

Building Blocks keeps educators focused and happy

By Kevin Carroll kcarroll@timesleader.com

With over 800 families served in 12 locations across the county, there's a lot going on at Building Blocks Learning Center.

In his 13 years with the early-learning company, chief administrative officer Lake Ryan Gemzik knows it's about more than just education at Building Blocks.

"It's about creating an experience for these children," Gemzik said. "It's also about creating an experience for our educators and keeping them happy and focused."

The experience is clearly working for the staff — Building Blocks was named as one of the Times Leader's "Best Places to Work" for 2021.

"Working here has made such a great impact on me," Gemzik said. "It's an honor for Building Blocks to be recognized as one of the best places to work."

The employees at Building Blocks, from teachers to administrators, are tasked with quite the job: taking children as young as six weeks old into their care and providing the appropriate setting for the children to learn and grow in a number of different ways.

Building Blocks currently has 122 teachers on staff, according to Gemzik, with each teacher focused on their own particular age group at each of the school's locations.

Far from just a preschool setting, Building Blocks serves children all the way through the age of 12.

"We keep the kids grouped by age to avoid causing issues for our teachers," Gemzik said. "We want the children to have a consistent experience."

Part of that experience has always been making sure that each student feels healthy and safe while at Building Blocks, an approach that put them ahead of the curve when confronted by the challenges brought by COVID-19.



"COVID-19 definitely challenged us, but we were already so focused on washing hands and keeping healthy," Gemzik said. "It seemed like such a headache at first, but I have a different perspective now. ... Our staff has done such a great job."

All in all, Gemzik said he's happy with the job the school has done for hundreds and hundreds of area children, and he's happy with how the job has afforded him opportunities like the chance to go back to school.

"This place allows for such a great work/life balance," he said. "I'm so lucky to be in such a great place."





NEPA Working through Covid 2021 BEST PLACES TO WORK

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Employees are core of business at Fastenal

By Ryan Evans revans@timesleader.com

JESSUP — For Marcelo DeSousa and his team at Fastenal in Lackawanna County, it's the culture of the company that makes them a Best Place to Work.

DeSousa, 51, migrated to America at the age of 12, settling in "South Jersey" as he puts it. While attending school, he got a job at UPS which lead to the beginning of his career in management. He would then go on to work with DHL, which saw him move around the country a lot. He says he, "wanted to get back a bit closer to home, to South Jersey" so when the position he's at now opened up, he jumped on it.

In the decade since, Fastenal's Jessup/Olyphant location has only expanded, not just in its physical size, but in its committment to its employees.

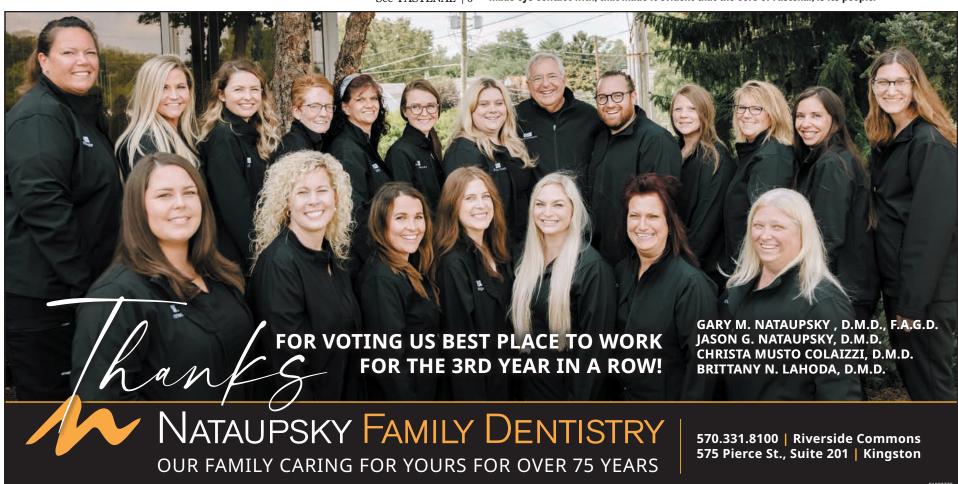
DeSousa, who serves as Regional Operations Manager, was very proud to point out numerous facts about his team, from their dedication in working through the pandemic, their adaptation and overcoming adversity and the numerous incentives and on-site luxuries his employees have at their disposal.

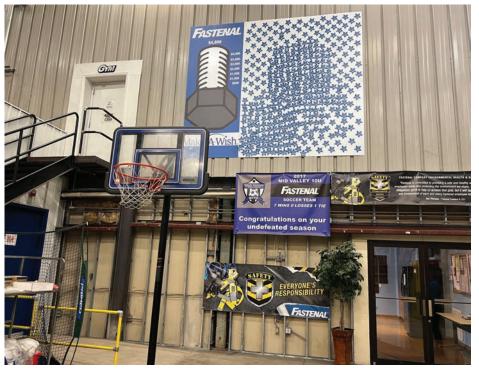
See 'FASTENAL' | 6



Ryan Evans | Times Leader

Regional Operations Manager Marcelo DeSousa says that historically, Fastenal doubles in size every 5 to 7 years, and while high-technology innovation and automation are apparent throughout the extensive facility, it was the smiles on the faces of workers, the way DeSousa greeted everyone he made eye contact with, that made it evident that the core of Fastenal, is its people.





Ryan Evans | Times Leader

Fastenal's gym and basketball court area also lead to a break room (doors to the right) which houses snacks, drinks, table games and the numerous plaques enshrined with the names of standout employees.



Rvan Evans I Times Leader

Regional Operations Manager at Fastenal's Jessup/Olyphant location Marcelo DeSousa receives the company's NEPA: Best Places to Work certificate. DeSousa credits his team - and their culture - with making his place a top-notch employment center. With ever expanding fields, endless incentives for employees and a culture that does truly care, it's easy to see how Fastenal won this award.



Thank you to Wilkes-Barre City's Police, Fire, Health, Public Works, and City Hall Employees for your tireless work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Your efforts are keeping our City safe and are helping to revive our community.

Mayor George C. Brown

FASTENAL from 4

Fastenal proudly boasts its School of Business, flanked by the 'Opportunity' sign that hangs over the doorway. Lecturers from around the nation come by and train the next generation of current employees who will step into its leadership positions. Employees can also earn bonuses, be named "Employee of the Month," utilize the full gym (although it is currently closed due to COVID-19 protocols) or enjoy the basketball court, which is quite a popular hangout during NBA Playoffs or NCAA March Madness. DeSousa even mentioned a time they delivered a brand-new grill to a standout employee.

"What we've worked through the years is basically our culture," DeSousa says. "Just making sure that the people that are here are the right people to be here, to be part of the team, to work together, to have the ambition, to fulfill that growth through customer service, follow our cultural values of innovation and ambition with the integrity and teamwork. It really just comes down to the culture, it comes down to the people."

Even when they were named an essential business, DeSousa was proud to say, "We never missed a day of work here. We learned a lot about ourselves, a lot about our innovation and how to change,



Ryan Evans | Times Leader

In addition to the School of Business, employees can also earn bonuses, be named "Employee of the Month", utilize the full gym (although it is currently closed due to COVID-19 protocols) or enjoy the basketball court, which is quite a popular hangout during NBA Playoffs or NCAA March Madness. DeSousa even mentioned a time they delivered a brand-new grill to a standout employee.

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adapt, and really figure out how we were going to support the community, the companies out there, but primarly, the medical field."

Fastenal was able to provide for the local community and the medical field as a whole with masks and gloves while delivering other essential supplies that were in short supply at the time. Fastenal was, "there for them," as DeSousa said, "and now we have actually branched out and have accounts within the medical field where they completely rely on us."

DeSousa says that historically, Fastenal doubles in size every 5 to 7 years, and while high-technology innovation and automation are apparent throughout the extensive facility, it was the smiles on the faces of workers, the way DeSousa greeted everyone he made eye contact with, that made it evident that the core of Fastenal, is its people.



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President





Golden Technologies four decades of excellence

By Ryan Evans revans@timesleader.com

OLD FORGE — According to a statement from Golden Technologies, the company is not one of the best places to work in Northeastern Pennsylvania as it was voted by Times Leader readers.

It's THE best place to work.

Golden Technologies, founded in 1985, has continued on for nearing four decades now, as a family-owned and operated company. Their motto, "build it right the first time," has been the focus of the company since its inception.

As stated on its website, "We are proud to be the world's leading manufacturer of power lift recliners, power wheelchairs, and mobility scooters." And that commitment is evident, given the great satisfaction the company's employees take in its "superb craftsmanship and lasting durability" of its line of products.

But it's not just the products and services offered that have brought Golden Technologies this recognition. It's the dedication of the company, during the most tumultuous of times, to be able to continue to provide its products to those who need them. Golden Technologies stayed open – and it still is - throughout the course of the pandemic, in the most uncertain times surrounding the virus. As an "essential business," the company was able to adapt to the changes in the most optimistic of manners.

According to President and CEO Rich Golden, "Under unprecedented conditions, each team member in production and traffic, customer and technical service, accounting and sales showed up day after day and did everything they could to continue to provide customers with the power lift recliners and mobility products they so desperately needed."



Courtesy of Chris Caroll | Golden Technologies Director of Marketing As employees walk out of Golden Technologies in Old Forge, they see this 'thank you for another great day.' A reminder, perhaps, of how they're working to provide those in need with necessary home medical equipment, simultaneously enhancing their lives and improving them.





Courtesy of Chris Caroll | Golden Technologies Director of Marketing

Golden Technologies, founded in 1985, has continued on for nearing four decades now, as a family-owned and operated company. Their motto, 'build it right the first time,' has been the focus of the company since its inception.



Courtesy of Chris Caroll | Golden Technologies Director of Marketing

Golden Technologies understands that its team members are central to getting things done. In the midst of the pandemic, they opened a new 170,000-square-foot warehouse with state of the art equipment, increased minimum wage and instituted new training programs to ensure employee growth and efficiency. Furthermore, they found time to give back to the community, donating a luxury power lift recliner to The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania and took the time to sew masks for residents and medical professionals and local hospitals.

In fact, in order to be better equipped to respond to the immediate needs of its customers, Golden opened a new 170,000-square-foot distribution center. The new center houses state-of-the-art equipment, but they didn't stop there. Golden also saw to it that workers would be ensured increased minimum wages, as well as new office spaces and cohesive training programs designed to increase efficiency.

Golden Technologies is also involved in its community, and Northeastern Pennsylvania as a whole, often giving back whenever possible. Most recently, the company donated a luxury power lift recliner to The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania, in order to provide comfort in their day programs, where they "protect and promote the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities," according to Golden Technologies' website.

Golden has also utilized its own sewing equipment to manufacture masks for not only the community, but for local hospitals and medical professionals.

Golden was recently honored by The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce with two SAGE Awards, Scranton Awards for Growth and Excellence, winning Business of the Year and the IMPACT Award for People & Culture. The SAGE Awards recognize the outstanding efforts, talent, creativity and innovation in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

As summarized by Rich Golden, "We are proud of receiving recognition as a business that has gone above and beyond in responding to the COVID-19 crisis in terms of creativity, adaptation, and perseverance to ensure the well-being of its team members. We are very proud of these awards and recognition by our community."

And it's not hard to imagine that the community is proud to have Golden Technologies.



Courtesy of Chris Caroll | Golden Technologies Director of Marketing

Golden Technologies' employees take great satisfaction in their work, according to a release from the company. Given their slew of recent awards – including being recognized as a 'Best Place to Work' – it's easy to see the dedication and hard work of its team members. They say it's a 'best place to work' but that it's 'the best place to work.'



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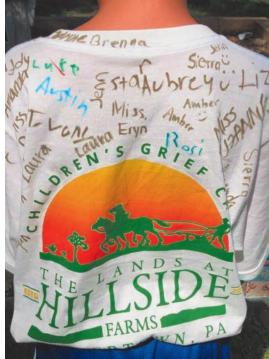
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ABOUT

The Institute for Human Resources and Services, Inc., has existed since 1975, serving people with intellectual disabilities. The IHRS serves approximately 78 clients and operates 23 Community Living Arrangements ("CLA") and one Community Residential Rehabilitation home ("CRR") in Luzerne County. Our program specialists and administrative staff possess years of experience in meeting the needs of our clients in comfortable residential-type settings. It is our ultimate goal to continue to meet the needs of those individuals entrusted to our care. Each CLA and CRR has a full complement of staff specifically tailored to meet the individual needs of each client. In 1995, the IHRS received an adoption license and has since affiliated itself with the StateWide Adoption Network ("SWAN") program. As such, the IHRS is licensed to pursue an adoption to finalization. The IHRS also assists individuals in becoming certified foster parents through our foster care program. The IHRS also offers emergency placement and emergency respite services and operates a licensed foster care/adoptions and family services agency that services Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Monroe counties.

The IHRS has a proven record of providing quality care to individuals with intellectual disabilities. We are hopeful that we may continue to provide these services to the community for years to come.

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The IHRS's mission is to provide a homelike atmosphere within a semi-structured community setting that enables consumers to attain their individual potential. This includes supporting the consumers in their everyday lives by providing them with a choice, control, stability, and freedom.

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The direct care professionals will act as mentors to the consumers so that they may achieve success as contributing members of the community.

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The IHRS is licensed according to the standards set by the Office of Children & Youth and Office of Developmental Programs of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

The IHRS also offers emergency placement and emergency respite services and operates a licensed foster care/adoptions and family services agency that services multiple counties through Northeastern Pennsylvania.

We are a private, non-profit tax-exempt corporation organized in 1975 under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Our charter promotes the psychological, social, and educational well-being of the children and adults the agency serves.

Our goal is to assist each individual to live in the least restrictive environment and develop his or her potential to the fullest on the basis of need, without discrimination as to race, creed, religion, color, national origin, gender, marital status, handicap, or age.

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The Institute's Community Residential Rehabilitation ("CRR") and Community Living Arrangements ("CLA") provide services to approximately 78 clients with intellectual disabilities as well as mental health disorders as an alternative to institutionalization.

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Employees at heart of Allied Services Integrated Health System for 60 years

By Bill O'Boyle boboyle@timesleader.com

SCRANTON — Judy Oprisko, Vice President/Human Resources & Compliance at Allied Services, said employees there have always been at the heart of what has made Allied Services Integrated Health System so special for more than 60 years.

"The pandemic simply made us refocus on how we reinvest in our people, from increased pay rates and double pay for overtime in our skilled nursing homes, to tuition reimbursement and support for advanced clinical training, to 'make your own schedule' to support single parents and those who have spouses who work challenging schedules, so they can also support their family needs," Oprisko said.

"Because we provide so many different levels of care, in dozens of settings and hundreds of homes across the region, we focus on employee engagement from the start of employment with our healthcare system and continue to follow our new hires with regular interaction, as we truly value their feedback."



Judy Oprisko, Vice President/Human Resources & Compliance at Allied Services.

Submitted Photo

Allied Services Integrated Health System is the region's leading nonprofit provider of healthcare and human services for people with disabilities, life-changing injuries and chronic illness.

Opriskom added, "We invest in our employees: We offer scholarship opportunities, tuition reimbursement and continuing education opportunities to help our employees continue to advance their careers and families."



James

Oprisko said RNs and LPNs who received their license in the last three years are eligible for student loan repayment of up to \$20,000 paid over a 5-year period. And any full-time or part-time employee attending nursing school is eligible for up to \$2,000 per year in nursing scholarships.

Effective Jan. 1, 2022, there is enhanced tuition assistance for all Allied Services employees. After six months of employment, Allied Services employees are eligible for up to \$5,000 per year tuition reimbursement for training or course at an accredited university, college, business school, vocational institution or other facility recognized by Allied Services.

Starting in 2022, Allied Services employees, both full-time and part-time, will be eligible for a Lackawanna College Business Partners Scholarship. The scholarship program provides up to \$5000 in tuition support per year from Allied Services with the remaining balance covered by Lackawanna College.

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Allied Services workforce is as diverse as the community it serves. Allied's employees include students, new graduates, retirees, veterans, professionals and single parents. The workforce includes: mental health workers; food service workers; home health aides; social workers; resident assistants; direct care workers; custodians; personal care attendants; certified nurse aides; maintenance workers; service coordinators; direct support professionals; registered nurses; licensed practical nurses; physical therapists; occupational therapists; and speech therapists.

See 'ALLIED' | 26

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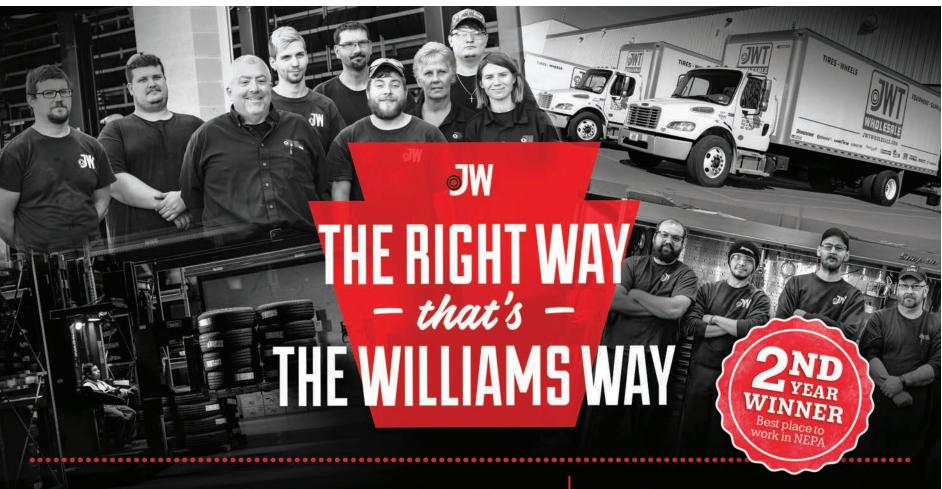
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26 | Thursday, December 23, 2021 NEPA BEST PLACES TO WORK Times Leader

ALLIED from 23

Employees have the ability to change career fields, advance their career or change care setting all without leaving the organization they love working for. Allied's continuum of care includes home health, in-home services, behavioral health, developmental services, vocational training, hospice, palliative care, skilled nursing, inpatient rehab, outpatient rehab, transitional rehab, personal care. For example, a nurse can choose from nine different care settings. The continuum of care allows employees to find the right care setting, role, shift, and schedule, to suit their interests, needs and goals.

Allied Services has more than 50 physical locations in Berwick, Blakely, Carbondale, Clarks Summit, Covington Township, Dallas, Dickson City, Dunmore, Kingston, Mountain Top, Mount Pocono, Nanticoke, Pittston, Pottsville, Sayre, Scranton, Stroudsburg, Taylor, Towanda, Tunkhannock, Wilkes-Barre and Williamsport. Allied's home-based programs such as In-Home Services, Hospice and Palliative Care reach patients and consumers in over 23 counties in Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania.

Allied is nationally ranked for its patient care: Allied Services employees can be proud of the care that they provide for their patients and residents. Allied's facilities have earned national rankings for long-term care, short-term rehab, inpatient rehab and home health. This is thanks to investments in our staff and in cutting-edge rehab technology not available at other facilities within the region. For example,

See 'ALLIED' | 29



McAndrew

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Employees deserve the award at Hillside

By Ryan Evans revans@timesleader.com

SHAVERTOWN — For Chet Mozloom, executive director of The Lands at Hillside Farms, the award is misinterpreted.

It's not "Best Places to Work" that brings pride, but rather "Platinum Employees" that keep the ever-evolving doors of the place open and welcoming to all its visitors.

Hillside is a place where "old school labor," as Mozloom calls it, meets modern practices and community service. Whether you're simply bringing the kids for ice cream, participating in one of the numerous educational programs, know of a child participating in Grief Camp or just tuning into the new podcast, it's plain to see how old-world meets new-world.

"It's an 'employer' award, but I really do think, and I'm not just saying this, it should be 'platinum employee', because it is not an easy place to work at. For many of our jobs it's even physically – I mean it's a farm – it's not just for show. You've got people who work all hours of the night," Mozloom says, and the other workers who spoke with a reporter were in agreement.

Caitlin Meehan, 27, has been at Hillside for about five years now.

Inspired to apply by her sister who worked in the ice-cream parlor, Caitlin started as a graphic design intern from Misericordia University, and gained



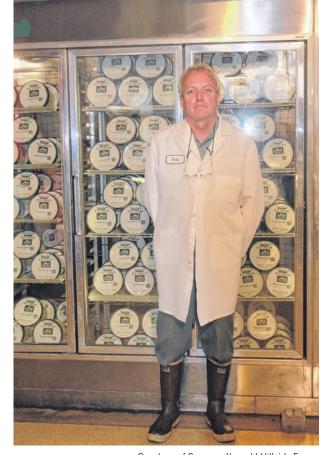
Ryan Evans | Times Leader

People visiting Hillside Farms may often forget — amongst the goats, alpacas, chickens, cows and ice-cream — that they're at an institution that is constantly growing and evolving, and working to give back to its community.

full-time employment. When asked what makes Hillside a great place to work, she said, "I think it's the environment. You're outdoors, and with being outdoors and around the animals, I think you have a chance to be a little more creative."

She was quick to point out how her job may have her designing flyers or brochures one minute, decorating for a party the next, and then taking pictures of some rather photogenic alpacas after that. She also handles the podcast duties and whatever else is needed.

Troy Pensak has been at Hillside since he was 17. Now five years into his time at Hillside,



Courtesy of Suzanne Kapral | Hillside Farms Director Marketing and Development

Processing Manager John Shorts has been at Hillside for 40 years and is happy to receive almost immediate "positive reinforcement" from customers. "You get instant feedback from the customers," he says. "You're in the backing making (food) and you go out front and you can see the response to what you're making."

Pensak is the farm manager. His days are long, and after listing out his extensive morning duties to a reporter, Mozloom jokingly added, "Then the work starts."

Pensak says it's really the "freedom aspect of it all", that makes Hillside an enjoyable endeavor. "You know what you need to get done and there's nobody behind your back pressuring you to do so. There's a lot of trust."

He also mentioned how willing other employees are to help out. "They'll drop everything to help you out."

With four decades at Hillside, Processing
Manager John Shorts talked about the positive
reinforcement he and his team
receive from customers.

See 'HILLSIDE' | 28



The Lands at Hillside Farms

Ryan Evans | Times Leader

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HILLSIDE from 27

"You get instant feedback from the customers. You're in the back making (food) and you go out



Courtesy of Suzanne Kapral | Hillside Farms Director Marketing and Development

Troy Pensak began working at Hillside Farms at just 17. Five years later, he's farm manager. He says it's the "freedom aspect of it all," that makes Hillside a great place to work. That, and the willingness of all the employees to help one another out.

front and you can see the response on what you're making," he said. "It's positive reinforcement for us in the back that we're doing a good job."

And more often than not, Shorts and his team find that they're doing a great job. Shorts came from a factory job, one that he did not enjoy. Now, he gets to cook, enjoy a short commute and oversee whatever might else might be needed.

As Mozloom says, "It's all hands on deck."
And it's all of this mutual work that

goes into Hillside that allows for it to be so much more than just a farm.

Mozloom says he and his employees are "cult-ish", with a chuckle.

"There's an odd freedom," he said. "The hours are long, but they're extremely diverse."

Mozloom has been at Hillside since 2006, and his time has offered this perspective: "I think it's just a culture. After hiring over 15 years, you end up with these people that are really just hardcore workers that are passionate about

their jobs. I can only say that I really appreciate the employees and for whatever reason, our turnover rate is like, ultra-low, almost zero.

"Everybody just works so hard, they really do."



Ryan Evans | Times Leader

Chet Mozloom, left, said its, "Platinum Employees", such as Caitlin Meehan, right, that make The Lands at Hillside Farms a wonderful place to work at. With dedicated, passionate workers at the ready, Hillside offers a "culture" on top of employment.

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ALLIED from 26

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Reinvesting in employees

Melanie McAndrew, RN, BSN of Jessup is currently Wound Care Nurse at Allied Services Skilled Nursing Center in Scranton. She first joined Allied Services as a CNA and took advantage of the generous tuition reimbursement program to pursue her interest in nursing. Throughout her studies, she had mentors at work that she could learn from. She earned her Bachelors of Science in Nursing in 2020 and was recently promoted to Wound Care Nurse.

"I love the family that I've built with my coworkers and patients. I really fell in love with community at Allied Services.," she said.

April James, RN, MSN, of Kingston, is Director of Nursing and Professional Services at Allied Services Home Health. April joined Allied Services in 2010. She chose Home Health because of the flexibility it could provide for someone with a busy family. While working full-time, April completed her Masters in Nursing with financial support from Allied Services.

"Working in Home Health allows you to create special bonds with your patients," she said. "You're not just a care provider but also a teacher and an advocate for the patient and their family. You become the main set of eyes and ears in the home, easing communication and limiting confusion between the patient and their physician.

"I love working for Allied Services because I have never felt like just another nurse or a number. They make you feel like family. My supervisor was so supportive while I was a full-time student and full-time nurse."

Reach Bill O'Boyle at 570-991-6118 or on Twitter @TLBillOBoyle.







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Beyond the Award

Being named as a Times Leader Best Place to Work Platinum Winner is a credit to the nearly 1,000 employees who comprise LVH-Hazleton, who remain focused on the mission to heal, comfort and care.

"This award is 100 percent thanks to our extraordinary LVH—Hazleton team, who shared their support by voting," says Terry Purcell, President, Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) Northwest Region and President, LVH—Hazleton. "LVH—Hazleton is the leader in local health care. It is a responsibility we do not take lightly."

The Best Place to Work Award reflects a targeted approach to deliver the best patient experience possible. "We have created an environment where our colleagues thrive, and that helps translate to the experience our patients have," says Melissa Curto, Vice President, Patient Care Operations, LVH–Hazleton.

LVH–Hazleton has achieved numerous clinical achievements as well, including Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP), Trauma Level IV reaccreditation, Primary Stroke Center designation, Chest Pain Center accreditation and, most recently, Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade "A." "These quality indicators help distinguish LVH–Hazleton to a higher standard," adds Purcell. LVH–Hazleton has undergone a massive transformation complete with a new \$25 million emergency room and all-private newly renovated patient rooms.





Top, LVH-Hazleton; Bottom, Health & Wellness Center at Hazleton

The recent announcement of LVHN's regional Cancer Center on the LVH–Hazleton campus is an indicator of a bright future.

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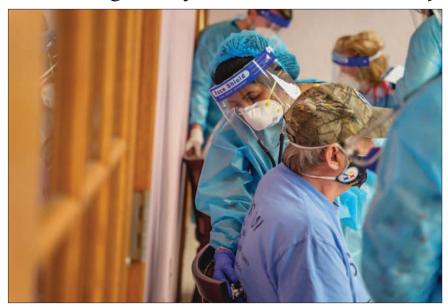
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Wright Center addresses keys to overall good health

Recognized for second consecutive year as a 'Best Place to Work' in NEPA



Wright Center for Community Health physician providers check vital signs and administer COVID-19 vaccinations to residents of Washington West Apartments in Scranton during the height of the pandemic

For almost two years, COVID-19 has tested the limits of our national health care system, the patience of people practicing social distancing, the educational system of countless students and so much more.

At The Wright Center for Community Health, more than 625 employees rallied around the nonprofit's mission, their patients and each other to form a cohesive unit that has been working nonstop to stem the tide of the global pandemic. It shows how teamwork, the saying goes, divides the task and multiplies the success.

Teamwork and passion are why The Wright Center has been voted for the second consecutive year as one of the best places to work in Northeast Pennsylvania, according to a readers' contest in the Times Leader newspaper. The Platinum Award exemplifies the collective work of a team of professionals that has overcome adversity in the profession to care for more than 30,000 patients in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna, Wayne, Pike, Monroe and Wyoming counties.

The Wright Center is also an example of what can happen when mission and opportunity intersect with able community partners, such as the Salvation Army, United Way, Bhutanese Community Center, Hazleton Integration Project and many others, for the benefit of underserved communities.

The Wright Center for Community Health is a Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike that operates eight primary care practices in Lackawanna, Luzerne and Wayne counties. Thanks to its federal designation, The Wright Center can address barriers to health equity by providing a safety net for comprehensive primary and preventive health care, including medical, dental, mental health, addiction, recovery and infectious disease services, to people regardless of their insurance status, income level or ability to pay.

That mission has been tested during the global pandemic, as demand for coronavirus testing, treatment and vaccination has pushed the growing team of physicians, physicians intraining, providers and staff to the brink.

EWRIGH CENTER

HEALTH

Overall, The Wright Center's health care community handled 147,107 in-person visits, 42,782 vaccines, 32,361 COVID-19 tests, 17,163 telehealth appointments, 4,213 vaccinations with our mobile medical unit, 729 monoclonal antibody infusion therapies, 341 COVID-19 vaccines for public housing residents and 104 nursing home visits between Jan. 1 and Dec. 1, 2021.

To aid collective advocacy efforts that lift up the communities it serves, The Wright Center for Patient & Community Engagement was formed to dig deeper and assess the negative social and economic determinants of health that affect historically marginalized populations. It is another form of preventive medicine, but needs responsive and data driven instead.

Unhealthy housing, poor access to education, employment status, food insecurity, and societal and cultural factors can significantly influence how well and how long people live. These factors affect a person's ability to make healthy choices, afford medical care and housing, manage stress and chronic conditions, and more.

Patient & Community Engagement conducts project-based work, educational initiatives and outreach across its service area. These efforts include more than 1,250 employee volunteer efforts and 2,500 volunteer hours this fiscal year, along with food distribution, social events for older adults, winter clothing donations, school backpack giveaways,

outreach to people experiencing homelessness, health fairs and other special mission-driven projects.

These short-term interventions are not Patient & Community Engagement's sole focus. Other quality-of-life issues addressed are intended to help individuals overcome some of the obstacles they have encountered in life and set them up to succeed. Team members connect patients with life-enhancing services, including the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program, otherwise known as SNAP, appropriate health insurance programs, household budgeting lessons, job training and other economic supports.

Overall, The Wright Center's primary care practices are a one-stop shop that cover almost everything from head to toe under one roof. This approach encourages patients to address whatever ails them during one visit. The nonprofit also took an innovative approach to addressing barriers to care by deploying Driving Better Health. The 34-foot mobile medical unit travels the region's roadways into rural communities and delivers care to senior living communities, school districts and minority population centers to ensure everyone has equal access to COVID-19-related services and other medical care.

The delivery of health care is complex. That's why The Wright Center has multiple layers of patient-centered services so it can accommodate every patient's total health care needs to improve the health and welfare of the region.

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to our dedicated employees for their commitment this past year.

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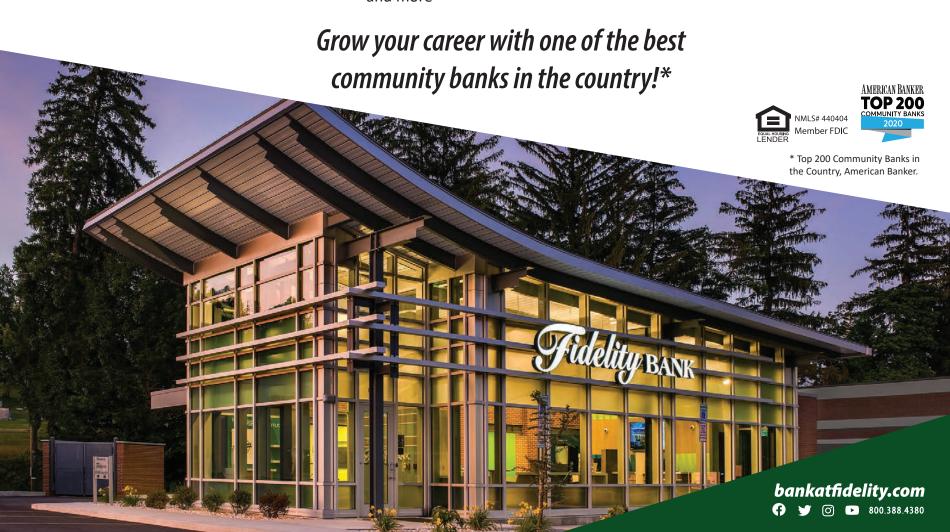


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Careers in Banking That Just May Surprise You

When you think of a banker, what kind of person do you imagine? Most of us immediately think of someone with a background in finance. Of course, that's the case for many bankers, but there are also a host of professionals in other roles within the industry that may not be obvious. If you or someone you know is looking for an interesting career opportunity, it may be the perfect time to consider the world of banking, Mary McNichols, Senior Vice President and Director of Human Resources, explains.

Diverse Opportunities

When it comes to careers in banking, most of us picture the professionals we interact with during a visit or phone call — the Personal Banker, Branch Manager, or members of the lending department. "We think of these professionals because they're the most visible," Mary said. "Many people may not think of all the ancillary positions, such as human resources or marketing. There are a lot of numbers-driven careers in banking that aren't visible, too, such as credit administration. Think about it — who's crunching the numbers on loan applications? Who's in the background in accounting running general ledger? Who's creating the loan documents, or conducting the transactions in the Trust department? The backgrounds that are needed for banking are as diverse as the jobs."

Financial institutions rely on professionals with various specialties, such as:

- Human Resources
- Loan Underwriting and Documentation
- Marketing, Digital Delivery, Data Analysis
- Information Technology (IT)
- Legal
- Administration
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Education

Careers in banking require various levels of education, from high school diploma to college degrees. Many, but not all, positions at Fidelity Bank require an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Training & Mentoring

If professional development is important to you, explore positions at institutions that encourage training and mentoring programs. For example, at Fidelity, bankers are trained according to the guidelines of The Fidelity Model Experience, which speaks to the culture of the company and the way bankers interact with each other and their clients.

New Personal Bankers undergo several weeks of training before they begin interacting with clients, and all bankers are encouraged to participate in internal and external professional development programs. This may include management training, empowerment programs, or earning certifications through job training.

Mentors also play an important role in professional development. "In many branches, we have people designated as mentors. When someone is newly-hired, they're partnered with a mentor who helps them through the training process," Mary said. "That's our formalized mentor program, but we also have informal mentoring, which is when you're training someone on the job." Fidelity trains mentors, and includes mentoring and coaching in its performance appraisals.

Ready to Unlock Your Inner Banker?

As bankers are regularly promoted from within, Fidelity often has openings for Personal Bankers. Many people enter the world of finance in this position. To learn more about this and other career opportunities, visit our website for career opportunities.

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Keeping Employees Safe in the Workplace

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught the world many things, including the need to prioritize public health. Protecting those you rely on ensures they'll be there when you need assistance.

Business owners must prioritize the health and safety of their employees. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that 5,333 fatal work injuries occurred in 2019, which marked a 2 percent increase over 2018. The most common causes of workplace injuries include overexertion and bodily reaction, falls, slips, and trips. When implementing safety precautions comes with a high price tag or is met with resistance by workers, it is up to business owners to dig deep and put protection over profit. Various strategies can help business owners as they navigate a post-pandemic landscape that may require a new approach to employee safety.

- Recognize the threat of potential safety issues. Accidents will happen regardless of how much business owners try to prevent them. But prevention efforts still greatly reduce the risk of accident and injury. Make a list of more common dangers (falls or injuries from equipment) and less common ones (fires or criminal perpetrators). Once the list is compiled, develop a plan to reduce the risk of accidents on both lists.
- Perform risk assessments. Conduct a risk assessment on your own or hire a third party to review the business and make recommendations. Note potential hazards and what must be done to remedy them promptly.
- Create a custom health and safety policy. Make a safety plan a key part of the employee handbook. Employees should be well versed in existing and newly adopted safety protocols and what's expected of them in case of emergency.
- Be mindful of requirements. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's OSH Act includes statutory requirements. Some of these include providing OSHA training, keeping records of work-related illnesses and accidents and providing personal protective equipment. Properly maintaining tools and equipment is another requirement.
- Utilize safety equipment and label hazards. Anti-slip mats on floors, properly locked cabinets for combustibles and other chemicals, warning signs and labeling in hazardous zones, and guards or kill switches on heavy machinery can greatly reduce the risk of employee injury.
- Provide safety training. Employees won't know how to do their jobs safely without training. Routinely assess employees to ensure compliance and install a reward system to commend those who make safety a priority.
- Perform safety drills. Ensure employees know how to react quickly in emergency situations by routinely going over protocols, including emergency evacuation drills. Consult with law enforcement professionals if guidance is needed.

Safety should be a goal for any business owner. Providing resources, maintaining equipment, conducting safety assessments, and educating employees can make a real difference in reducing injuries.



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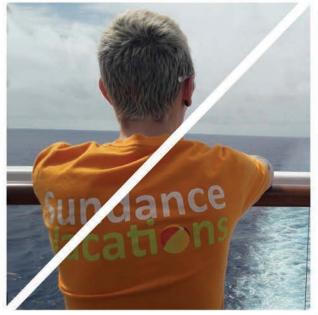
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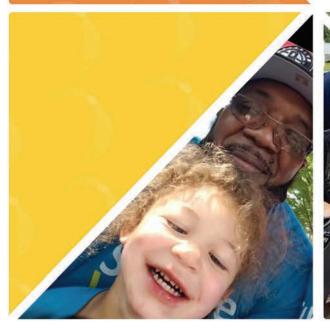


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Sundance Vacations was co-founded in 1991 by husband-and-wife-duo, John and Tina Dowd. By combining their devotion to family and travel, the pair reinvented the way travel companies do business, and are continuously expanding their horizons when it comes to vacationing.

Sundance is home to over 300 employees across its multiple locations in Wilkes-Barre, PA; Hazleton, PA; Harrisburg, PA; Allentown, PA; King of Prussia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Tamaqua, PA; Shamokin, PA; and Parsippany, NJ.

COVID has been a struggle for every business the past two years, but here at Sundance, we like to turn a negative event into a positive impact. COVID has allowed us to develop many new roles in the company, including work-from-home opportunities, which are currently an employee favorite. We've been able to reach new talent in areas that we were not able to reach before, which creates new opportunities in major cities. Sundance was affected in unforeseen ways due to the pandemic, but we're proud to say that the company has grown more connected as a team and familial unit—because that's what we are here at Sundance—a family.

John and Tina Dowd act as parental figures to everyone in the company. Paige Evans, Human Resources Manager, said, "John and Tina have created a culture here that is truly remarkable. Your voice is always heard, and your work is always valued. If you are looking for a company that seeks to make working fun, you have found the right place!"

Sundance cultivates a nurturing environment that allows for new employees to comfortably ease into their positions and longstanding employees to advance in their careers. Many important players in the company will be celebrating anniversaries of more than twenty-five years!

The needs of our clients and travelers are of the utmost importance to us. Candy Bednar, Vice President of Business Development, said, "the #1 reason I love working at Sundance Vacations is that everything I do works towards getting someone to go on an awesome vacation!"

The goal of Sundance is to make affordable vacations available to everyone. Not only are we dedicated to providing quality vacations, but we're also dedicated to providing a quality work place for our outstanding employees who make the magic happen. Denise Miller, Associate Vice President of Marketing, said, 'what had me twenty-seven years ago when I started was friendly CEOs, great pay, advancement opportunities, and vacation perks!"



Christina Allen, VIP Manager, added, "one thing that sticks out in my mind is an incredibly generous donation that was made to St. Vincent de Paul Kitchen. It genuinely brought tears to my eyes because I was so proud to work for such an amazing company."

Sundance is constantly giving back to local and national charities as part of its mission. St. Vincent de Paul Kitchen is only one of the many organizations that the company aids throughout the year. This holiday season, Sundance employees are encouraging and engaging in support for Toys for Tots, Santa Squad of the Greater Pittston Area, and several other non-profits.

As we move into the new year, Sundance Vacations will strive to hold the title of one of the best places to work in Pennsylvania.





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At Berry, we are extremely proud of our heritage and the company we've become today. Throughout our history, it has been the dedication of our team members that has allowed us to grow into a leading global provider of innovative protection solutions.



Our history is rich in product innovation, customer focus, and strategic growth. With roots as a small, hometown company based in Evansville Indiana, Berry has grown into a global, publicly traded, multi-billion dollar public corporation.

KEY MILESTONES

- We have come a long way since becoming established in 1967; we now have 47,000+ employees and generated \$12.6 billion of pro forma net sales in FY2019.
- In 1972, the injection molding company entered the container market, and in 1983, Imperial Plastics was purchased by Jack Berry, Sr. and renamed Berry Plastics.
- Beginning in 1988, Berry Plastics completed over 40 acquisitions and began trading on the New York Stock Exchange in October 2012 under the ticker symbol BERY.
- In 2017, we changed our Company name from Berry Plastics to Berry Global to better reflect who we are.
- Through the acquisition of RPC Group, Berry expanded its footprint to become a truly global company.

With over 290 locations around the world, we are certain to have a career opportunity in a location that's appealing to you. We are continually recruiting energetic and innovative individuals who are passionate about their skills, and who are ready to grow with us to create a positive impact on the future. We invite you to explore more about Berry, the careers we offer, and how our more than 47,000 team members together drive our mission of "Always advancing to protect what's important."



We take great pride in the company we have developed and the products and services we offer. Our ability to support our customers at every stage of the product development process—including expertise in consumer insights, ideation and design, manufacturing and research and development—is what has allowed us to become a leader in the industry.

CULTUREWe value an incl

We value an inclusive culture that invests in our employees' future, builds a sustainable environment, and continues to protect what is important.

OUR CAREERS

We are always advancing to protect what's important.

OUR MISSION & VALUES

We are always advancing to protect what's important.



"The Berry culture promotes new ideas and a sense of belonging... Berry treats me with respect and compassion, also ensuring the safety of each one of us."

> Nitin Prakash EHS Coordinator | West Hill, Ontario



How Businesses Can Persevere in the Face of Adversity

Millions of individuals envision being their own boss and gaining financial independence, and those are just two reasons why starting a business can be an exciting prospect.

Novice entrepreneurs are likely familiar with just how difficult it can be to get going and sustain a business for years. The United States Department of Labor Statistics says 20 percent of small businesses fail within the first year. By the end of five years, nearly 50 percent have closed their doors. This information shouldn't make aspiring entrepreneurs run for the hills, but it can serve as motivation to avoid common mistakes and learn from others.

Every new business venture is met with obstacles along the way. Recognizing potential challenges and learning how to sidestep them is an important part of growing a successful business.

Make a business plan

A business plan is crucial and will begin with your vision and what you want to achieve. The business guidance site The Balance: Small Business suggests including the following in your business plan: a mission statement; list of the products or services that will be offered; the niche a business intends to establish itself in; marketing strategies; which problems a business will solve in its industry; and how business owners plan to position themselves against competitors. An effective business plan can serve as a guide that business owners can use to get started and then return to as their business grows and evolves.

Choose the right people

The business solutions company Don't Do Business Without It says choosing the right employees or cofounders is very important. It may be tempting to hire a friend or family member because you want to do them a favor. You may even have had a successful working relationship in the past. But it's best to base hiring decisions on applicants' competence and skills. Integrity also is a good trait to look for in an employee.



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Strategies for retention also should be a priority. Pew Research says roughly 40 percent of millennials will change jobs in a year's time. Figure out how to make your business so attractive that employees will want to become long-term fixtures.

Ask for help or consider mentors

All business owners experience problems from time to time, but the obstacles a business faces have no doubt challenged others in the past. Business owners should not feel as though they need to go it alone to prove their mettle. Business owners can reach out to a mentor or someone in their professional network when faced with a new and challenging obstacle. A study by UPS showed that 70 percent of business owners who received mentoring survived for five years or more. That's nearly double the rate of those who didn't seek assistance. Asking for help with problems can also free up energy for other components of the business, which allows owners to play to their strengths.

Any business will face obstacles and adversity, but with the right mindset and people, any obstacle can be overcome.







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Fastenal is dedicated to employment equity and is an equal opportunity employer - minorities, females, veterans, disabled, sexual orientation, gender identity.



JESSUP — For Marcelo DeSousa and his team at Fastenal in Lackawanna County, it's the culture of the company that makes them a Best Place to Work.

DeSousa, 51, migrated to America at the age of 12 settling in "South Jersey" as he puts it. While attending school, he got a job at UPS which led to the beginning of his career in management. He would then go on to work with DHL, which saw him move around the country a lot. He says he, "wanted to get back a bit closer to home, to South Jersey" so when the position he's at now opened up, he jumped on it.

In the decade since, Fastenal's Jessup/Olyphant location has only expanded, not just in its physical size, but in its commitment to its employees.

DeSousa, who serves as Regional Operations Manager, was very proud to point out numerous facts about his team, from their dedication in working through the pandemic, their adaptation and

overcoming adversity and the numerous incentives and on-site luxuries his employees have at their disposal.

Fastenal proudly boasts its School of Business, flanked by the 'Opportunity' sign that hangs over the doorway. Lecturers from around the nation come by and train the next generation of current employees who will step into its leadership positions. Employees can also earn bonuses, be named "Employee of the Month", utilize the full gym (although it is currently closed due to COVID-19 protocols). DeSousa even mentioned a time they delivered a brand-new grill to a standout employee.

"What we've worked through the years is basically our culture," DeSousa says. "Just making sure that the people that are here are the right people to be here, to be part of the team, to work together, to have the ambition, to fulfill that growth through customer service, follow our cultural values of innovation and ambition with integrity and teamwork. It really just comes down to culture, it comes down to the people."

Even when they were named an essential business, DeSousa was proud to say, "We never missed a day of work here. We learned a

lot about ourselves, a lot about our innovation and how to change, adapt, and really figure out how we are going to support the community, the companies out there, but primarily, the medical field."

Fastenal was able to provide for the local community and the medical field as a whole, with masks and gloves and delivering other essential supplies that were in short supply at the time. Fastenal was, "there for them," as DeSousa said, "and now we have actually branched out and have accounts within the medical field where they completely rely on us."

DeSousa says that historically, Fastenal doubles in size every 5 to 7 years, and while high-technology innovation and automation are apparent throughout the extensive facility, it was the smiles on the faces of workers , the way DeSousa greeted everyone he met.





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