President Business Development*
- Windsor Door (1992-1999) *National Distribution Center Manager*
- Collier Industries (1982-1992) *Purchasing Agent, Manager of Operations, Vice President of Sales & Marketing, Vice President and General Manager*

### Industry Leadership

- IDEA Board of Directors, Charter Member
- DASMA Membership Committee, Chairman
- DASMA Training & Education Committee, Chairman
- DASMA Board of Directors

### Education

- B.A. in Speech, West Liberty State College (West Liberty, W.Va.), 1971



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