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**ELECTRONIC  
SYSTEMS INC.**

**LEGENDARY SERVICE**

## PLANTING THE STEM SEED

By Gary Larson, President, [glarson@electroniccsi.com](mailto:glarson@electroniccsi.com)



At Electronic Systems, Inc. (ESI), we're proud of our engineering team. This group of individuals grew up with the curiosity, creativity and problem-solving skills needed to manufacture products that meet our customers' expectations. In most cases, their interest in designing and building things started early in their lives. That's why we're excited to be part of two Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) outreach programs. Not only are we helping to ensure a quality workforce for the future, but it is also simply fun to watch a bunch of kids get turned on to engineering

For the third year, ESI is a sponsor of the Jackrabbit BEST™ (*Boosting Engineering, Science and Technology*) Robotics Competition. Held at the end of October on the campus of South Dakota State University, Jacks BEST is part of the national BEST Robotics program. Its mission: to inspire middle through high school students to

pursue careers in engineering, science and technology.

We also sponsor FIRST®LEGO®, an organization founded to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology—also through robotics. I've enjoyed coaching my own children in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) events.

Without these great programs many kids would never have the opportunity to explore the field of engineering. They may grow up knowing what firefighters and doctors do, but be unaware of the important role engineers play. Being involved with programs like Jacks BEST and FIRSTLEGO plants a seed. It's satisfying to watch them discover and develop skills that they can apply to solving a problem. They learn to work as part of a team; listening to one another and drawing upon one another's ideas and skill sets. They learn how to utilize technology to meet a challenge. Even better, they have fun doing it.

These STEM outreach programs are designed to help foster the desire to seek a career in the STEM fields. We're proud to play a minor role in making that happen. ♦

***"I continue to be inspired by the way ESI treats its suppliers. You are really a class operation."***

***—Executive  
Metal Stamping Company***



# EXPERIENCE THAT COUNTS

As a customer's product moves through the manufacturing process at Electronic Systems, there's a good chance Aaron Wood is impacting the final product somewhere along the way. Whether it's determining the best board panelization for process flow, helping define the build process and assembly instructions, programming equipment or signing off on a specific build-to-print project, this manufacturing engineer brings his experience and skills to the table.

Aaron came to ESI three years ago, working the night shift as a manufacturing technician. Equipped with a degree in industrial management with an emphasis in manufacturing engineering, he entered the workforce during the recession of 2008, taking a temporary job before landing the production manager position for a plastics manufacturing firm. He also joined the National Guard and then Army Reserve, where he currently serves as an officer with the 452nd Ordnance Company. Both experiences, he says, play well in his current position.

"My background in plastics has helped when we're working with sonic welding or we need to diagnose what's gone wrong with a plastic piece," says Aaron. While he's nearing the completion of his



Army Reserve commitment, he says it's been time well spent. "The military has given me a lot of leadership skills and confidence to solve problems," says the Sioux City, Iowa, native. "Believe it or not I used to be a really quiet and shy person," he adds with a smile. "It's made me a better person."

That person goes home each night to his wife, Christine, and a four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son. Christine has an ESI connection, as well. An engineer, she serves as the 4-H STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) field specialist for South Dakota State University, and has worked with ESI in its sponsorship of the FIRST®LEGO®, Robotics Competition (see Gary Larson's article on page 1).

The family lives on an acreage where Aaron enjoys horses, four-wheeling, fishing and hunting. "Christine says I have too many hobbies," he says, "but that's why I live in South Dakota."

And why does he work at Electronic Systems? He says he relishes the multi-faceted and problem-solving aspect of his job. "I enjoy what I'm doing," says Aaron. "I like the variety and I like the challenges—the 'What's going to happen today?' aspect. My attitude has always been, 'Give me a problem and let me fix it.'" ♦

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

It isn't every day associates at Electronic Systems can say they packed 4,320 meal kits for hungry and malnourished children. In June, a group of more than 20 ESI associates and family members showed up at the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Kids Against Hunger® packaging location to place ingredients for nutritious meals in bags that can be shipped to hungry children around the world. "Not only were we doing something that helps others, but it was a lot of fun," says ESI's human resource generalist Jamie

Bortnem, who coordinates community outreach events.

Working together to make a difference also played out in August when, for the second year, associates participated in Project SOS (Supply Our Students). Associates were part of a team that handed out close to 6,000 backpacks to underprivileged children. "It's great to be able to give out these backpacks—basic new school supplies that other kids often take for granted," says business development coordinator Holly Olsen. Thank you to all of our associates who participated! ♦



*ESI associates showed up this summer to pack 4,320 meal kits for South Dakota Kids Against Hunger.*

# INTRODUCING NEW SELECTIVE SOLDER

ESI's manufacturing engineer Paula Schmidt stands next to the new Pillarhouse USA, Inc. Jade MKII selective soldering system for double-sided through-hole circuit boards. The new equipment, put into operation in August, utilizes a patented 1½-millimeter nozzle—the smallest on the market—to allow soldering in very small, tight spaces that would have previously required hand soldering.

"The Jade MKII improves solder joint quality due to the repeatability and accuracy of the machine," explains Paula, who researched the product and watched it in action at another manufacturing facility prior to recommending its purchase. She, along with manufacturing engineer Aaron Woods, have been instrumental in integrating the new system into ESI's manufacturing processes. ♦



## 2016 LEGEND SUPPLIER

Watertown Box Corporation, based in Watertown, South Dakota, received ESI's coveted Legend Award during the 2016 Supplier Appreciation Day in August. The Legend Award was established in 2003 to recognize and reward outstanding achievement within our internal team at Electronic Systems. In 2015, the award was extended to our supplier partners for providing legendary service above and beyond expectations.

ESI uses the word "legend" to reinforce our values of legendary integrity, flexibility and responsiveness, and, according to ESI president Gary Larson, Watertown Box, long-time supplier of packaging materials, meets that high mark.



*Watertown Box Corporation was presented with the Legend Award during Supplier Appreciation Day. Left to right: Watertown Box Salesman Troy Bergh, ESI's Director of Business Logistics Lynne Mooney, Watertown Box President Bill Towle and ESI President Gary Larson.*

"Troy Bergh from Watertown Box is very proactive and eager to dig in and help us solve any issues we are having with packaging, including sending us samples to evaluate—sometimes multiple times on the same part—until it's exactly what we need," says Gary. "He'll stop multiple times to see how the samples are working and makes changes as needed. He offers suggestions on different ways to do things for optimum efficiency and cost savings. He definitely feels like a "partner" of ours." Congratulations Watertown Box! ♦

### Preferred Suppliers for Four Consecutive Quarters:

TTI, Inc.  
Heilind Electronics  
Digi-Key Corporation  
Future Electronics  
Arrow Electronics  
American Solutions for Business  
Active Sales Associates, Inc.  
M & L Industries, Inc.

To see the list of all Q2 Preferred Suppliers go to <http://www.electroniccsi.com/main/preferred-suppliers-q2-2016/>.



# ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS INC.

## LEGENDARY SERVICE

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ISO 13485:2003 Firm

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PHOTOS OF ALL OF THE 2016 PARTNERSHIP  
AWARD WINNERS CAN BE FOUND AT  
[WWW.ELECTRONICSI.COM](http://WWW.ELECTRONICSI.COM).

## RECOGNIZING OUR SUPPLIERS

By Lynne Mooney, Director of Business Logistics, [lmooney@electronicssi.com](mailto:lmooney@electronicssi.com)

It was again our pleasure to host more than 70 of our supplier partners during our 12th annual Supplier Appreciation Day in August. It was also an honor to present our Partnership Awards to those suppliers who, in 2016, went above and beyond. In addition to our Legend Award recipient (see page 3), winners were recognized for exhibiting the Best in Class in several categories and overall Best in All Categories. They are:

### BEST IN ALL CATEGORIES (Total Overall Value, Quality and Service)

Digi-Key Corporation

### BEST IN CLASS

American Solutions for Business  
Active Sales Associates, Inc.  
Ellsworth Adhesives  
Future Electronics

### CATEGORY

Custom Manufacturer  
Printed Circuit Boards  
MRO/Consumables/Equipment  
Electronic Distributors



*Digi-Key Corporation is the 2016 Best in All Categories award winner. Left to right: ESI's Director of Business Logistics Lynne Mooney, Digi-Key's Lynn Kartes and Kari Jesme, ESI President Gary Larson and Tom Treichel of Digi-Key.*

change allows us to communicate more effectively with our customer.

We also announced changes to our Preferred Supplier Program metrics in 2017. At ESI we already expect that our suppliers will deliver quality products on time, so we plan to focus more on other aspects of our relationship, including responsiveness to NPI quotes and parts needs, ease of working with the supplier team, responsiveness/flexibility to changing material requirements, and identification of alternates for customer review/approval to address obsolete and long lead components. ♦

In addition to providing an opportunity to recognize our supplier partners with awards, lunch and a networking event, we also utilize this event to highlight specific programs and processes where we can partner even more effectively with our suppliers on behalf of our customers. For example, when using QuoteFX, we are requesting that suppliers provide additional information on line items that need corrections, as well as more details on what prompted the correction. Providing more complete information on a P/N