



**ELECTRONIC
SYSTEMS INC.**

LEGENDARY SERVICE
INTEGRITY, RESPONSIVENESS, & FLEXIBILITY

WWW.ELECTRONICSI.COM • SUMMER 2019

*“Great people
to work with no
matter what the
request.”*

—PURCHASING MANAGER
INDUSTRIAL CONTROLS COMPANY

FINDING GOOD PEOPLE

By Gary Larson, President, glarson@electronicsi.com



It’s not news to you that the manufacturing industry is in the midst of a lack of skilled workers, and Electronic Systems, Inc. (ESI) is in a city with even lower unemployment rates (2.4%) than the

national average.

It’s one reason we are finding new and innovative ways to recruit people who will become valued employees. One idea came to fruition in January, when we held our first four-day Entry-Level Recruiting and Training class in partnership with a nearby technical school. I invite you to turn inside for more details.

When we hire someone new, I want them to become part of our culture, part of our team—and to stay here a long, long time. That’s why we have an employee development specialist, Danielle Lammi, who helps train and work with new employees to ease their transition. It’s why we honor associates who have been here for five, 10, 15 years or more with a badge they proudly wear on their smocks. It’s why, in our newsletter, we recognize employees who have

been here 20 years, profiling those who stay with us for 25 years or more.

Twenty years ago, on June 21, 1999, I was one of those people walking in the door of ESI for the first time. I’ve stayed primarily because of the excellent people and culture we have here—because of the legendary service we are all committed to on behalf of our customers.

When our people say, “I work for ESI,” I tell them, “No you don’t. You *ARE* ESI.” Every one of our 260+ people is a part of our success. That’s the culture we want every new employee to sense as they walk through ESI’s doors today, as I did two decades ago. I thank our entire workforce for their hard work and dedication. And I thank you for showing appreciation for that commitment through your continued business with us. ♦

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CLASSES FOR NEW RECRUITS



ESI's Danielle Lammi teaches an orientation class to new associates. Watch for a profile on Danielle in ESI's fall newsletter.

With Southeast Technical Institute (STI) just a few miles from ESI, President Gary Larson approached the school awhile ago, asking if they might partner on a basic training class to help recruit and prepare individuals for a job in manufacturing—specifically at ESI.

That concept became reality this past January, when six people participated in the first-ever Entry-Level Recruiting and Training class at STI. The result: four of the attendees were offered and accepted a job at ESI following completion of the class and an interview. In April, five more

people took the class—with three people offered a production position.

“With our low unemployment rate, it’s definitely getting harder to find people,” says Jamie Baker, ESI’s HR generalist. “We are being proactive and thinking outside the box in order to deal with that challenge.”

The classes, which are offered on the STI campus, utilize instructors from STI, the South Dakota Department of Labor, South Dakota Manufacturing and

Technology Solutions and ESI. Classes cover everything from interview and computer skills to workplace safety. A Bring Your “A” Game class covers what basics people need to know in order to succeed in the workplace.

ESI’s own Danielle Lammi, employee development specialist, explains details that apply specifically to ESI, including OSHA regulations, component identification and an introduction to Lean manufacturing concepts. Individuals who complete the four days can be interviewed by Jamie and may be offered a position. “Our normal new hires sit through about eight hours of orientation when they walk in the door of ESI,” says Jamie. “The individuals who have been through the Entry Level Recruiting and Training class are ready to go from day one.”

“It’s a really good program,” says Danielle. “They must finish the class to qualify for an interview. They don’t have to pay for this class, but they also don’t get paid to be there, and so we’re seeing commitment right away.” Responses from participants have been positive. “Every applicant I interview says it was great,” says Jamie, “that they learned a lot. It’s been good for everyone involved.” ♦

ESI HELPS FEED SOUTH DAKOTA

ESI’s Business Development Manager Shawnee Pick had heard that Feeding South Dakota, a hunger relief organization that last year served 45,000-plus families through its food pantries, was running short of canned food items. That’s when she challenged ESI associates to help fill those pantry shelves. “We beat our goal by 32.5%,” says Shawnee. “Everyone liked the idea of helping and they responded.” Thanks to all our associates who made a difference for hungry families! ♦



THE ANALYSIS GUY

STEVEN WENZL, ESI'S
FINANCIAL AND DATA ANALYST



Q. What got you interested in data and analysis?

A. I think I always knew analysis would be a big part of my life. It's made me tick since I was little. It started out with numbers and math, and, born and raised in southern California, I ended up getting a computer science degree from the University of California, Irvine.

Q. How did you get involved in finance?

A. My first job was in an analyst role for a small company, and I ended up in a management role in the finance department. I don't have a finance or accounting background—just a natural gift for it, I guess. Because I lacked the educational background, Jeff Tornow (ESI's CFO and friend of the owners) was asked to mentor me. He made me a much better accountant.

Q. Why move from California to Sioux Falls, and why ESI?

A. I ended up leaving that company and Jeff entertained the idea of my coming to work at ESI, first to fill in as accountant and eventually to work in IT, focusing on analytics and data base administration. It was a long deliberation, especially because I had just gotten married in June 2018. But my wife, Heather, was on board with the idea more quickly than I was. We ended up moving to South Dakota in October.

Q. What is your role today at ESI?

A. My primary function is high-level analysis and IT projects relating to systems and application efficiency. In addition, I have a supervisory role in the accounting department. We're currently upgrading our ERP system and once that's well underway, I want to work with the different departments to find out what analytics they wish they had. Our system holds all of this data and so we need to go in, pull it out, manipulate it and turn it into something useable. Numbers and data exist to tell a story. Looking at raw data and drawing conclusions after the fact bring a lot of value to an organization—to see hard numbers about what's happening.

Q. You left warm and sunny California to come to Sioux Falls in October. How are you and Heather transitioning?

A. We've been here a little more than six months and it's been pretty much winter the whole time, but it's not as bad as we thought it would be. We're looking forward to experiencing summer, trying some camping and not having to bundle up in four layers just to go outside. But I'm doing what I love and working for people I respect. ◆

REACHING MILESTONES

20 YEARS

Ron Fuerstenberg	April 7
Michael Kresak	May 3
Harley Manning	May 17
Paula Schmidt.....	May 17
Gary Larson.....	June 21

25 YEARS



Cathy Finn says she started at ESI on June 20, 1994, “with no knowledge of electronics.” Today, 25 years later, that’s no longer true. She remembers her first task—operating the solder wave process. “It was very different then,” Cathy recalls, with the solder area—wave,

inspection/touch up and wash—running the entire length of the plant. “I handled all three positions...I got my exercise.” A little more than a year later she was named a team leader—a position she still holds today. Cathy still gets her exercise. She and her husband, Bruce, raise cattle and farm. “I hurry home, put on my coveralls and boots, and get out there to start chores with some of my eight grandchildren.” But she says she still enjoys her work at ESI. “I get a lot of satisfaction out of assisting people, creating good quality work and satisfying our customers.” ◆



ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS INC.

LEGENDARY SERVICE

AN ISO 9001:2015 AND
ISO 13485:2016 FIRM

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YOU CAN FIND US AT...

Upper Midwest Design-2-Part Show
June 5 & 6, 2019
Minneapolis Convention Center
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Upper Midwest Expo & Tech Forum
June 27, 2019
DoubleTree by Hilton Minneapolis - Park Place
Minneapolis, Minnesota

ESI AND SILICONEXPERT

By Colin Sabby, Materials Manager, csabby@electronicssi.com



For electronic manufacturers, selecting components that avoid compliance, end-of-life or other concerns is important—especially in the midst of our

current long lead-time environment.

ESI has different tools to assist our customers in maneuvering through those challenging waters, and one of them is SiliconExpert software.

SiliconExpert, a subscription-based service, is not a tool in every EMS's toolbox. It provides ESI with access to an electronic parts database covering millions of electronic components. It can provide lots of information about parts,

including end-of-life forecasting, finding cross references, lifecycle statuses, product change notices, where the part is made and if it's tariffed. There are certainly other ways to find out some of this information through distributor sites, but SiliconExpert is more comprehensive and easier to use.

Certainly not every part or BOM needs to be checked with SiliconExpert, but there are times when this additional resource can provide our customers with that extra step—a report card on the health of their components. And, when we run into issues with lead times, obsolete parts or price increases, for example, we can use SiliconExpert to locate alternatives. It's just one more way ESI provides Legendary Service. ◆

PREFERRED SUPPLIERS

ESI is pleased to announce a long list of our Q1 Preferred Suppliers.

Please go to www.electronicssi.com, click on the News/Events link and look for Preferred Suppliers of Q1 2019.

SUPPLIER APPRECIATION DAY #15 | AUGUST 22

This August 22nd, we reach a landmark as we celebrate the 15th year of our Supplier Appreciation Day. The day includes tours of our facilities, presentations by management, lunch and plenty of networking opportunities. We will recognize outstanding efforts from suppliers with awards for Best in Class, Best in All Categories and our Legend Award. Suppliers, be watching for your invite in the mail!