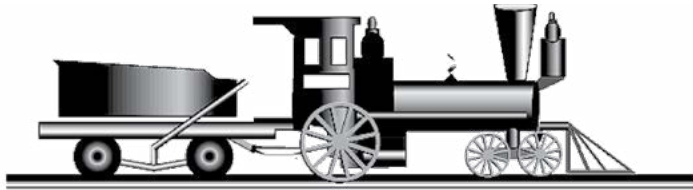


BRANDON VALLEY
Journal

FOCUS ON
Manufacturing



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energy



Midwest Railcar Repair, Inc.

Midwest Railcar Repair has been a part of the Brandon community for over 20 years. In fact, it's a business that started in 1954 as a servicing facility for the Sioux Falls meatpacking plant. Relocating twice during its four decades in Sioux Falls, the business moved to its current location just north of Brandon in early 2000. The current owner Greg Carmon purchased the company in 1988 from GE and constructed the current state-of-the-art facility now home to this nationally-recognized servicing facility.

As the name suggests, repairing of railcars is their focus. Today, these railcars come from all over North America to our local business to receive inspections, interior cleaning, regulatory qualifications, conversions, alterations, painting, interior lining and damage repairs.

Repairing these 110-ton behemoths requires space, technology and the expertise that Midwest Railcar Repair brings to the industry. With a capacity for over 700 railcars on-site, their 38 specifically-designed indoor repair



stations allow the skilled employees of Midwest Railcar Repair to achieve what few in the nation have the expertise to keep the nation's railcar assets on-track. Combine those elements with a

Midwestern work ethic and you have the gold standard of the industry.

Did you know they have their own full-fledged waste water treatment plant and metal fabrication shop on-site? The railcar industry is so important that even the American Welding Society has a specification specifically developed to cover the welding standards for the manufacturer and maintenance of railcars, locomotives, and their components intended for North American railroad service. An industry with calibrated flashlights, certified tape measures and nationally qualified specialists is high-tech.

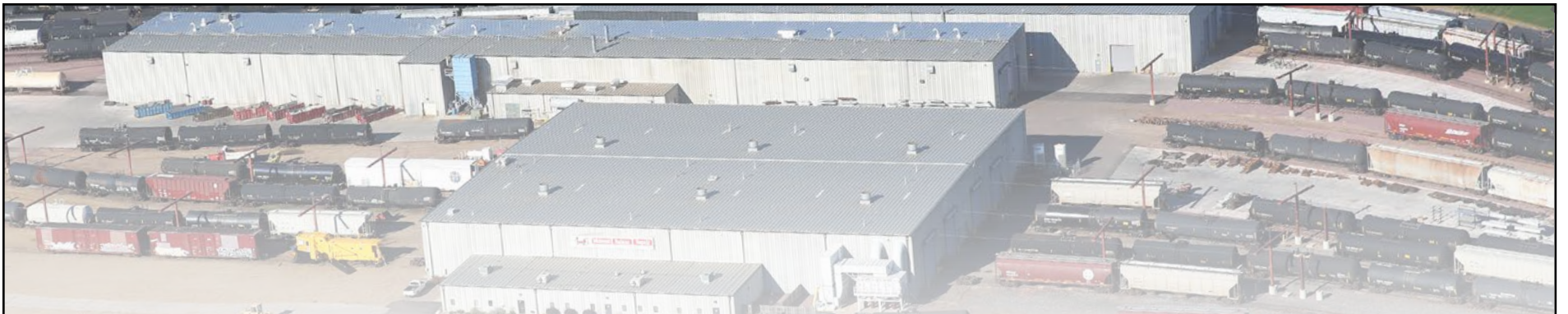
With railcar technicians skilled and certified in the techniques of: ultrasonic inspection, thermography inspection, magnetic particle inspection, dye penetrant inspection, hydrostatic inspection; welding of carbon steel, stainless steel, aluminum and industrial blasting, painting, lining and tank car cleaning, they can do it all. Cleaning, repairing and maintaining railcars that haul products ranging from corn, soybeans, flour, sugar, salad oil, corn syrup, ethanol, gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel, crude oil and almost everything in between. They perform

Kosherization of railcars right here in Brandon, S.D., that allow those cars to haul Kosher products. In fact, the next time you treat yourself to M&Ms or any other Mars Candy, know that the skilled employees of Midwest Railcar Repair are maintaining the railcars hauling that delicious chocolate.

As an integral member of the South Dakota economy — with an annual payroll exceeding \$8 million — the company understands the importance of building strong communities. The company and employees donate time, materials and funds to area youth sports and community organizations. Carmon, himself, is past chair and board member for the Brandon Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, a board member for the Brandon Community Foundation, Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation and Build Dakota Scholarship program.

A full suite of benefits coupled with a starting wage of \$20.50/hour and an average wage of over \$27/hour, Midwest Railcar Repair rewards its employees for their skilled work. Employment with Midwest Railcar Repair is a career full of rewards; come join their team.





GET YOUR CAREER ON TRACK

— CHECK US OUT ONLINE AT MWRail.com —

Midwest Railcar Repair, Inc. is seeking applications from individuals with desire to learn, grow and succeed in their career while working for an outstanding company that offers excellent pay and benefits.

JOIN OUR TEAM TODAY!

Apply online at www.mwrail.com or in person

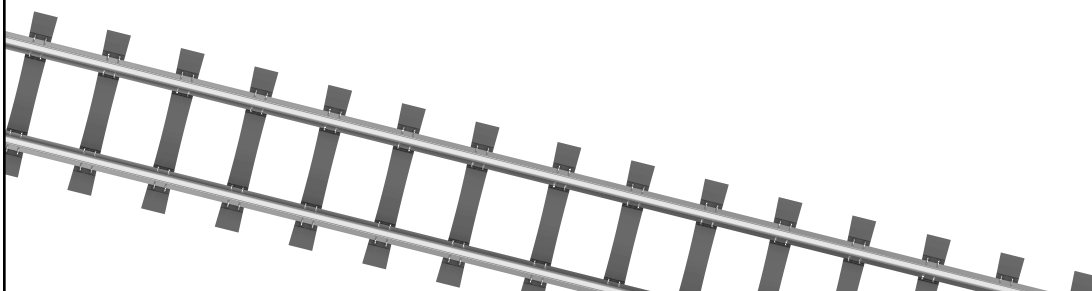
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Railcar Repair, Inc.**

South Dakota
**MANUFACTURING
& TECHNOLOGY
SOLUTIONS**

HOW WE HELP

LEAN

Lean 101 Training, Lean Office, Lean Certification, Lean Transformation, Value Stream Mapping





LEADERSHIP

Lean Leadership for Supervisors, Executive Coaching, C-Level & HR Peer Council

AUTOMATION

Automation 101 Training, Automation Readiness Assessment, Integration





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WORKFORCE

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LOCAL MANUFACTURING RESOURCES YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD

Powerful words spoken by Benjamin Franklin years ago still ring true today. "When you're finished changing, you're finished." As we have witnessed this year, manufacturers need to be nimble to progress.

In South Dakota, the manufacturing landscape is changing as technology continues to advance. Some manufacturers will choose to adapt, while others will choose to stay stagnant and likely see their businesses suffer.

Change is not easy. Continuous improvement is not easy, and getting a whole organization on board is not easy. But it is vital to your success.

Many manufacturers aren't operating as effectively or efficiently as they could be. It takes time, accountability and manpower. At South Dakota Manufacturing & Technology Solutions, we help manufacturers remain competitive through Lean training, consulting and events. We are a part of a national initiative to strengthen U.S. manufacturing. With our tools and expertise, we can help manufacturers save time, reduce waste and increase their bottom line.

Most recently we have designed a Lean Leadership program focused on supporting new supervisors. We have also developed an Automation 101 course, which is a hands-on training to teach employees about the benefits of automation and how to identify automation opportunities in their workplace.

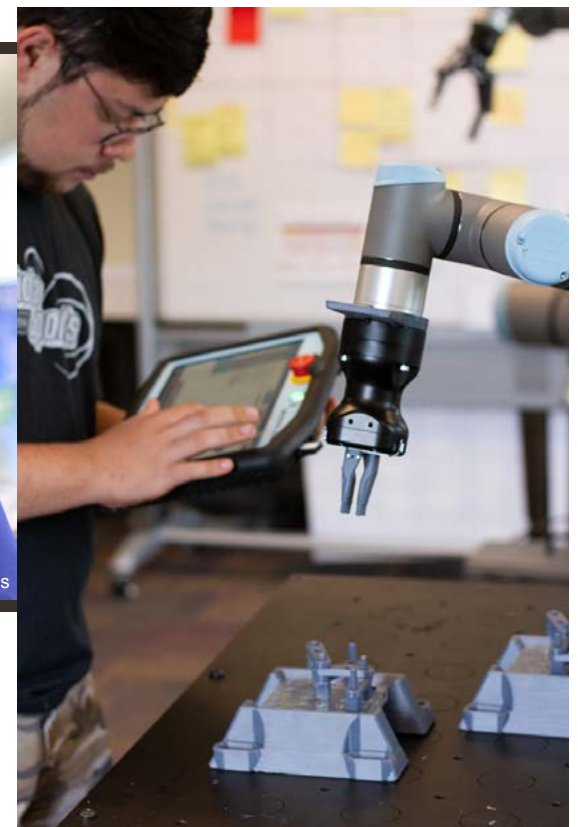
In our Sioux Falls office, we have an automation lab that manufacturers can visit to see live demonstrations of equipment and explore the possibilities of integrating automation. Our automation expert on staff can provide an automation readiness assessment by touring your facility at no charge. If the pandemic has shown us anything, it's that our industry is changing and we need to adapt and innovate to remain competitive.

If you are looking to initiate Lean projects, implement automation, or need help training employees on the basics of Lean, leadership, or problem-solving, please contact us today. We would be happy to meet with you to learn more about your goals and the changes you want to make.



Don Cuperus

**2329 N CAREER AVE
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57107
PHONE: 605-212-5679**





Chuck Parsons, president of the Brandon Development Association, presents a dividends check to Alliance Communications' general manager Ross Petrick. Also pictured are Paul VanDeBerg, Business relations for Alliance, Kevin Lawrence, Brandon Representative on Alliance Board of Directors and Dennis Olson of the Brandon Development Foundation. Alliance was one of the investors who gifted its investment to the BDF.

CORSON INDUSTRIAL PARK PAYS DIVIDENDS TO INVESTORS

Dennis Olson has long had the philosophy that jobs created by new and expanding business ventures are the backbone to growing a town's population and adding rooftops to the landscape.

"I learned very early on from Dan Scott with the Sioux Falls Development Foundation that there's different philosophies of how a town should grow, but his philosophy was you need to provide primary jobs for people, and if you do that, they will eventually build homes here and then the retail establishment will follow. The main theory behind that is if you incentivize retail establishments coming, they'll never stand on their own feet. But, if you allow the capitalistic, entrepreneurial economy to take over when they think there's business here, they'll spend the money to come and they'll make money," Olson said.

As it turns out, the philosophy Olson "borrowed" from Scott once again came to

fruition late last year when the Corson Development Park – now filled to capacity – was paid off, constituting the dissolution of the partnership.

"It's done," Olson said in celebratory fashion. "The agreement was, when the land is all sold and the rail has been turned over to the owners (manufacturers in the Corson Park), then the deal is done and we're going to dissolve."

Around 2000, Olson said a soybean processing company showed interest in bringing their business to Brandon, more specifically, to the north side of Interstate 90, which is now recognized as the Corson Industrial Park. "They liked the location and wanted a proposal from the Brandon Development Foundation, but they wouldn't talk to us until we had a purchase agreement or owned the land," Olson said "And 20 years ago, when you talked about a bean plant, the price of land went crazy."

Continued from page 5

The late Gene Johnson, who was known to wrangle a deal over a handshake, convinced the land's multiple owners to sign a purchase agreement. As it turns out, Johnson's efforts and the purchase agreement was for naught, as the soybean oil crushing company decided to set up shop in Fairmont, Minn.

Brandon Mayor Mike Schultz and Sioux Falls Mayor Gary Hanson both went to tour the plant, and as Olson recalls, "Mike and I agreed that was probably the best economic development deal that we didn't get, because it was a horrid place being on the northwest part of town with the smell."

With time dwindling down on the purchase agreement, Jeff Eckhoff, who at the time was the executive director of the Minnehaha and County Economic Development Associations, suggested the need to purchase the Corson property.

"I remember like it was yesterday," Olson said. "I had a First National Bank money clip and I said I had \$22 here, and I asked him how much he had. He says, 'We're going to go to the banks and utilities and we're going to get enough money to purchase it.'"

Determined to succeed, they accomplished the feat in 30 days. The purchase was made possible with contributions from MCEDA, who pledged \$25,000, and \$100,000 investments by Alliance Communications, Sioux Valley Energy, The First National Bank in Sioux Falls, Home Federal and Security Bank, which are both part of Great Western Bank today, and the Brandon Development Foundation.

Although they had come so far in their efforts to raise the needed capital, they were still \$360,000 short.

On the recommendation of Scott, the SFDF kicked in the remainder needed for the \$985,000 total to purchase the land.

"The reason why they did that is because the SFDF did not have any rail access. This was right on the Burlington Northern line, so that's why they got involved," Olson said.

Scott also truly believed what was good for Brandon was good for Sioux Falls, Olson said.

"He knew darn well that 80 to 90 percent of our people drove to Sioux Falls to work and to buy stuff," he said.

Bob Mundt, who is the current CEO of the Sioux

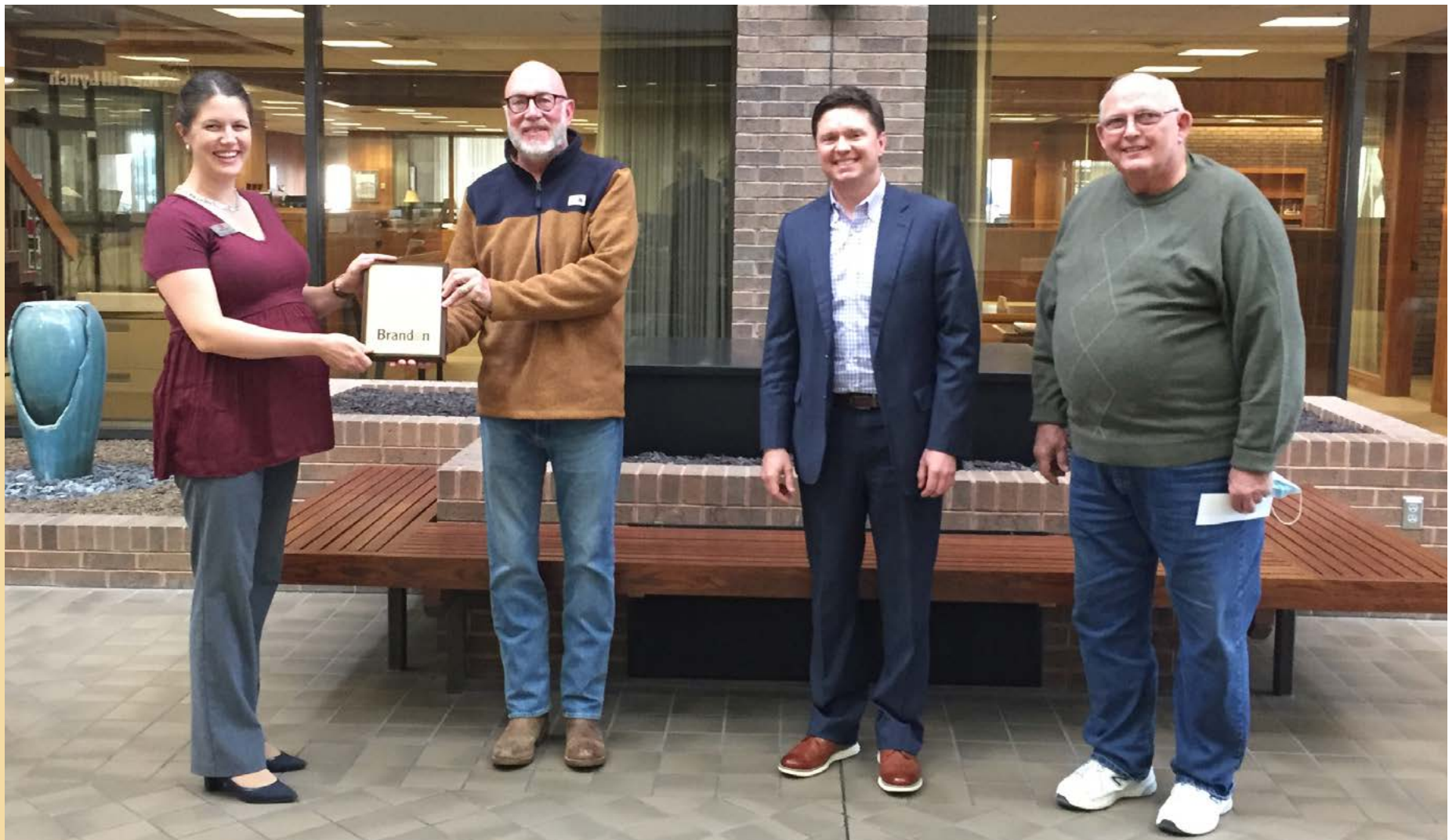
Falls Development Foundation, said the development that resulted from purchase has helped the Sioux Falls metro area.

"Commitment to community is an important cooperative principle," said Tim McCarthy of Sioux Valley Energy.

"Investments like this result in jobs, higher tax revenue, business growth and a better quality of life for our members and the entire region. Sioux Valley Energy is proud to have been part of the initial group of investors who saw the potential of economic growth stemming from the Corson Development Park all those years ago. We believe in the concept of a 'rising tide lifts all boats.' In other words, economic progress in one community has a positive impact on other communities."

That philosophy is also shared by The First National Bank, said president and CEO Chris Ekstrum.

"We have a vested interest in the growth and development of our communities, and Brandon is a critical community for us," he said. "We have a branch there, it's our Sioux Falls neighbor and fits our footprint well, and we felt there was good leadership and vision behind it, and it was a worthwhile investment."



Maggie Groteluschen, personal wealth manager for The First National Bank in Sioux Falls, accepts a plaque from Brandon Development Foundation president Chuck Parsons. Also pictured are FNB president and chief executive officer Chris Ekstrum, and Dennis Olson of the Brandon Development Foundation.

When the regional economic deal was struck, Olson said they promised the investors they would not ask for any further development money.

"We'd have to finance that ourselves," Olson said.

He also remembers going against the trend of "giving away land."

"We said we would not give away the land unless we felt we had a good enough deal to have a stakeholder's meeting, at which time the decision would be made," Olson said.

Finally, they pledged to pay stakeholders back one and a half times of what they put in when every parcel of property was sold. For a \$100,000 investment, stakeholders stood to gain a \$150,000 return.

The Brandon Development Foundation came out the true winner, as The First National Bank and Alliance Communications gifted their returns.

"When it's all done, we're going to have a windfall of about \$750,000," Olson said.

Ekstrum said the bank never intended to make money from its investment. Instead, it was all about supporting the industrial park and the perks that come with that, like building a community, paying off debt and investing in future development parks.

Others, like Sioux Valley Energy and Western Bank are gifting a portion of their investment to the BDF and the city of Brandon.

The 117-acre Corson Development Park now totals more than \$27 million in property tax valuation, anchored by wind tower manufacturer Marmen Energy, which employs nearly 300 people.

Other employers include Raven Industries, which has a plant for its engineered films division, Henkel, Leeco Steel, Wausau Supply and FlexIt USA.

The Corson Development Park is a prime example of how public-private partnerships can benefit all, said Jesse Fonkert, executive director of the Minnehaha County Economic Development Association.

"There are so many wins here. It's definitely a model others can consider following," he said. "It absolutely shows we are stronger as a region when we come together to harness opportunities for shared growth."

BRANDON'S INDUSTRIAL ENDEAVORS BY THE NUMBERS

Industrial Parks: Burkman Industrial Park, Burkman Industrial Park 2nd Addition, Brandon Development Corporation Addition, Brandon Industrial Park, Brandon Industrial Park 1st Addition, Corson Development Park, Rovang Industrial Park

No. of Acres: 321.5

No. of Employees: 1,477

Total valuation: \$59,630,684

IT ABSOLUTELY SHOWS
WE ARE STRONGER AS
A REGION WHEN WE
COME TOGETHER TO
HARNESS
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR SHARED GROWTH.

Jesse Fonkert, Executive Director of the Minnehaha
County Economic Development Association

Brandon Development Foundation formed in 1983

The Brandon Development Foundation was created by associations between Russ Melgaard and the late Governor Bill Janklow. At the time, Melgaard was working for an accounting firm in Minnesota and was enticed to Brandon by Janklow to be the first CEO of Luverne Truck & Fire Apparatus, Olson said.

"I don't know if Janklow called, but that request for Melgaard to come to Brandon pushed the buttons to form a new development foundation."

As it turns out, it was the second development foundation to organize here.

"The old one, I don't know much about other than they sold shares, because

when I got to be city administrator in 1986, I got calls and said, 'When are we going to get our shares back, and there wasn't any money.'

When Olson stepped into his role as city administrator, one of his duties was to work with the Brandon Development Association.

"I was technically never on the board," Olson said. "I just went to the meetings, and quite frankly, if cities and development foundations don't get along, nothing happens, and I've seen that happen."

Olson said it wasn't until late 1986/early 1987 when Joel Jorgenson took over the helm as president of the BDF that things started to get done.

"He had this way about him. He didn't know he was a leader, but they would

have their meetings, discuss what they were going to do and then they'd get done and Joel would say, 'Well, I think we probably should go this route,' and then they'd fold like cheap suits," Olson said. "He was a businessman and he was very consistent. That's when the board really started acting like a board."

One of the things that came with that was Community Development Block Grants.

"What happened there – and it did with Luverne Truck – is that Janklow gave them several loans, but one of them was that the principal and interest was paid back to the Development Foundation. That's where our revolving loan fund money came from," Olson said.

BRANDON DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

► **President** Chuck Parsons

► **Vice-President** George Gulson

► **Staff** Dennis Olson

► **Board Members** Steve Kolbeck, Tim Jorgenson, Kevin Erickson, Paul VanDeBerg, Jay Buchholz, Yannick Laroche

► **Ex-Officio Board Members** Paul Lundberg, Barb Fish

Contact Us!

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Email: bdf@cityofbrandon.org

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 - Learn and develop new skills



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Pride. Innovation. Teamwork. Commitment. Honesty.

These are the five common values that has made Marmen Energy a leader in the wind power industry and an excellent company to have affiliations with. These five common values have – and will continue to serve – as the foundation for all of Marmen Energy’s endeavors. With three plants – two in Canada, and one in Brandon, S.D. – Marmen has the ability to serve the entire globe.

Founded in 1972, Marmen handles parts of all sizes in a variety of sectors, including oil and gas, wind power, hydropower, steam and gas turbine, mining, steel, aluminum and target markets like defense and military, medical, shipbuilding and nuclear power. Since 2002, the company has been producing wind towers for the United States market and has become one of North America’s largest wind tower manufacturers.

Marmen, a family-run business, has experienced extensive growth and propelled itself into international markets, carving out a place among the greats. Today, Marmen and its subsidiaries have over 1,000 employees and continues to evolve in a family atmosphere all the while promoting cutting edge and high-performance ways.

BRANDON & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2013, Marmen Energy made its presence known in the U.S., opening its first plant in Brandon, S.D., where the fabrication of wind towers is the focus. That same year, the company inaugurated a new building for the machining of small and medium-sized parts and also expanded several areas of its existing facilities in Trois-Rivières.

“The choice of South Dakota was strategic,” said Patrick Pellerin, president of Marmen Energy. “This ideal location brought us closer to our clients. In addition, Brandon and Sioux Falls offer a pro-business climate with engaged political, academic and corporate leaders. And lastly, the entire community is facilitating our integration, as we believe that the area has one of the best workforces in the country.”

Well beyond its ambitious manufacturing projects, Marmen is also an involved corporate citizen that cares about the well-being of its community and employees. Since its foundation, the company has been committed to contributing to the economic growth and socio-cultural development of the regions where its plants are located. Over the years, whether in Trois-Rivières, Matane or Brandon, Marmen has increased its commitments, whether in the form of sponsorships, partnerships or charitable donations.

The company has taken big steps to partner with both area high schools, the Career and Technical Educational center in Sioux Falls and South Dakota’s state technical schools through hands-on training and scholarship opportunities.

“We are all about wanting to help future generations



BUILT ON FIVE COMMON VALUES

PRIDE – Marmen Energy is proud of the trust their customers place in them, and in turn, the company is equally proud of the parts they produce for their customers.

INNOVATION – Because Marmen customers operate in competitive markets, the company’s goal is to deliver faster and better. To do this, teams are made up of ingenious people who know how to innovate and work brilliantly.

TEAMWORK – Internally, Marmen teams are strong and are built to maximize their efficiency. For their customers, Marmen takes pride in working closely with their customer’s teams and openly shares their knowledge and expertise.

COMMITMENT – Marmen Energy remains committed to making every one of their customer’s projects a great success and are fully dedicated to helping them achieve their goals.

HONESTY – Marmen Energy boasts transparency, throwing no surprises at its clientele and keeping them well-informed at all times.

These values are shared by all Marmen Energy team members, who truly define the quality of the company’s services and interactions.

find their career paths,” said Leah Jaeger, human resources and school liaison at the Brandon facility. “And it’s not only about financial opportunities, but about helping them find their passion and gain ample experience.”

Marmen Energy is one of the Build Dakota Scholarship program’s corporate sponsors.

“We want to work with the principals at the area high schools and the local chamber of commerce to help us recruit and retain employees,” said Aimee Miritello, human resource manager. “Community is important to us and equally important is the relationships we have with area schools.”

Miritello said Marmen Energy has implemented a pro-

gressive recruiting process and has made it even easier through a new texting tool, text “MARMEN” to “25000,” which immediately schedules an appointment with a Marmen Energy recruiter. With the addition of more contracts, Marmen Energy in Brandon has a plethora of employment opportunities for people with little experience or someone with great talent in their field.

Marmen and its affiliates partner with area schools along with major events in their region and support many causes in the areas of education and various non-profits.

Through its social commitment, Marmen is proud to help make the area communities in which they live and work even more vibrant and appealing.



SOUTHEAST TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Whether you have just graduated from high school or may be exploring the possibility of pursuing an entirely different career path, look no further than Southeast Technical College. Technical schools like SEC offer training in numerous fields and may just be the perfect solution for those who want to work in an industry that requires – as well as benefits from – hands-on training.

For more than 50 years, SEC has been a leader in offering cost-effective, career relevant education that, in turn, produces graduates who are confident and well-trained for their chosen profession.

“A starting point is SEC’s affordability that provides students the opportunity to enter a high-end, high-paying career with minimal debt,” said Benjamin Valdez, Vice President of Academics at SEC.

Valdez adds that SEC’s 52 academic programs should appeal to those who want to “test different career fields.”

“Because students have a little wider choice, they’re able to see and kind of dabble, so to speak, in different career fields to see what’s right for them without getting a tremendous amount of debt,” Valdez said.

One of the higher demand fields of study SEC offers in its programming is the health care industry.

“Health care is kind of the low-hanging fruit,” Valdez said. “Avera and Sanford are very supportive and are always looking to grow, and with the pandemic, that really brought it more to the forefront as far as career opportunities.”

Graduates of SEC’s construction-related programs are also highly sought after, Valdez said.

“Due to our construction management program, all of our HVAC, welding, plumbing, electrician programs are very high-demand fields. As the Sioux Falls region grows with new business coming in and the housing market going up, I think that’s another big area,” he said.

Oftentimes, Valdez said SEC students are learning their chosen trade on the job and in the classroom simultaneously.

“We have a lot of businesses that do that. We’ve really tried to work with industry that they continue to support the student to remain in school and complete their degree. And we do that because we want to ensure the employer has a well-rounded individual,” he said.

SEC’s automotive partners have tuned into this avenue to recruit – and maintain – these students as employees.

“It’s very easy to say, ‘Hey, I can teach you how to tear that engine apart – come work for me.’ But time goes on and you need someone that can do more than that.



Benjamin Valdez

You need people to go into leadership positions that can critically think and solve problems. And that’s really what earning a college degree does for an individual. It provides more depth in an area and really prepares you to take on more and be more successful,” Valdez said.

Training for a career in the classroom isn’t the only option for students who want to earn a degree. Online programs have become very popular, especially this year with the pandemic.

“We have had to relook at how we deliver education, and we found that we can be very successful,” he said. “Students really like the opportunity to be able to continue to work full-time and not interrupt their careers by taking online courses.”

Valdez said they are looking to transition some of their theory-based learning online or to a hybrid modality.

“We still have the hands-on components, the laboratory settings, which students come in and actually practice that skill,” he said.

Take automotive diesel tech, for example.

“They actually break down an engine and learn how to do brakes,” he said.

Or nursing, where students learn how to start IVs and use industry-related equipment.

“We’re very hands-on with those skills, so we have that component as well,” he adds.

Valdez said they are constantly looking to add new fields of study.

“One of the programs we’re looking at and doing a lot of investigation into the industry is a brewery program. We are seeing that industry grow quite a bit here in South Dakota and even nationally,” he said.

Recently, SEC launched a veterinary technician program, which has been well received.

“Here we are in South Dakota and the No. 1 economy in South Dakota is ag and farming and we didn’t have a vet tech program in South Dakota. We’ve now met that need,” he said.

The first class of students numbered 45, and Valdez said SEC has already reached its limit for next year. The same can also be said for SEC’s dental assistant program, which, too, has a waiting list.

It’s never too late to learn something new, and SEC boasts a wealth of nontraditional students, who are already in the workforce and looking at a career change.

“Primarily, 40 percent of our student population are non-traditional students,” he said. “They want to have another option for what they want to do or even just upscale technology is consistently changing and evolving. But how does industry keep up with that? They’re having challenges as well, and this is the opportunity for our students to really take advantage of stuff like that.”

SEC grads are rewarded with either a diploma (typically one-semester programs) or an associate’s degree (generally two years).

“Southeast Tech and technical education programs focus primarily on hands-on delivery of their education. We’re really focusing on those skills that are going to be most needed within the industry and then getting

them ready to become successful,” Valdez said.

Enrollment remains strong at SEC, with approximately 2,400 students enrolled this year. Approximately 80 percent of their students are South Dakota natives, and SEC takes pride in keeping them in South Dakota by focusing on success within their trade and within the South Dakota economy.

For example, with satellite campuses in Yankton and Huron, SEC has been able to expand its nursing program.

“Communities are starting to realize that you have to start looking at education a little differently right now. We’ve been sending our students away. Big industry and corporations from Omaha and Lincoln, Neb., are recruiting their talent base, their workforce. So how do we keep them in your area? A lot of it is creating opportunities in your hometown rather than sending them away,” he said.

SEC, along with the three other technical colleges in South Dakota, have a combined 90 percent success rate for students finding a career in their chosen field of study after graduation.

“And of those, 84 percent remain here in South Dakota to fill those high-tech, high-need careers and to continue their education here as well,” Valdez said.

One avenue South Dakota’s four technical schools have used to keep their students in South Dakota has been made possible through the Build Dakota Scholarship program. Last year, Valdez said 402 applications were submitted, from which 92 Build Dakota Scholarships were awarded.

“All 92 are industry-sponsored,” Valdez said. “So, that means Build Dakota is covering half of their tuition and the industry partner is covering the remaining half. That student, upon graduation, walks away debt-free and their commitment is to work for that industry partner for three years after graduation. It becomes a win-win all the way around.”



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Tradition runs deep in the fire industry and Spartan Emergency Response (Spartan ER) based in Brandon, SD, has been a major contributor to that industry with over 250 years of combined experience. As a North American leader in the emergency response market, Spartan ER and its portfolio of brands, Smeal Fire Apparatus and Ladder Tower (LT), manufacture a broad range of custom pumpers, tankers, rescues, and aerials that are designed to meet fire department's needs.

Fire trucks are one of our society's oldest and most recognizable vehicles. But its look and functions have dramatically changed over the years to meet the increased demands of the job. One thing that has remained steadfast is Spartan's commitment to delivering high-quality, reliable, and safe apparatus to departments and communities around the world.

Their vast dealer network comprises coverage in 44 states in the United

States, 10 provinces and 3 territories in Canada, and multiple countries in Latin America. Fire truck design, development, manufacturing and after-the-sale support have always been at the heart of the company and continues today.

Engineering and manufacturing excellence combined with an intimate knowledge of every customer's needs has been at the heart of Spartan's success since the beginning. It's a people business through and through, and it starts with the employees and their dedication and pride in building world-class firetrucks. Every day on the job at Spartan translates into lives saved in communities all over the globe. It's an honor to serve an industry whose primary mission is to save lives and protect property.

Spartan is always seeking to expand their team of dedicated employees. Visit www.spartaner.com to learn more. Spartan operates facilities in Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Nebraska.

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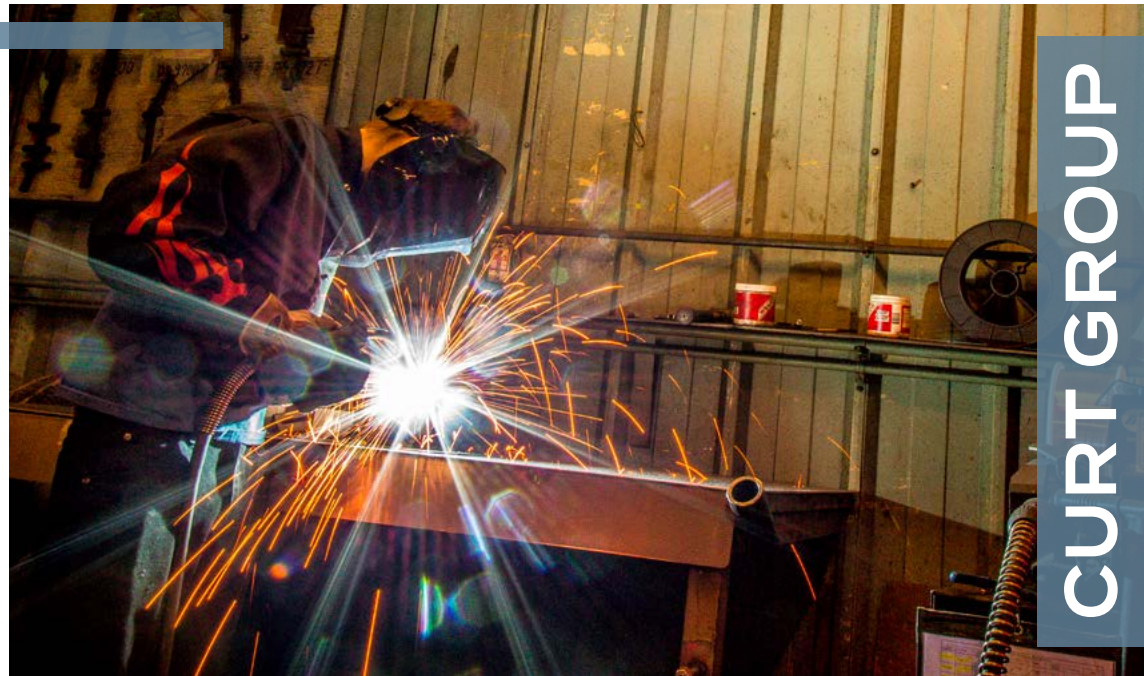
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CURTGROUP.COM

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" A GREAT COMPANY THAT CARES
ABOUT THEIR ASSOCIATES"

- DEAN S



CURT GROUP

CURT Group, an industry leader in towing products and truck accessories for all types of vehicles, may just be the company you've been searching for.

With more than 1,000 associates worldwide, CURT Group has manufacturing plants in Wisconsin, Florida and South Dakota, the latter of which is located in Brandon.

CURT Group is made up of a team that designs, builds, ships and sells products that help people explore the world and do cool things. Whether its work or play, CURT Group products help people along the way. The company takes great pride in the work they do, the products they create and the difference they make for their customers.

CURT Group is comprised of several brands that boast a long and rich history.

The first is CURT, which offers a complete line of towing products and is a leading manufacturer of USA-made custom-fit trailer hitches for nearly every vehicle on the road today.

ARIES is a fast-paced marketer and innovator of truck, Jeep, SUV and CUV accessories. From automotive enthusiasts to professional builders, these products are built for the champions of individualism, innovation and attitude. ARIES specializes in custom-fit grille guards, bull bars, side bars and running boards, as well as Jeep Wrangler accessories.

LUVARNE has been manufacturing quality automotive accessories in the United States since 1963. The brand, which is nationally known and respected, produces accessories for pickup trucks, commercial vans and SUVs and specializes in grille guards, running boards, side steps and mud guards. These products are primarily made from high-quality stainless steel, aluminum and mild steel.

RETRAC is a leading manufacturer of OEM and after-market accessories for heavy-duty and medium-duty trucks. Since 1958, RETRAC continues to drive the trucking industry with innovative solutions to increase safety, protection and job quality. RETRAC is an industry leader and recognized name for quality mirrors, grille guards and other accessories.

UWS is a leading manufacturer and designer of USA-assembled truck tool boxes and accessories. UWS offers a full range of truck tool boxes, transfer tanks, chest boxes, dog boxes and other truck storage solutions.

Currently, CURT Group's Brandon production center seeks a Plant Accountant, Assembly Operator I (first shift, part-time), Fabrication Associate II (first shift), Material Handler (first shift), Powder/Paint (first shift, part-time) and general production positions.

Potential team members will enjoy more than just a paycheck. CURT Group offers generous paid time off, wellness programs and a wealth of benefits. The list of benefits is big, and includes medical, vision and dental insurance, company matched 401K, life and disability insurance, discount product and apparel purchase programs, a tuition reimbursement program, flexible spending accounts, dependent care flexible spending accounts, company-funded health savings accounts, an employee assistance plan and opportunities to volunteer in the community and give to charitable programs.

In summary, CURT Group works to ensure that every associate feels supported and is encouraged to have a healthy balance between work and home commitments.

The CURT Group name stands for excellence in their products and associates, and continues to aspire to be the industry leader by recognizing that the customer is king and their associates are their greatest asset.



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