

# THE RECORD

Published by the National Tooling and Machining Association

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Retaining Employees and Reducing  
Litigation Risk p 18

Trust, Credibility, and Value:  
Superpowers for Exceptionally  
Inspirational Leaders pp 24-25

*and so much more ...*

# EMERGING LEADERS RISING 2022

See the Full List of the 2022 Class  
of Emerging Leaders on pages 30-33



NHX with Linear Pallet Pool

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## THE RECORD

### OPERATIONS & EDITORIAL

Roger Atkins, President  
Rena Montedoro, Editor  
Doug DeRose, Co-Editor  
John Stevens, Co-Editor

### ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

To advertise in The Record, or for information on publishing your corporate newsletter or sales literature, contact John Stevens at (216) 264-2837 or via email at [jstevens@ntma.org](mailto:jstevens@ntma.org) for advertising and editorial content.

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## Upcoming NTMA National Events



**Emerging Leaders Conference '22**  
Monday, August 29 – Wednesday, August 31  
Indianapolis, IN



**Manufacturing Engage 2022**  
Tuesday, October 25 – Friday, October 28  
Kansas City, MO

## What's Your Story?

### Send Us Your Story

Each issue of The Record will feature stories from members – and we want to hear from you. Send us stories of success, or those that fit the theme of the month's issue. The submission deadline is the first of the month prior to publication.

Contact John Stevens at [jstevens@ntma.org](mailto:jstevens@ntma.org)

### Upcoming Themes for The Record

#### August

IMTS 2022 ... Network, Educate, Purchase ... What's Your Plan?

#### September

MFG Day 2022 ... It's Our Day. Don't Miss the Opportunity!

## At NTMA, We're Social. Follow Us!



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[www.youtube.com/channel/UCWz78MHNBXqkxAHKqbUARzg](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWz78MHNBXqkxAHKqbUARzg)



# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

When I think about, **Emerging Leaders**, I realize that every past generation has been dependent on the next generation to continue the trade and the industry. Emerging Leaders are and have always been the life blood of manufacturing since its inception and today that is no different.

In past generations, many children followed their parents – who followed their own parents and grandparents – into manufacturing. In recent generations, however, that model has been declining. The emphasis has changed from following a family career and industry lineage, to parents wanting kids to “have more” or experience greater success than their own.

Many parents shifted their emphasis to the importance of a college degree – believing that a degree would open more doors of opportunity for younger generations. There is no doubt it succeeded and made a big difference. Supported by parents and the industry, colleges have played a key role in enhancing the manufacturing industry with a more highly educated workforce.

Unfortunately, over the last few decades, colleges have become the be-all and end-all for many students, whether there was a career path or not. Thus, many students attended college who should have gone straight into the industry, while others missed the boat of industry and college altogether. Academia’s focus became more about student numbers and total revenue, not necessarily the value a college degree provided students or the industry.

Industry dependence for Emerging Leaders also began to revolve around the “college for all” belief, leading the industry to put all its eggs in that basket. Government began to finance the college career path with little understanding or support of both those in the system who should not have been there, as well as those who never got into the system and had no

industry career direction. Many were left behind only to find whatever job they could get, not a job they wanted or one in which they could excel.

For American small- and medium-sized businesses, one thing we have learned through the years is not to wait on the government or an educational system to solve our need for employees or training of employees.

This is the very reason NTMA was created in 1943: our workforce needs were not being met. Today, we still find ourselves in the same situation. While industry and trade associations are bypassed and made to be dependent on a system that does not produce the trained workforce we need, academia has the advantage to chase the next hot industry in order to generate revenue while continuing to receive government support. As entrepreneurs and doers, we continue to create our own solutions and solve our own needs.

This is what NTMA National does every day. We work and create partnerships to help solve these needs while allowing you to run your business and deal with day-to-day challenges. It is your membership that allows us to create these opportunities for you to enhance and grow your business.

### So where do we go from here?

**We FOCUS ON OUR EMERGING LEADERS.** We work with you to ensure your future leaders are given every opportunity to learn and succeed. We make the career path clear and provide opportunities for growth. We make our next generation of leaders aware of how their personal contribution is essential to the overall success of the company.

We must show our Emerging Leaders how our successes together help contribute to the philanthropic needs of our communities, our state, our nation, and the world. We must dispel the

myth that large businesses are where the action is and where everyone works – and are the only ones that make things happen. We must promote the importance of small- and medium-sized businesses and our contribution to our nation’s employment and economy.

You have seen these numbers before, but they are critical when telling our story to Emerging Leaders about the opportunities that abound within our companies:

- 99% of “all US firms” have fewer than 500 employees.
- 98% of “all US firms” have fewer than 100 employees.
- 93% of “all US firms” with less than 100 employees are “manufacturing” firms of some type.
- **There are 24,000 “NTMA/Metalworking Specific” US firms (based on NAICS codes). Of them:**
  - 96% have fewer than 100 employees.
  - 92% have fewer than 50 employees.
  - 80% have fewer than 20 employees.
  - 44% have fewer than 5 employees.

In closing, I am thrilled to report that for the fourth month in a row NTMA has completed the month net positive in new member growth and remains net positive year-to-date. New members year-to-date are at a four-year high, and our resignations year-to-date are at a six-year low.

**Keep doing your part to invite companies to join NTMA. It increases our influence in the industry, which benefits us all.**

Members and friends, we are doing the right things as an association, as companies, and as an industry. We are setting a firm foundation and pathway for our **Emerging Leaders of the Future.**

**Always Remember, There Is Strength in Numbers.**

Roger Atkins, President – NTMA



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N9570X4.8753Y-2.  
N9580Y2.  
N9590X0.Y2.  
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N9680G0G90A0.S5000M3  
N9685G54X-4.8Y-2.  
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# NEW MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

## PARADISE MANUFACTURING, LLC Western at Large Member



Paradise MFG was founded in 1999 by Ty Stanton and his partner at B & J Metal Fabrication in Ridgefield, WA. Ty took the business over in 2014 and has recently moved to a new location in Woodland, WA. Utilizing CNC plasma and full range of fabrication equipment, Paradise MFG has thrived on supplying custom fabrication, heavy equipment attachments, and precast concrete formwork. The recent move to Woodland has allowed Paradise MFG to expand its product offering to include machine lathe and millwork, stud welding, and custom retail products. The company is a privately held, family-owned business that's core values are service and quality, currently works on shift, and employs 6-12 at any given time. The company's customer base serves the greater Clark and Cowlitz Counties in SW Washington State, and Metro Portland, OR.

1695 Lewis River Road, Woodland, WA 98674  
(360) 921-8793

## DUGAN TOOL & DIE INC. St. Louis Chapter Member



Dugan Tool & Die Inc. was founded in 1977 by Charles E. Dugan. What started as a part-time adventure in his basement soon became a leading fabrication and repair facility for industry near St. Louis, MO. Mark Willmore is the current owner and CEO of Dugan Tool & Die Inc. and has been since 2010. With the help of a fantastic support team, the company has more than doubled in size in his tenure. In 2016 they relocated to a much larger facility at St. Louis Regional Airport in East Alton, IL. Currently, Dugan has over 40,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing space and 32 full-time employees. The company services all areas of industry, including refining, pipeline, pharmaceutical, steel mill, ammunition, aviation, and aerospace. Dugan Tool & Die is a union facility, ISO 9001:2015 certified, and offers 24/7 breakdown service to all its customers. They have an extensive CNC machining area which includes 5-axis milling and live tooled turning centers using SolidWorks and Mastercam. Specialty areas include robotic welding, 5' x 10' water jet cutting, precision grinding, and CMM inspection of all outgoing parts.

1145 East Airline Drive, East Alton, IL 62024  
(618) 259-1351  
[www.dugantool.net](http://www.dugantool.net)

## DIE-MATIC CORPORATION Cleveland Chapter Member



Die-Matic Corporation was founded in 1958 by Louie Zeitler. Today Die-Matic is jointly owned by both the third generation of the Zeitler family and our loyal employees. During our first 25 years in business, Die-Matic designed and built progressive dies. Since then the company's primary focus has been on metal stampings. In addition to metal stampings, Die-Matic provides value-added services such as prototypes, assembly, welding, and more.

201 Eastview Drive, Brooklyn Heights, OH 44131  
(216) 749-4656  
[www.die-matic.com](http://www.die-matic.com)

## FINE LINE MACHINE Florida West Coast Chapter Member



Fine Line Machine LLC is a precision manufacturing company established in 2021, based in Lakeland, FL. We offer precision CNC machining services for single part prototypes to high-volume production runs. In addition to CNC manufacturing, we offer engineering and assembly services to allow us to provide complete mechanical assemblies to our customers. We service a variety of industries including Machine Automation, tool and die, and much more. From design for manufacturability assistance to custom automation projects, we have the skills and resources to develop a solution that meets your needs.

502 East Main Street, Lakeland, Florida 33801  
(727) 207-5820  
[www.finelinemachine.com](http://www.finelinemachine.com)

## HANNIBAL MACHINE INC. St. Louis Chapter Member



Hannibal Machine is in its 32nd year of business and offers a range of precision metal and plastic services. We originally were founded in downtown Hannibal, MO, and have since moved to a new facility that has expanded its capabilities. We are a Certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned company of 10 employees and specialize in a wide range of manufacturing techniques to provide a high-quality part to our customer. We have grown with adding waterjet cutting services and 5 axis CNC milling and multitasking CNC turning as well as laser part marking. We are a first and second-generation run company that has shipped parts across the county.

8090 Highway MM, Hannibal, MO 63401  
(573) 248-1545  
[www.hannibalmachine.com](http://www.hannibalmachine.com)

JOSIE CNC, LLC

Rocky Mountain Chapter Member



Josie CNC Machining is a brand-new company started by a veteran machinist in Arvada, CO, with almost 20 years of experience making parts for a broad scope of materials (plastics, 6061, 7075, titanium, exotics, composites, and most stainless) across a variety of industries – including aerospace, oil and gas, medical, and more. Their goal is to help machine shops, manufacturers, and engineers save money and obtain high-quality parts within a quick turnaround time. They have a hands-on approach to every step of the machining process, starting with collaborative quoting and finishing with a fully inspected, high-quality part. They can work with you or your engineers to build a prototype and ensure that the final product will meet your goals.

8351 West 51st Avenue, Arvada, CO 80002

(720) 237-1136

www.josiecnc.com

EXTREME FORCE VALVE, INC.

St. Louis Chapter Member



Extreme Force Valve located in East Alton, IL provides valve services to companies all across the Midwest. Extreme Force Valve is owned by Dugan Tool and Die, a well-respected business since 1977 serving over 250 customers. Extreme offers Safety/Relief valve testing and repair services. Extreme is National Board Certified to perform T/O and VR work on Section I Steam and Section VIII liquid, air/gas and Steam Valves. Our repair work meets or exceed OEM specifications. The St. Louis area has a large variety of industries, and Extreme Force Valve has a range of experience in Pharmaceutical, Petro-Chemical, Manufacturing, and Food/Beverage industries. Our footprint continues to expand as a small business, and we are well-positioned to serve companies across the Midwest.

1147 East Airline Drive, East Alton, IL 62024

(618) 471-9016

PRECISION PUNCH AND TOOLING

Connecticut Chapter Member



In May of 2018, Precision Punch officially changed its name to Precision Punch & Tooling to better reflect the expanding and diverse line of precision products the company offers. Today, in addition to its extensive regular product line for the Metal Forming, Metal Fabricating, and Perforating industries, Precision Punch and Tooling offers a wide range of custom manufacturing capabilities, including high-precision specialty tooling for a wide range of market segments including Ammunition tooling, Injection Molding tooling, Medical tooling, Pharmaceutical tooling, Dental tooling, Tablet Compression tooling, Tab tooling, Can and End tooling, Fin Die tooling, and Battery tooling as well as serving manufacturers supplying the automotive and aviation industry.

304 Christian Lane, Berlin, CT. 06037

(860) 229-9902

www.ppunch.com

## CONGRATS TO THE NTMF 2022 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



### \$22K AWARDED IN SCHOLARSHIPS



**Jacob Berens**  
Mesa Community College  
Major: Manufacturing Production Technology  
Modern Industries



**Kaitlyn Fricke**  
Northeastern University  
Major: Advanced Manufacturing Systems  
Peerless Precision, Inc.



**Joshua Keys**  
Saint Louis Community College  
Major: Engineering Technology  
Carr Lane Manufacturing



**Joshua Lesniak**  
University of New Hampshire  
Major: Mechanical Engineering  
Quality Centerless Grinding Corp



**Zach Lundberg**  
Cleveland State University  
Major: Bachelors of Mechanical Engineering Technologies  
Jergens Inc.



**Max Morgado**  
University of Rhode Island  
Major: Mechanical Engineering  
Pilot Precision Products



**Jack Pannebecker**  
Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology  
Major: Computer Integrated Machining  
Astro Machine Works



**Timothy Smith**  
Arizona State University  
Major: Engineering and Manufacturing  
Nelson Engineering Co



**Ryan Warner**  
Southwestern Illinois College  
Major: General Education  
Southwestern Illinois College



**Adam Zaouague**  
Metropolitan State University of Denver  
Major: Advanced Manufacturing / Aerospace Concentration  
Reata Engineering & Machine Works, Inc.

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION BEGINS FOR LEADING TOOLING COMPONENTS MANUFACTURER

NTMA Member Carr Lane Mfg. has promoted Colin W. Frost to the new position of President effective June 1 as part of its transition to the next generation of leadership. Frost is a 15-year veteran of the firm and has been Chief Operating Officer for the past six years.

In addition, Steve M. Schlitt, Chief Financial Officer, has been named Vice President Chief Financial Officer and will expand his responsibilities in real estate, mergers and acquisitions, and other strategic initiatives.



From left to right: Carr Lane's Steve M. Schlitt, Nance Frost, Colin W. Frost, and Keri Westland.

Also, Keri L. Westland, Director of Administration, has been named Chief Administrative Officer, effective June 1. In this new role, Keri will continue to lead the Human Resources team, managing the construction of Carr Lane Mfg.'s new 50,000 sq. ft. facility in Elgin, TX, and head manufacturing operations in St. Louis and Austin. Colin Frost and Keri Westland represent the third generation of family leadership for the 70-year-old tooling components manufacturing firm headquartered in St. Louis.

Carr Lane Mfg., Chief Executive Officer Nance E. Frost, will retire by the end of 2024. She is the second-generation leader of Carr Lane Mfg. Her parents, the

late Earl E. and Myrtle E. Walker started the business with two partners in a garage in 1952. Carr Lane Mfg. is a world leader in creating standard tooling components and industrial parts.

"Our customers, distributors, and employees deserve a clear and effective transition to the next generation of leadership," Nance Frost said. "Colin and Steve have played key roles in our growth during the past decade, and I am confident Colin, Steve, and Keri will thrive in these expanded leadership roles. Together with me and our team members, we will continue to build a vibrant future for Carr Lane Manufacturing." More than 180 people work at Carr Lane Mfg.'s facilities in St. Louis and Austin, TX. Its parts and products are used in aircraft, spacecraft, automobile manufacturing, theaters, movie sets, seaports, medical devices, and furniture manufacturing.

"The future is extraordinarily bright for Carr Lane Mfg.," said Colin Frost. "While few family businesses even survive to the third generation, we have a great team with an abundance of opportunities for innovation and growth."

### COLIN FROST

Colin Frost began his professional career as a member of the team at Carr Lane Castings. He has also worked as a Regional Sales Manager, Special Project Manager and Head of Business Development for the firm. He was promoted to Chief Operating Officer of Carr Lane Mfg. in 2016. He writes frequently about manufacturing issues and holds five patents for innovative components and tooling parts. Frost is also a trustee of the St. Louis Art Museum. He earned a bachelor's degree from Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, OH.

### STEVE SCHLITT

Steve Schlitt joined Carr Lane Mfg. in 2011 and serves as Chief Financial Officer. He has been responsible for the Accounting, Supply Chain, and Human Resource functions at various points during his time at Carr Lane Mfg. He also holds seats on the boards of several

Carr Lane Mfg. related entities. Prior to joining Carr Lane Mfg., he worked more than 14 years in public accounting, advising privately held businesses. Schlitt is a Certified Public Accountant and holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from St. Louis University.

### KERI WESTLAND

Keri Westland started working at Carr Lane Mfg. as a high school student, handling assignments on the assembly line as well as picking and shipping orders. She also worked in accounting and purchasing during college. She has more than 20 years of experience in human resources, recruiting, project leadership, talent development, and diversity and inclusion. Most recently she worked at two leading financial services firms, Waddell and Reed Financial and State Street. Westland joined Carr Lane Mfg. last year. She holds a bachelor's degree from Luther College in Decorah, IA.

### About Carr Lane Mfg.

*Since 1952, Carr Lane Manufacturing Company has been committed to being the world's preferred source of tooling components by continuously improving products, processes, and services to exceed our customers' expectations. Carr Lane Mfg. is recognized as a world leader for standard tooling components and industrial parts used by virtually every industry around the globe. Known primarily for jig & fixture tooling components, Carr Lane Mfg. offers more than 100,000 industrial parts products including quick change tooling plates and accessories, hoist rings, toggle clamps, handles, knobs, ball & spring plungers, threaded inserts, clamp straps, drill bushings, alignment pins, fixture bases, and power workholding devices. We are proud to sell American-made products, with the majority of our fixture manufacturing done at our two United States production plants located in St. Louis, MO, and Austin, TX.*



Learn more at [www.carrlane.com](http://www.carrlane.com)





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# NRL 2022 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP – WE ARE BACK!

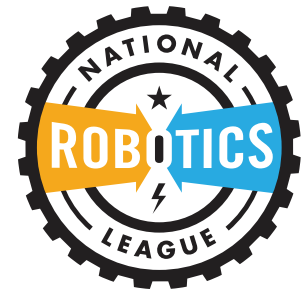
After taking an unexpected break since 2019, sparks flew and metal crunched again at the NRL 2022 National Championship, May 20-21, at the UPMC Events Center on the campus of Robert Morris University. The best 34 National Robotics League teams from across the United States competed in the fiercest battles in the history of the program. This was the ultimate test of FULL CONTACT INNOVATION. In the end, Cochranon High School, representing the NWPA NTMA Chapter, built the meanest, strongest, and most impenetrable remote-controlled 15 lb robot in the nation – Death Punch.

In the end, we are all winners. NTMA founded the NRL to help change misperceptions about manufacturing and attract a new generation of students to the in-demand and well-paying careers in manufacturing. At its core, the program was designed to develop relationships and talent pipelines between high schools and NTMA member companies. The result is not only a destruction-driven face-off of incredible machines, but also the opportunity to develop technical and critical thinking skills and to personally recruit these students to be the future of

manufacturing. NTMA and the National Tooling & Machining Foundation would like to thank Grainger, Boston Centerless, BIG DAISHOWA, alliantgroup, HEIDENHAIN, Mastercam, Blaser, and Robert Morris University for joining them in sponsoring the NRL 2022 National Championship. A special thank you to the AWT Foundation and Bloomsburg High School for providing the use of their respective arenas for the competition – and to all of the volunteers that selflessly donated their time.

**Congratulations to all of the 34 teams that competed at the NRL 2022 National Championship. Here is the complete list of award winners:**

- Grand Champion & 1st Place Award:** *Death Punch, Cochranon High School, Cochranon, PA*
- 2nd Place Award:** *Greg, Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus from Jefferson, OH*
- 3rd Place Award:** *Havoc II, Hempfield Area High School, Greensburg, PA*
- NRL Innovation Award:** *The Thing, Hempfield Area High School, Greensburg, PA*



- Best Engineered Bot:** *Death Punch, Cochranon High School, Cochranon, PA*
- Best Engineering Documentation:** *Havoc II, Hempfield Area High School, Greensburg, PA & Douglas SmackArthur, Bedford High School, Bedford, PA*
- Coollest Bot:** *Takeoff, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS*
- Sportsmanship Award:** *Pine-Richland High School, Gibsonia, PA*

Thank you to Mastercam for designing and machining the championship awards. The excitement from competition is just the beginning.

If you are interested in learning more about how to turn students into passionate, skilled, and future candidates for careers at your shop, reach out to Bill Padnos, NTMA Foundation Executive Director at [bpadnos@ntma.org](mailto:bpadnos@ntma.org) or visit <https://gonrl.org/get-involved/mentor-a-team>.



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**Monday, August 29 – Wednesday, August 31**



**Location:** Marriott Indianapolis Downtown  
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**Negotiated Room Rate:** \$165  
**Room Block Deadline:** Friday, August 5th

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# EMERGING LEADERS<sup>22</sup>



**CAITLIN SICKLES**  
EMCEE



**BEN BARTON**



**DAVE CAPKOVITZ**



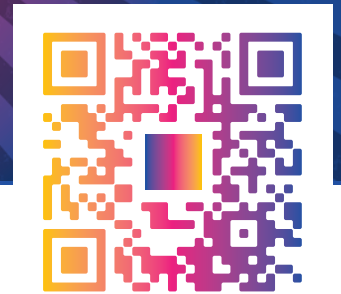
**KRISTIN CARLSON**



**BILL SKOWRONSKI**



**MICHAEL WATKINS**



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## Topics & Speakers

### Conference Emcee - Caitlin Sickles

#### Position Yourself for Leadership

*Presented by: Caitlin Sickles – Principal, Policy Resolution Group at Bracewell*

#### How to Turn Community Engagement Into Your Competitive Advantage

*Presented by: Kristin Carlson – President, Peerless Precision, Inc.*

#### Leaders are Not Born. Leaders Are Made.

*Presented by: Dave Capkovitz – Principal, EBITDA Growth Systems & Mike Watkins – Principal, EBITDA Growth Systems*

#### How to Utilize Social Media to Advance Your Company and Yourself

*Presented by: Bill Skowronski – Senior Content Marketing Manager, Red Caffeine*

#### Be the Voice of Emerging Technologies in Your Shop

*Presented by: Ben Barton – Solutions Engineer, Paperless Parts*

\*Sessions start by 3 pm on Monday, August 29, and wrap up by 11:30 am on Wednesday, August 31.

## Campfire Chat Topics

Your chance to sit down in a small group setting and discuss the following topics peer to peer:

- Wage Inflation
- Time Management Strategies
- Retaining Employees
- Delegation & Communication

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Questions? Contact Kristen Hrusch – [khrusch@ntma.org](mailto:khrusch@ntma.org) or 216-264-2845

## NTMA WESTERN LAKE ERIE CHAPTER SPEEDS AND FEEDS FITNESS CHALLENGE

The NTMA Western Lake Erie Chapter recently completed their Speeds and Feeds Fitness Challenge. The wellness competition divided members of the Chapter into teams that “faced off” in competition, measuring average miles walked, biked, or run. Overall, the Chapter was able to log 3821 miles, with 19 people taking part in the challenge.

The three-man team from NTMA Member Fedco took home first place – Josh, Scott, and Dave logged a total of 1019 miles, averaging 22.6 miles per week over the 15-week challenge. In May, they were presented with a special trophy for their efforts – the award was 3D Printed by Dundee Manufacturing, which also participated in the competition.

---

*“It was great to see our team bond and encourage each other weekly and through our group text. It is no easy feat to work a 10-hour shift and go out in rain, cold, and snow to log some miles.”*

---

**Dale Davis – President  
NTMA Western Erie Chapter**

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*“In the May 2022 (Volume 43, No. 5) issue of The Record, we featured a Q&A on Chapter Best Practices with the President of the NTMA Western Lake Erie Chapter and Vice President of Dundee Manufacturing, Dale Davis. In error, the photo used was of Dale junior, also known as “Jake” who is featured in this issue on page 33. We apologize for the mix-up Dale and Jake. Dale (pictured here) joked that he was looking quite good for 52 years old.*

Western Lake Erie Chapter President Dale Davis presents the trophy to the Fedco team

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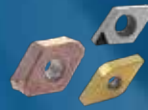
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# Retaining Employees and Reducing Litigation Risk

By: Stephen Maule - Partner, McMahon Berger

Retaining talented and experienced employees is becoming more important given the difficulties employers are facing in attracting new workers. Competition for skilled talent has increased significantly in recent years. As a result, employers often have been forced to modify their practices with respect to disciplinary decisions in order to prevent the loss of trained and tenured employees. To reach a proper disciplinary result, or prevent the need for

If disciplinary action is being considered for performance reasons, an employee performance evaluation should have been conducted prior to implementing such discipline. Performance evaluations can provide notice to the employee of their performance issues and give them an opportunity to improve. As supervisors play a critical role in the evaluation process, it is critical for employers to train their supervisors on the evaluation process to ensure

consistency, fairness, and objectivity. Evaluations should avoid ambiguity and be specific when describing performance issues. As always, honesty is the best policy when assessing performance – “massaging” an employee’s evaluation to produce a more favorable score serves only to undermine the process and can expose the employer to greater risk. Before any disciplinary action is taken, the employer should investigate the misconduct or performance issues

The employer could be setting itself up for a discrimination claim if similarly situated employees are found to have been treated differently from one another. Employees must be disciplined uniformly. If the decision is made to discipline, company-prepared forms should be used if available. The reasons for the discipline should be simple but specific. Documents related to employee disciplinary matters should focus on the facts and avoid any personal attacks or commentary about the employee. If a policy violation is alleged, clearly identify it as well as the manner in which it was violated. Have the employee review and sign the document and retain it in their personnel file.

How an employer imposes discipline may increase or decrease the likelihood of litigation. Given the sensitive nature of such a decision, employers should take care to avoid unnecessarily embarrassing or humiliating the employee. Conduct the meeting in private during a quiet time of the day. The meeting should be kept confidential to the extent possible and only involve those necessary for the matter to be resolved. If an employee is terminated, escort the employee from the building and explain that their personal belongings will be collected and delivered to them. This process also should be thoroughly documented.

discipline at all and retain employees, employers must avoid numerous pitfalls.

Make sure employees are aware of and understand company policies. As part of any newly hired employee’s orientation, ensure company policies are distributed and explained. Provide an opportunity to ask questions or request clarification about the policies and have the employee sign a policy acknowledgment form, to be retained in the employee’s personnel file. Any updates to a policy also should be acknowledged in writing.

giving rise to the discipline. The severity of the misconduct alleged will dictate the extent of the investigation. Depending on the severity and nature of the misconduct, it may be appropriate to place the employee being investigated on administrative leave for the pendency of the investigation. In a previous edition, we discussed the importance and construct of workplace investigations.

In assessing the severity of any discipline, the employer should refer to its prior handling of similar disciplinary matters. Determine whether the alleged misconduct has been the subject of discipline in the past when committed by other employees.



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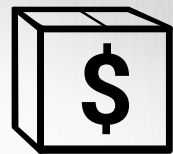
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### PRODUCTIVITY

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### PRICE

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Source: Grainger Consulting Services

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# A 75-Year Family Tradition: Three Generations Find Inspiration at IMTS

By: Kathy Keyes Webster – Managing Editor – Content, The Association for Manufacturing Technology



Courtney Silver - President, Ketchie Inc.



Courtney Silver believes manufacturing has a higher purpose. As president and owner of Ketchie Inc., her philosophy is that manufacturing creates an opportunity to make a positive impact in people's lives through relationships, products, and services. The precision machine shop in Concord, NC, makes high-mix, low-volume parts for OEMs in textiles, railroad, medical, and heavy construction machinery.

Silver got into manufacturing in 2008 when she joined the company with her late husband, Bobby Ketchie. She'd never been in a machine shop before and had no idea what role she'd play in the business.

*"I immediately fell in love with machining and manufacturing," Silver says. "I love the fact that we're working with our hands, our hearts, and our minds to make products that are useful all across the country."*

There's great pride in the parts that Ketchie produces. For one of its oldest customers, Ketchie produces shafts, gears, and pinions for knitting machines that make nonwoven apparel like Under Armor clothing. Silver is especially proud of supporting the railroad maintenance equipment by producing parts for track lifting machines.

## INSPIRED AT IMTS

Three generations of owners at Ketchie Inc. have been relying on what they learn at IMTS to grow and maintain a competitive business since 1947. Silver has been at every IMTS since 2016.

*"Attending IMTS is very energizing," Silver says. "I come back inspired. I look at the work we're doing and see how to do it better, faster."*

Ketchie has a number of Mazak (IMTS booth: 338300) machining centers and lathes. The shop makes it a priority to visit the Mazak booth at every IMTS. Silver brings part prints so Mazak representatives can review them.

*"We sat down at a table in the booth and went over what machine they'd propose for the family parts we were looking at," Silver says. "IMTS is great because we can talk to so many experts and make a lot of progress researching solutions."*

## GAME PLAN FOR 2022

*"At IMTS 2022, we're bringing a multi-generational team from operations, the shop floor, quality, and project management to combine new ideas with wisdom and experience," Silver says.*

To help solve labor challenges, Silver will look closely at robotics and automation at IMTS 2022. Of interest are quick changeover automation, flexible intelligent robotics, collaborative robots, and new workholding and tooling.

*"I'm excited to go to IMTS this year, not only to look at some things that we already know about, but also to discover technologies we haven't even thought about yet," Silver explains.*

Ketchie uses tooling and fixturing from several manufacturers and plans to visit their IMTS booths: Hexagon (booth 135202), Iscar (booth 431522), Kurt (booth 432433), Techniks (booth 431075), Mitee-Bite (booth 431556), SMW Autoblok (booth 431700), Mitsubishi (booth 338129), and Ingersoll (booth 431522).

**Find Courtney on [www.IMTS.com/CourtneyS](http://www.IMTS.com/CourtneyS)**

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AND  
**CHAD OSWALD**

**PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, METALQUEST**  
Navigating through a pandemic was no time for half measures. Scott and Chad opened a second location, then produced almost 252,000 precision parts in 81 days. They will attend IMTS looking for digital twins, more automation, and other high-performance, out-of-the-box solutions. Find Scott and Chad at IMTS 2022.

VISIT [IMTS.COM/SCOTTCHAD](https://www.imts.com/scottchad)





## NTMA SERVICE AWARDS 2022

### NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

The Service Awards are given out each year at the Manufacturing Engage Conference. We need your help finding the best candidates for these awards.

**Award categories are:**

### MEMBER AWARDS

#### HONOR AWARD

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Nominate a member for continuing meritorious service and dedication to the industry and/or the Association by a regular member; traditionally awarded for longevity of service in dedication, as opposed to a single act or service in a short-time industry or Association position.

#### L.A. SOMMER MEMORIAL AWARD

---

For outstanding and continuing service of the highest magnitude; emphasis is placed on service to the Association by a regular member, both of the highest order and over a period of time, connoting excellence in a particular role in NTMA, rather than as a participant in a single event.

#### WILLIAM E. HARDMAN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TRAINING

---

For a company or individual (regular member or education member) which consistently demonstrated strong support and active participation in structured training for the precision custom manufacturing industry.

### NON-MEMBER AWARD

#### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

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For outstanding service to the industry by a person outside the NTMA regular member companies.

Help us recognize deserving individuals and/or companies that have supported and advanced the industry and the Association.

**Submit your nomination(s) by Friday, August 12th, 2022.**

**For a nomination form, contact Linda Warner at [lwerner@ntma.org](mailto:lwerner@ntma.org)**



For more information, please contact  
Linda Warner at [lwarn@ntma.org](mailto:lwarn@ntma.org) or 216-264-2824.  
Applications and self-assessment documents can be found here:  
<https://ntma.org/resources/ntma-awards>  
Applications should be sent to [6Saward@ntma.org](mailto:6Saward@ntma.org)

## NTMA 6S Excellence Award

### PURPOSE:

To improve the perception of American manufacturing by promoting and recognizing excellence in member shop organization and efficiency.

### HOW IT WORKS:

- NTMA companies apply for the award by submitting a self-assessment based on criteria that demonstrate best-in-class practice in the six S's:  
**1. Safety 2. Sort 3. Set in Order  
4. Shine 5. Standardize 6. Sustain**
- Certificates are awarded every year for the first five years based on self-assessments submitted. Once the recipients receive five certificates, they are also presented with a trophy.

### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

- Conference exposure via introductions, etc.
- Promotional exposure: web, print, blogs, and emails that promote and support the award.

### SUBMISSION DUE DATE:

**Please submit your application by September 1, 2022 to be considered.**

## NTMA & AMT TECHNOLOGY AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

The NTMA and AMT Technology Awards are designed to recognize and share excellence for those whose use of technologies are strengthening the precision manufacturing industry.

### There are two award categories:

- *Technology Excellence Award*
- *Leadership and Culture Excellence Award*

If you would like a nomination form for either category, please visit: <https://ntma.org/resources/ntma-awards>.

**Submission Deadline is December 2, 2022**

### WINNERS IN EACH CATEGORY RECEIVE:

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- Featured Article in The Record
- Recognition at the MFG Meeting - Spring 2023
- Free Registration and Hotel at the MFG Meeting
- Plaque to be given out at MFG Meeting
- If applicable, National Associate Member (NAM) to provide social media exposure for winner
- Hosted webinar in 2023



## Trust, Credibility, and Value:

# Superpowers for Exceptionally Inspirational Leaders

By: Dr. Ellen Burts-Cooper – Senior Managing Partner, Improve Consulting & Training Group

Remember waking up early on Saturday mornings to watch your favorite superheroes and daydreaming about the amazing things you would do if only you could have been born with superhuman abilities? How cool would it be to make such a difference in people's day-to-day lives that you inspire them to build trusting relationships while establishing and protecting your credibility and adding lasting value?

*Great news! You can do all of that without the spandex!*

Trust, credibility, and value are the core superpowers for the most exceptionally inspirational leaders who manage and develop exceptionally productive individuals and teams. This article covers how each of these elements will help you become an exceptionally inspirational leader.

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*“The toughest thing about the power of trust is that it’s very difficult to build and very easy to destroy.”*

- Thomas J. Watson, Businessman

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## TRUST

Author Stephen Covey once described trust as “the glue of life,” and “the foundational principal that holds all relationships.”

Trust promotes transparent relationships that lead to highly functioning teams. Teams build confidence, cohesive relationships, and resilience. Having an in-depth understanding of various elements of trust will lead to individuals and teams that share ideas more openly, collaborate more often, and have a greater motivation to advance the mission and vision of the organization.

### Are you a trusting leader?

Consider the five elements of effective trust and ask yourself the following questions.

- **Competence:** Based on area of expertise, experience level, and job role.
  - Do you know what you need to know?
  - What do you need to learn more about?
- **Communication:** Being open and transparent with relevant information.
  - Do you do what you say?
  - Are you transparent with information?
  - Do you respect confidentiality?
  - How will you increase your ability to be vulnerable at work?
  - Do you communicate with integrity and honesty?
  - How do you determine your approach?
  - What can you do to prevent and/or manage conflict?





**Social Interactions/Relationships:**

Engaging with others and establishing connections beyond the work.

- Do you build healthy relationships?
- Who do you need to make a stronger connection with on the team?
- How should you engage socially?

• **Contractual:** Delivering the established goal; doing what is promised.

- Do you deliver what you promise?
- What could you do to ensure that you deliver on your goals?
- What barriers are there to delivering what was promised?

• **Decision-Making:** Considering multiple stakeholders and impact of decisions on others.

- Do you consider your stakeholders when you make decisions?
- How will you remember to think about your stakeholders when you make decisions?
- What are critical cross-functional decision points?

**Which trust factor is your biggest opportunity for improvement?**

---

*“Every action or perceived action shapes credibility.”*

- Mindy Hall, Author

---

**CREDIBILITY**

Credible leaders build relationships, acknowledge their egos, and communicate with tact and empathy. They put the values, mission, and the goals of the organization ahead of their own self-interest and understand how to interact in a way that inspires those around them to do the same.

The key driver in shaping or protecting credibility is the action of the individual or leader. To establish a high level of credibility, it is critical that leaders can manage their behaviors and emotions. When a manager lacks leadership credibility, it’s often the little things that have been done over time that add up and damage their reputation. Would your team consider you a credible leader? Ask yourself the following questions and really reflect on your answers by thinking of situations that can back them.

- Are you trustworthy?
- Are you up to date with changes in your field?
- Which communication trust factor is your biggest opportunity for improvement?
- Do you encourage teamwork and collaboration?
- Are you dependable?
- Do you have the overall organization’s interests and employees’ interests in mind while making decisions?
- Do you treat your team with respect?
- Do you take time to try to understand other perspectives?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no,” what actions will you take to fill that credibility gap?

**VALUE**

Among other notable prerequisites to becoming exceptionally inspirational, leaders must also identify and understand the value that they bring to the table. Effective leaders take inventory of their skills, abilities, and brand. Knowing your value as a person, and a leader is key to bringing your true self to everything that you do.

Once you have a clear understanding of your value, you must add value by doing. It does not benefit the organization to simply have dormant value. In order to truly be effective and inspirational, one must act on and apply their value to their work and the lives of those around them.

Now, consider these elements in your own working style. Trust, credibility, and value. Often times, we search for those qualities in others and judge them by their ability to operate at a high level in each area. The exceptionally inspirational leader, however, takes it upon themselves to first be the example in each category and to foster an environment in which each element can be well-represented.

**What is your superhero ability in leadership?**



# 3 Digital Tactics for Lead Generation for Manufacturers

By Zoe Blank – Marketing & Public Relations Specialist at Felber PR & Marketing

*Generating and maintaining viable leads is at the core of any successful manufacturing company. Lead generation is the process of initiating consumer interest for products or services with the goal of converting that interest into sales.*

*But what are the best ways for manufacturers to generate leads? How can manufacturers use digital marketing to generate new leads?*

## 73%

of buyers pay attention to a supplier's website when deciding whether to submit RFIs.

## 74%

of buyers choose the supplier that's first to add value and insight.

## 67%

of buyers rely more on content to educate themselves and inform purchase decisions than they did in prior years.

### 1. CREATE AND SHARE VALUABLE CONTENT

The most effective marketing strategies anticipate consumer needs & provide content to meet those needs, even before they ask. In fact, 67% of buyers rely more on content to educate themselves and inform purchase decisions than they did in prior years, according to Demand Gen's 2020 report.

Inbound marketing can be used to establish trust and symbiotic relationships between your company and its consumers. This process involves generating valuable content which attracts and educates prospects while providing them with information that benefits them. A recent Corporate Visions study reports that 74% of buyers choose the supplier that's first to add value and insight.

The use of infographics, blogs, and news releases can help satisfy consumers' informational needs by focusing on their problems & detailing how you can help solve them. Trade shows and webinars are another great way to educate consumers while increasing your company's awareness and establishing an industry presence.

### 2. ESTABLISH A STRONG AND RELIABLE SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

The potential reach for manufacturers on social media should not be underestimated. Owned social pages can be a great place to share valuable content and connect with prospects. It creates a space for manufacturers to create a brand persona, introduce themselves, and communicate with potential consumers on platforms they're already using.

Another advantage of social media is the potential to research prospects and identify what they are looking for from your company. Knowing more about your audience can help you tailor content to meet the specific needs of your buyers. 80% of marketers said that their content marketing objectives are better met

when content is personalized, according to a Seismic demand metric report. Learning how your company can help expand the manufacturing industry is a great way to establish consumer confidence and generate leads.

### 3. DESIGN YOUR WEBSITE TO OPTIMIZE CONVERSIONS

The easiest way for consumers to research product and company information is online. 73% of B2B buyers said they pay attention to a supplier's website when deciding whether to submit RFIs, according to a recent Thomas industrial buyers survey. If your company's website is not user-friendly, you're missing out on a ton of potential customers. Using your website to encourage visitors to take action could be a valuable source of new leads.

Visit: <https://info.felberpr.com/seo-audit-offer> to learn how a website SEO Audit can improve discoverability. For instance, try using a contact section on your site's homepage where visitors can get in touch immediately to ask questions, or an e-newsletter subscription pop-up to encourage regular communications from your business.

#### Need help with your digital marketing strategies?

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# A Customer Shift is Happening

By: David Capkovitz, EBITDA Growth Systems

We spend quite a bit of time traveling the Continental US, visiting machine shops and manufacturers of all kinds. Two constants I am seeing across all of these businesses are 1. A gap in supply chain where we are struggling to get materials in a timely fashion, and 2. A gap in a skilled workforce where we are all fighting for the same small pool of individuals we need to grow and meet our goals. These are daily struggles that we see in all of our interactions, and we need to be able to lean into this current business climate and make sure we stay on top of our game.

## What do I mean by this?

Our next step after investing in our culture is to start the real conversations with our customers. Our customers need to hear the genuine struggles that we are going through for both your sake and theirs. If their expectations are that they are going to get everything that they order exactly when they want it for the exact price they are asking for, they may be set up for disappointment. This level of communication needs to be exponentially higher during these struggles. Not having the materials means you cannot cut the chips. Not having the people means you don't have all the expected hours of production available to hit the due date. This open and honest conversation with the customer is never fun, but it's integral in growing a strong relationship. Customers used to be able to call any shop and place an order with the cheapest bidder. Now that is not the case. We are in a different climate both in the US and globally. The employees are gold, and the shops that can produce good parts on time are in high demand. That means the shoe is on the other foot.

## How do we deal with the Customer in the newfound climate?

We need to understand our value! We need to understand our cost very well. We need to understand that if we don't pay employees a more than fair rate someone else will. We need to understand that "expediting" may not be available with materials or outside suppliers. This labor and material shortage

climate along with significant inflation that we are seeing means we are not in a "price reduction" state anymore. If you are, I think you may be in the wrong market. That leads to the next tough conversation that no one seems to want to have.

If you don't increase pricing to compensate for the increase in labor cost, the increase in material cost, and the ancillary inflation costs, the only one who loses is you. This means you go from 15% profit to -5% profit and the people who start to struggle are the owners and their families. If this is you, please start to reflect now for your sake and your legacy's sake. I am seeing these conversations happen on a daily basis and have had the privilege of being in several of them alongside our clients.

## What happens with these tough conversations?

First things first... The customer is expecting this call if you have not had it. All of their prices are increasing as well. Once you get through the initial pleasantries and break the news to them (Before you accept the next order), things go one of two ways. Either 1, they start by saying that they cannot handle a price increase, their prices are locked, and they may have to move the order somewhere else, or 2, they are expecting this and start to negotiate with you on how much they can pay for the item(s). It is important to know that you have more leverage than you think you do. The competing shop most likely buys the material where you do, and struggles to fill the same employment spots you are trying to fill. From here I suggest you hold your ground. nine times out of ten the threats you may encounter are empty, especially in a highly regulated environment (Medical, Aerospace, Defense, Space, and Automotive). This means the customer would have to spin up a new supplier and go through all of the validations, PPAPs, etc. to even start to move that part number. All that time they are trying to do this, their supplier quality engineer has to stop what important thing they are doing (if they have an extra supplier quality engineer) and the customer does not get what they need for their product sales. All that said, it is hard for a good customer to move product.

## How do I negotiate these new prices?

The first thing you need to do is understand your cost, and then look to make a fair profit on top of your cost. At EGS we suggest that you offer 50-60% Gross Margin (GM) on low-run product and around 40-45% GM on higher-volume product. Don't sacrifice GM, look for ways to streamline your process to make it more efficient. Once you get to your accurate number, hand that over and hold firm. If you are sitting on a 10% GM product, let the customer know it's okay if you don't get the order. You have rising costs as well as employees to take care of. It is imperative that you convey the message that you greatly value your employees, and you need to make a fair living for all of them (including yourself). There is also no good investment in top-end technology without this mentality unless you saddle yourself with a significant amount of debt.

At EBITDA Growth Systems, we suggest that you review all of the jobs in your shop to see how you are performing in regard to Gross Margin. Start negotiating from the bottom up of your lowest GM part numbers and do a good review before you accept the next order. This will stop the current losses that you have and turn them into profitable jobs.

If you are a manufacturer, you are the backbone of our country and you are important. You are running a business that we all need. We (USA) cannot afford for you to not be successful. Profit is how we measure success. Profit is also how you keep employees (they like to win) and how you invest in your dreams, all while you get better sleep at night. Take it seriously and don't leave it on the table.

## Do you need a paradigm shift with your customers?



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Manufacturing Manager,  
*Hamill Manufacturing Company*

“Brandon is organized and motivated to succeed. He is new to manufacturing and originally from Hamill's Accounting Department. Brandon has bridged his transfer from the office to the shop environment by gaining the respect of employees on every level. In doing this, he has transformed the way Hamill thinks about manufacturing. He utilizes our shop floor data collection to show trends – strengths and weaknesses – and helps us rethink manufacturing processes. This has allowed Hamill to reduce waste, rework lost time, and continue to refine more lean processes. Brandon is also easily able to relate to the next generation and provide them with training to help our organization move forward.”

- Timothy McCarthy



**JP Cooper**  
Department Manager – Lathe,  
*Shamrock Precision*

“JP has helped his company survive the toughest times and thrive during the best. JP started with Shamrock Precision as a material handler with no experience in a machine shop. Since then he has grown into a trusted voice for colleagues and management, and earned the position of Department Manager during COVID-19. He is always willing to do whatever it takes to complete the job right.”

- Corbin Embrey



**Tawny Bush**

Supply Chain Manager,  
*Reata Engineering*

“Tawny consistently goes above and beyond with any task or job put in front of her. She is a strong leader and her attention to detail is unparalleled. We constantly receive compliments from both our vendors and customers in regards to their interactions with Tawny. She has increased our OTD from our suppliers and is always on top of managing solutions with supply chain issues. Everyone knows that if you need information, she is your go-to person!”

- Christina Collette



**Robert Falor**

CNC Machinist, *Southern Manufacturing Technologies, Inc*

“After working for several years as a Chef, Robert found SMT. Robert graduated from our apprentice program with twelve NIMS Credentials, and earned an additional one for OJT. He runs our newest, most sophisticated cell with robotic tending. Robert is currently mentoring and training one of our high school students and is one of our tour guides when we have school tours. He now serves on the Board of the Tampa Bay Machining Apprenticeship and has become a strong spokesman for careers in machining. He is an Emerging Leader and has a bright future.”

- Roy Sweatman



**Rikki Parra**

Sales Coordinator / Engineering Coordinator, *Allied Tool & Die*

“In her sales coordinator position, Rikki has become a key player for Allied Tool and has taken ownership of this important process. Her next move is into CNC Engineering: making sure all CNC processes flow smoothly. Rikki maintains a positive outlook and is a joy to work with – and remains a determined part of Allied Tool.”

- Jeff Moorhead



**Kristian Kasa**

Manager, *Boulevard Machine*

“Kristian started his career learning to be a CNC Machinist while still in high school. He went on to STCC to further his skills as a Mechanical Engineer, as well as picking up classes for Mastercam. Over the years he has progressed from a Machinist, to Programming, to Manager, demonstrating his leadership skills working closely with the machinist. His drive for knowledge and determination has made him an essential part of the Boulevard team. Most recently he has taken on the planning and designing of Boulevard’s new state of the art facility.”

- Tanya Hayward



**Christy Townsley**

Marketing Manager,  
*Carr Lane Manufacturing Co.*

“Christy joined CLM just 6 months prior to the start of the pandemic. Without the foresight of what were to come she lead the digital transformation of the marketing department and marketing deliverables. Once the pandemic occurred Christy pivoted the efforts of the department to support the significant changes in Sales activities. Her leadership and vision for the future was critical to the success of CLM during such a turbulent time.”

- Colin Frost



**Jason Ryan**

CNC Machinist, *Southern Manufacturing Technologies, Inc*

“Jason came to SMT through his involvement in an SMT-supported robotics club. He graduated from our machining apprenticeship program with twelve NIMS Credentials and earned an additional one for OJT. He is one of our lead people in our Horizontal Cell consisting of six CNC Horizontal Machining Centers, including three with a 23 pallet FMS. Jason is mentoring and training one of our high school students and is one of our tour guides for school tours – as well as leading the corrective actions and continuous improvement in his area. He has become a strong spokesman for careers in machining and is a true Emerging Leader.”

- Roy Sweatman


**Rick Brunswick**

Engineering Manager,  
*Tru-Edge Grinding Inc.*

“Rick began at Tru-Edge as an intern while attending the Tri-Star Career Compact School in Celina, OH. In 2001, after graduation, Rick accepted a full-time position as a CNC machinist, operating various models of precision grinding machines. In 2012, Rick was promoted into the Engineering Department and undertook responsibility for CNC programming/cutting tool design and process planning. Rick later accepted a position as the Engineering Manager overseeing a team of six engineering associates. Rick’s ability to continually learn and develop his interpersonal communication capabilities, project management skills, and overall dedication to our organization makes him an excellent candidate for an Emerging Leader.”

- Marc Steimer


**Tracey Redeker**

Materials Coordinator,  
*Bourn & Koch Inc.*

“Tracey has made great efforts within this organization in a growing number of roles and responsibilities. In 2013, she started at Bourn & Koch in a clerical role and has since acquired a number of skills, including: procurement, work order creation, labor transactions, cycle counting, methods routing, internal auditing, corrective action leadership, cost variance analysis, continuous improvement, project leadership & material handling. She is piloted by the values important to BKL as she passionately drives the changes needed to grow the business. Because of her integrity, the ownership of her responsibilities, and her teamwork, she has grown to become capable to lead efforts that demonstrate important performance improvements.”

- Todd Wells


**Jessica Wilber**

Director of Business Development/  
Operations Manager, *FOM, LLC*

“Jessica began with FOM, LLC in 2021 and immediately had an impact - bringing in new client contacts and increasing revenue over 20% in her first 6 months. We quickly realized Jessica had a ton of operations knowledge - she consistently suggested great ideas to make the business run smoother. We soon promoted her to Operations Manager. Jessica will now be in charge of designing, improving, and implementing new processes to streamline operations, taking over all LEAN and 5S initiatives and organizing planning meetings. Jessica’s management of operations will allow for further growth of the company as we prepare to move into a larger facility, add more machines including 5-axis, multi-axis turning, and extending our horizontal pallet pool system.”

- Justin Quinn

machining. He went straight to 5-axis machining - since 4-axis was not challenging enough for him. Jed has become a very reliable and fast set-up man. In just a few years, he has left many old timers behind in skill set, and continues to challenge himself to do more - and now he is learning people management. He has a knack for process improvement, never taking anything for granted, and always striving for cycle time reduction. Jed never says no to a project and takes every challenge with a smile.”

- Art Santana

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RISING<sup>22</sup>**


**Jed Tronier**

Multi Axis Milling Lead,  
*Paramount Machine*

“Jed came out of the auto-mechanic industry with no idea of CNC’s, then self-taught himself to program in Mastercam after falling in love with





**Dale Davis**

Mechanical Engineer/Die Designer,  
*Dundee Manufacturing Company*

“Dale (aka “Jake”) started working in our shop after his freshman year of high school and continued with us until he started college. During high school he took 3 years of Solid Works, and became proficient in the software. He graduated from the University of Toledo with a Bachelor’s in Mechanical Engineering in 2020. In 2021 he joined our company full time as a mechanical engineer, working to become our Engineering Manager. In this past year, he has learned cost estimating, Autodesk Inventor and Nastran, performing FEA using this software. Additionally, he has been included in Western Lake Erie NTMA Chapter meetings, allowing him to become active in the process and bring a young person’s perspective.”

- Dale Davis



**Joel Antipuna, Jr**

Manufacturing Manager, *Rosenberger North America Pennsauken, LLC*

“Joel worked his way up from a summer intern to Manufacturing Manager. He joined the Rosenberger North America team as a full-time employee in 2016 after graduating from Stockton University with a bachelor’s degree. Joel officially started his career as an entry-level CNC Swiss Machinist – an area that Joel was familiar with as he had worked for Rosenberger over his summer breaks from school since 2010. His leadership style is to lead by example, challenge others to develop, and support them in their efforts. Joel’s consistency in his approach has fostered a well-rounded team that is genuinely interested in the success of others and the company”

- Ted Toth



**Annie Shipman**

Master Planner,  
*F.N. Smith Corporation*

“Annie started with F.N. Smith in 2014 as an entry-level machinist on 2nd shift. Soon after, Annie was enrolled in the machinist apprenticeship program, completing all 4 years to become a machinist journeyman. In 2020, Annie was promoted to supervisor, overseeing fabrication, weld, and the machine-building departments. She led these teams through the challenging times of the pandemic; improving overall efficiency and increasing capacity. Annie is detail oriented and leads with passion, pushing her team to continually improve. Her drive helped FN Smith have its best year in history. She now sets schedules for all production areas within FN Smith, coordinating with engineering, production, and outside processing to ensure orders are shipped on time. Annie has been key to the growth of the company, is well respected by her peers, and is continually striving for that next step.”

- Chris Blumhoff



**Jimmy Tornow**

Sales Engineer,  
*F.N. Smith Corporation*

“Jimmy began with us in 2014, and was one of the first to complete the Machine Builders apprenticeship

program. He became one of our top machine builders and field service technicians, traveling the world installing F.N. Smith equipment, including Brazil and Mexico. Jimmy is a natural with customers, taking time to ensure they understand the equipment. In 2021, Jimmy helped FN Smith have its best year ever – his orders alone eclipsed what the company could collectively do in a single year. In addition, Jimmy provides field service support and serves as a mentor to our machine building team.”

- Chris Blumhoff



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## Emerging Leader: Christina Collette



When Christina Collette saw a job opening at Reata Engineering & Machine Works, Inc., she knew she wanted to apply. As a former supplier to Reata, Christina remembers thinking that “Reata had an ease of communication with suppliers which really built good relationships.” “They were one of my favorite customers,” she says, “so I thought it would be a good place to be.”

Christina started as the company’s supply chain manager in 2019 and served in that role for about two years before being promoted to director of operations where she is “focused on structuring, streamlining, and increasing efficiencies.” Christina notes that her first position in the company helps her to do well in her current role. “I’m glad that I started where I did. It allowed me to be one of the team, making people more willing to communicate about their frustrations and things they wish they could change. I created good relationships and built trust that is important now.”

To keep up that trust, Christina believes in facetime first. “Once I moved into this position, I spent a lot of time on the floor being hands-on.”

“As a manager,” Christina notes, “It’s easy to say, ‘We’re focused on team, we want a good culture.’ It’s much harder to put action behind it.” She explains that managers are often trying to combat the perception among employees that their feedback is falling on deaf ears.

“I try to be really purposeful about what I say and the follow-through actions that

I take,” Christina says. To prove the point, she instituted for herself a hard time limit. “I make sure that, for everything that is brought to me, I respond within twenty-four hours.” Sometimes she can provide a solution under that deadline, sometimes she can’t. But, either way, she makes sure to respond.

“Showing progress toward a solution is just as important as providing the solution,” she says. “If you’re doing it, but you’re not communicating it, the perception is that it’s not being done.”

Christina says that she is like most manufacturing industry leaders in that she “has very high expectations.” “But I also believe in leading by example,” she adds. She explains that she doesn’t ask for things that she doesn’t understand or hasn’t tried herself. “If I’m working with the shipping department and I’m asking them to reduce time on packaging, I spend half a day back there working alongside our team to figure out the solution.”

For Christina, almost everything comes down open communication driven by honesty and vulnerability. “I might say, ‘This is what I’d like to have happen, but I’m not the expert, you are the expert and I need to hear your opinion of what I’m asking so we can figure out together what’s possible and what is the best way forward.’” She says, “If you want people to take ownership, they have to feel heard and validated.”

A culture of open communication can also help manage mistakes and setbacks. “I try to be very even-keeled – no highs and no lows. You can’t take your team on an emotional rollercoaster or make people fear coming to tell you that there is an issue.” A two-way street of open communication allows Christina and her team to receive early warnings of problems and provide faster reaction times on solutions, something that is better for Reata and for customers. Communication also depends on accessibility and Christina knows that. She encourages calls or texts on her cell phone and is usually on-site 10 to 11 hours a day – from about 7:30 AM to 5 or 6 PM – where she makes herself consistently available, even when in meetings.

“Employees here know that they are my number one priority, they are what makes this business. If they knock on the door, they will get my attention.”

“Ultimately, you have to get people to see you as a human and not a boss,” Christina says. “Walking the floor is great, and having an open-door policy is great, but if you don’t have a connection, no one will feel comfortable coming to talk to you. You can stand right next to someone six hours a day, but if they don’t have a connection to you, they won’t tell you what is bothering them.”

Christina believes that “As a leader, it is our job to learn the various personalities of employees, it’s not their job to learn us.” It’s not enough for employees to be told the expectations of their managers, she says. “We have to learn what communication styles work for different people – written, visual, hands-on. We have to try multiple ways before we can truly say this is an expectation that everyone understands.”

When she thinks about leadership, Christina looks up to Grady Cope, the owner of Reata. “He treats his team as a family – every person in this building knows that he cares and would do anything for them. He also has a real passion for having an impact in the industry, beyond just his company.”

And Christina is trying to follow that lead. She’s on the board for the Rocky Mountain NTMA Chapter and a co-chair for the local National Robotics League as well as a part of many other industry growth organizations and projects. She plans to bring several members of her team with her to this year’s NTMA Emerging Leaders Conference, “The way they do the roundtable discussions, people share so candidly their struggles and their successes. You end up taking away a lot that you can implement at your own company as well as continued contacts that you can reach out to for input and assistance in the future.”

“NTMA is like a club,” Christina says. “But one where everybody is focused on helping each other be successful, which, in this day

## Emerging Leader: Zac Overton



Zac Overton and Steve Overton, co-owner of Overton Industries

Zac Overton is warm and gregarious with an easy self-deprecating humor. “My current role is division manager,” he tells me. Then adds, “But no one really knows what that title means.”

He goes on to explain that he runs the Tube Forming Systems business of Overton Industries in Franklin, Indiana. “We design and build custom tools and machines for large, typically Fortune 500-type companies.”

In his role, Zac is responsible for financial reporting, operations, employee retention, and culture. “It’s a lot of different hats,” he says with a laugh.

Zac starts his day with two separate “stand-up, walk-around meetings.” “We go through our machine build department and talk through what happened the day before, what the plan is for today, and what stumbling blocks there might be that could keep us from getting our work done. Then, we do the same thing on the machining side.”

The first meeting starts at 7:30 AM and each one lasts “between ten and twenty-five minutes, depending on how much work we’re doing and what kind of issues we have going on.” From there, Zac says, “it’s just an adventure.”

Zac is in the car when I reach him, driving back to his office after attending an automation event in Chicago. Despite

having been away from the facility all day, Zac is relaxed.

“I really try to be the opposite of a micromanager. I think the ultimate goal is that the business can run just as effectively when senior leaders need to be away.” Zac, who turned 34 at the beginning of the year, has been around Overton Industries his whole life. His father and two of his uncles own the business which was founded by Zac’s grandfather who passed away a few years before Zac was born. Zac remembers helping his dad with PowerPoint presentations when his father was the company’s Chief Financial Officer.

Zac went to Indiana University where he felt free to pursue his own interests. “My father didn’t want me to feel obligated by my family ties to the business.” Four years later, Zac had a degree in Spanish Language and Literature – and no clear plan of what to do with it.

After working in a few other positions, he approached his family about joining Overton Industries. They took him on in a sales and marketing role. “I could talk to anybody, but I didn’t really know, from a floor perspective, what we did. So, I was going to sell things I knew nothing about. I’d come back from meetings to find out whether we could do what I’d said we could do.”

After going back to school for Business Administration, Zac took over the shopfloor and operations for the company. “That was really a stretch because I’m no machinist!” He held the role for two years. “It was a great experience and one that I know I needed. But it’s not a job I’d want to have again.”

Today, Zac oversees every aspect of the business and describes his leadership style as “transparent and collaborative.”

“Too many owners and senior managers want to be the hub, the center of the wheel, and everything runs through them.

But then the problem is that the business is that person and, without them, there is no business. I don’t want to be that person and I don’t want to employ that person either. I want everyone to have ownership over their role and, when we work as a team, it’s a well-oiled machine.”

Zac takes team seriously. “I like to surround myself with people who are smarter than me and better than me. You have to know your limitations.” And, it’s clear that Zac sees NTMA as an extension of his team. He attended his first meeting over a decade ago and finds inspiration in his fellow current and future manufacturing leaders. He applauds NTMA’s work to support the next generation of CEOs who will grapple with a “complicated political environment and negative perception of manufacturing in this country.” “We are the group that will really make or break this industry. It’s so important that we have the tools we need to run the businesses and to grow and sustain and promote the industry to make it stronger and better.”

Zac seems to be in perpetual motion toward betterment. During the pandemic, he picked up a master’s degree in finance. He listens to podcasts on his commute – “it just seems like such a waste of time to not be learning” – and is constantly reading – “mostly business and history books.” He recommends “No Rules Rules,” an account of Netflix’s culture of radical honesty. “I like how they built an environment where people felt comfortable offering honest feedback directly to their bosses. That’s a culture I’d want to be a part of, and one I’m trying to help create.”

Zac is reflective when he thinks about his role at Overton Industries. “I try to be positive, partly because that’s my personality, but also, I’m really bullish on this industry and this business. I think it’s important to set a vision, to provide something that people can be excited about and want to be a part of. If we can do that, there’s really no limit for us.”

## Emerging Leaders Q&A:

Ashleigh A. Wehrle

President, Area Tool & Manufacturing, Inc.



### 1. Why did you choose the manufacturing industry to focus your career?

Manufacturing chose me. My father founded Area Tool & Manufacturing, Inc. in 1976. After completing my undergraduate at Mercyhurst University with majors in Business Finance/Management and Accounting I entered the retirement planning industry working with corporate retirement plan trustees and participants. I was approached by my dad when his office manager of 28 years was retiring. 15 years later it was the best decision I didn't realize I was making.

### 2. What do you find most compelling about the industry today?

Manufacturing is constantly evolving. The core foundations of manufacturing are ever present, but we have to adapt quickly to ever-changing, ever-improving technology that impacts both manufacturing and operations.

### 3. Where do you see your career going over the next 5 years? What contributions do you want to make?

Our employees are the driving force behind our success. These are highly skilled,

highly technical individuals that bring their passion and drive for excellence to every part they machine. Holding themselves to the highest level directly impacts our customers' ability to serve their end-users. For me, being able to provide an environment where these individuals can thrive and excel in a trade that is critical to every item we connect with, is the biggest contribution I can make. Impacting the pipeline into manufacturing and allowing this trade to grow exponentially is where I would hope to see my career over the next 5 years go.

### 4. What in your mind makes a great leader in manufacturing?

Humility, empathy, and adaptability are characteristics that can make a great leader in manufacturing. Humility allows one to lean on the expertise of those around them and cultivate a teamwork environment. Empathy allows one to relate to customers, needs and in return creates problem-solving skills. Adaptability allows one to move swiftly with the constant changes in manufacturing. All three together allows one the capacity to make modifications that honor the foundations of manufacturing while incorporating new technologies.

### 5. Why should someone consider working in the manufacturing industry?

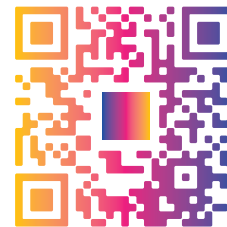
Manufacturing encompasses every aspect of our daily lives. Everything is rooted in manufacturing. This trade is highly technical, highly skilled, and constantly evolving. For anyone looking for a fast, paced career that has a direct impact on the quality of products at our fingertips, "boots on the ground" manufacturing is where it all starts.

### 6. What do you see as the greatest challenges facing the industry today?

The pipeline of trainable employees is a tremendous challenge. The seesaw has teetered far to the side of many highly skilled, long-term individuals who are nearing retirement. The skills they have mastered during their careers are virtually irreplaceable and unreplicated without years of mentoring and training. There are many misconceptions about manufacturing that have negatively impacted the growth of individuals entering the trade.

### 7. How are young leaders like yourself facing those challenges?

Being transparent, vocal, and passionate about manufacturing in a way that allows our message to be heard across many outlets. Reaching the youth where they are in terms of relating manufacturing to the world as they know it. Educating the educators (including parents and peers) on the skills, character traits, and hobbies of individuals who excel in manufacturing. Opening our facilities so we can show and not just speak of the highly technical achievements we produce on a daily basis. Partnering with the NTMA Community both Nationally and Locally.



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# The Future is Rich With Emerging Leaders



Ryan Carpenter, Operational/Technical Consultant  
Global Shop Solutions

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*“Every day Ryan sets an example by making the choice to do amazing things for our team, our company, and especially our customers. I consider it an honor and a privilege to have him as part of my team.”*

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It would be easy to consider Ryan Carpenter a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to Global Shop Solutions ERP software, but that doesn't do him justice.

As an Operational/Technical Consultant on the Continuous Improvement Team at Global Shop Solutions, Ryan's knowledge and skills enable him to help customers resolve just about any issue in the realm of quote to cash flow. He joined the company in December 2018 and was promoted to his new role in February of last year.

Manufacturers rely on data to make decisions, and Ryan works diligently to help our customers understand the significance of keeping timely and accurate data in their ERP systems. He teaches them how to use the software to manage inventory, build accurate work orders, analyze true job costs, quality control, and much more. He also coaches them to implement proper business practices when tracking information so they can focus more on what they do best. Overall, Ryan's biggest impact comes from working with customers to continuously improve their fluency in the software.

On the technical side, Ryan leads implementations involving specific aspects of the software, such as GS Mobile – a software tool that allows manufacturers to use mobile handheld scanners for rapid, accurate inventory tracking and material movement. He also serves as a teacher and trainer on various technical aspects of the software. His virtual trainings include a course on the Dashboard Designer, a popular new software feature that allows customers to design their own Dashboard visuals in Global Shop Solutions. Ryan also teaches a shipping Advanced Certification Course (ACC).

Manufacturing personnel often resist change to their ERP systems. Ryan gets the job done with his friendly but confident personality and the ability to explain complex processes in a logical and organized manner. His calm demeanor and knowledge of the system instill a sense of comfort that the changes he is recommending or implementing make sense from a process flow and efficiency standpoint, thereby reducing resistance to the change. It's no surprise that our customers love working with Ryan.

Since coming to Global Shop Solutions, Ryan has accumulated a vast amount of knowledge regarding operations and customer care. With his ability to provide assistance in both areas he quickly became a valuable team member. Always ready to help and willing to put in the time to research solutions, Ryan's teammates know they can count on his leadership and persistence to see every project through.

“Each morning is a choice to wake up and be great; to show up, be present, and give it your best,” said Joddi Goertzen, Global Shop Solutions Senior Financial Consultant and Continuous Improvement Team Lead.

“Every day Ryan sets an example by making the choice to do amazing things for our team, our company, and especially our customers. I consider it an honor and a privilege to have him as part of my team.”

## Ryan Carpenter's Awards and Achievements

*Ryan graduated with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the Colorado School of Mines. He holds an associate-level certification in SOLIDWORKS®, a leading developer of 3D CAD design software.*

“It takes many years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.”

- WARREN BUFFETT

Great leaders lead by example, which perfectly describes Cynthia Ashby when working with customers, direct reports, and other Global Shop Solutions departments.

As team lead for Global Shop Solutions Data Analysis Accounting Team, Cynthia does more than just implement solutions to customer financial issues. She also takes the time to ensure each customer fully understands the reasoning behind her solution and the procedures needed to achieve the desired results.

Cynthia, who joined Global Shop Solutions in 2014, excels at troubleshooting customer issues and training the customer’s financial people on different ways to make their business more financially sound. She plays a key role in the continuous improvement of the ERP software by helping the R&D team understand customers’ financial needs and desires when upgrading and adding new functionalities to the system. When customers request new features or customizations of the software, Cynthia works directly with the Continuous Improvement and R&D teams to devise a way to build it into the software.

Perhaps nothing illustrates Cynthia’s “lead by example” leadership style as her approach to developing the people that report to her. When team members are unable to come up with solutions for a customer problem, she doesn’t immediately jump in to fix the problem as managers often do. Instead, Cynthia has the team member consider potential ways to find a solution to the problem and work at it on their own – an invaluable technique for developing the team’s troubleshooting skills. If the team member remains stuck, she offers suggestions to guide their thinking and come up with the right solution.

Cynthia started her career with Global Shop Solutions in customer service, answering phone calls from customers regarding issues related to the accounting/financial side of the software. It didn’t take long for senior management to recognize her talent and passion for helping customers and co-workers solve problems in a timely manner. Now, she leads the second-level customer support team, which handles complex financial issues that can’t be resolved quickly over the phone.

Cynthia attained her leadership position by earning the respect, admiration, and trust of senior leaders, supervisors, and fellow employees. She constantly helps consultants when they’re on the road, assisting them in finding solutions to customer issues they haven’t come across before. With superb communication and organizational skills, regardless of the situation Cynthia always handles it in a calm, professional manner.

Most importantly, senior managers can rest easy when giving Cynthia projects because they know she will get them done. It’s people like Cynthia that have made Global Shop Solutions what it is today.

#### Cynthia Ashby’s Awards and Achievements

*Cynthia earned three bachelor’s degrees in only four years of undergraduate study – Accounting, Financing and Banking, and Financial Institutions – achieving a 4.0 GPA in each one. She recently completed her master’s degree at Texas Tech University while working full-time at Global Shop Solutions.*



Cynthia Ashby, Data Analysis Manager  
Global Shop Solutions

*Senior managers can rest easy when giving Cynthia projects because they know she will get them done. It’s people like Cynthia that have made Global Shop Solutions what it is today.*



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**JEFF JACKSON**  
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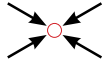
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