

# GCC Q&A

**Clint Cornejo**  
*Owner*  
**Allmetal Recycling**  
**(Wichita, Kansas)**



**(Seventh in a monthly series of profile interviews  
with Gulf Coast Chapter members.)**

**Born:** I was born Aug. 1, 1989, in Wichita, Kansas.

**Education:** I graduated from the University of Kansas in 2012 with a Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences degree.

**Family:** My wife Danielle and I have been married for almost four years now. No children yet, but we have a labradoodle named Mister who keeps us busy.

**When and how did you enter the recycling industry?**

Growing up, I spent my summers during high school and college working for our family business, which focused on road construction, asphalt, concrete, demolition, C&D landfills, and aggregates. Certain aspects of the construction and demolition business gave me some insight into the scrap metal industry.

In 2009, our company purchased Caster Iron & Metal and renamed it Allmetal Recycling. After selling the construction company in 2010, my dad, Marty Cornejo, and my uncle, Ron Cornejo, shifted their focus to expanding their footprint in the scrap metal industry. A few years later, we decided to expand the operations with the acquisition of Kamen Iron & Metal in 2012. At that time, I seized the opportunity to join the business with a path to ownership. Although it was a bit different line of work than what I knew, I decided to give it a shot.

In 2015, my cousin Kolby Cornejo (Ron's son) and I took over the company. Since then, we have grown tremendously to the point where the company now has 165 employees and six locations—three in Wichita (including an auto shredder) and the others in Newton, Harper, and Salina, Kansas.

**What was it about the industry that prompted you to build a career in it?** From my first day on the job, I saw endless opportunity for growth and change in the metal recycling industry. Since then, we have built our brand around changing the image of the industry. We wanted to be the company that showed transparency to our customers and, at the same time, build recycling facilities you can drive into and not get a hole in your tire. That's exactly what we have done. To this day, it is still our motto and is how we approach the business on a day-to-day basis. I love every aspect of it, from operations to production meetings to buying and selling to building relationships with our customers and other metal recycling professionals. It's probably true in every industry, but in scrap I can honestly say that I learn and/or see something new every day.

**What have been your most rewarding professional achievements?** In 2018, the Wichita Chamber of Commerce selected Allmetal Recycling to receive its Small Business Award. That was a very rewarding experience as the interview process was extremely detailed, and we were up against a lot of other great small businesses. Let's be honest, scrap metal is not the most glamorous industry, and we believe receiving this award says a lot about our success and the way we do business.

I also was honored when the Wichita Business Journal chose me as an Emerging Leader in 2017 and when the Wichita Chamber of Commerce asked me to sit on its Manufacturing Roundtable in 2018.

**What are you passionate about?** My faith and family always come first. My parents instilled these values in me at a very young age, and I live by them.

**What do you like to do in your free time?** I enjoy watching football, basketball, and baseball. I also like to get out and play golf. And, of course, I enjoy spending time with my wife, family, and friends. In the summers, nothing beats a cold cocktail by the pool or a beer on the boat at Table Rock Lake.

**If you could improve anything about yourself, what would it be?** There is not one specific thing about myself that I would change. I believe that it is important to always be improving yourself and evolve over time. At any stage in life, or in a professional career, you always have to reevaluate yourself personally and look at how things are being done. In general,

though, I would like to improve to be a better listener and a better communicator, and I would like to be a sponge and absorb as much information as possible to be a better person and make smart decisions for our company and for those we employ.

**When and why did your company decide to join ISRI and the Gulf Coast Chapter?** Our company has been a member since the acquisition of Caster Iron & Metal in 2009. We immediately saw the value of membership and have maintained our membership ever since. The most valuable benefit I have received from ISRI are the relationships I have formed over the last seven or eight years that I not only enjoy personally but are helpful to our business.

**Have you held any volunteer leadership positions within GCC?** Given our company's growth over the past six or seven years, I have felt like my time was best spent growing the business locally while participating in ISRI by attending the Mid-America Chapter Consumers Night event, ISRI's Commodities Roundtable Forum, and the national ISRI convention. As we continue to grow but become more established, I believe I'll have more time to take on a more active role within the GCC.

**What are the major challenges facing your company and the overall recycling industry today?** I would have to say COVID-19. I think everyone would agree that the health and safety of our employees and customers is our top priority. It has been a challenge, but also our top priority, to implement the correct safety measures and procedures so we can stay open and operate. Thankfully we have been able to do just that.