



**ELECTRONIC
SYSTEMS INC.**

LEGENDARY SERVICE
INTEGRITY, RESPONSIVENESS, & FLEXIBILITY

WWW.ELECTRONICSI.COM • FALL 2020

“Thank you so much ESI for your rapid response, excellent execution, and high quality to our request.”

— VP of Operations,
Industrial Controls Company

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PREPARING FOR WHAT’S NEXT

By Gary Larson, President, glarson@electronicsi.com



If 2020 had a theme, it might well be “We Made the Best of It.” This has certainly been an unprecedented year for both businesses and individuals. It was also a year with special meaning to us at ESI as we celebrated our 40th year as a company. Though we had to modify some of our plans, we still enjoyed a week-long celebration recognizing our history and a successful Supplier Appreciation Event. I’d like to thank our customers, employees and suppliers for making our 40th year special despite the challenges.

Now we turn our full attention to next year — and the next 39 years after that. Through our first four decades, we’ve seen and weathered just about everything — natural disasters, recessions, political unrest and now pandemics. One of our core strengths is flexibility, and that has served us well as we have adapted our business to harness change for the benefit of our company and our customers.

Through all the disruptions, we were able to maintain and build our Legendary Service culture. We’ve learned, and applied, many lessons. As we look to the future, one thing is certain — we must prepare for the unexpected. This was a year that tested

everyone’s business model, including ours. We learned where our weak spots were and took steps to eliminate them.

Planning for future disruptions is a priority for ESI. It is also a quality we value and encourage in our suppliers. For ESI to continue to be a trusted manufacturing partner, we must have a solid and reliable supply chain.

We strive to be a dependable part of our customers’ supply chain as well. One lesson learned by ESI and other manufacturers is the need to have a “Plus One” option for certain critical components. When your only supplier of a given part closes their factory, what is your alternative, your supplier plus one? We’re committed to finding those Plus One resources for our supply chain — and being that resource for current and potential customers.

There are two things our customers can count on as we go forward. First, that we will be here to serve you through whatever unexpected events lie ahead. Second, that we will continue to improve our Legendary Service through strategic planning, flexibility and strong customer and supplier relationships.

Thanks for helping us celebrate in 2020. Let’s get ready for the next 40 years together. ◆





PUTTING MATH TO WORK

JAMIE GUSTAFSON, PLANNER

Q: How would you describe your role as a planner?

A: I'm one of the primary points of contact with my assigned customers. Orders come to me and I enter them into our system so the proper requirements for labor and parts are known. This allows us to get everything required for the build here on time so we can schedule the work to meet the customer's on-time delivery date. I'm also responsible for keeping the customer updated when production timelines change, and I buy parts for some of my customers. It's a good fit, as I can see the whole production picture and understand when to order based on where we are in the process.

Q: Is this a career path you planned to follow?

A: Actually, I had no idea what I was going to do after college. I was a math major with a minor in economics. As a South Dakota State graduate, I was familiar with Daktronics. I worked there as the master scheduler for several years. Then I worked at Terex prior to joining ESI a year and a half ago.

Q: What qualities do you have that enable you to do your job well?

A: My mathematical mindset is helpful. I can find different ways to solve problems, which is applicable to just about anything that can occur in manufacturing. I also interact with the customer on a daily basis, so I work hard to make certain those interactions are positive. Transparency is important, even when there are issues. You have to

make sure that your customer is always informed about the status of their order.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your work?

A: The daily problem solving that comes with the job. Every day is different. I also appreciate the culture here. Everyone has a positive attitude and is very helpful when I have questions. We collaborate to make sure we get what our customer needs, because our customer depends on us to support them and their customers.

Q: What interests you outside of ESI?

A: I like sports. I played basketball and tennis in high school and I still like to do both recreationally when I can. I also enjoy pheasant and duck hunting. ♦

Q2 PREFERRED SUPPLIERS' LIST:

- A2 Global Electronics
- Avnet Electronics Marketing
- Bisco Industries
- Digi-Key Corporation
- Future Electronics Corporation
- Heilind Electronics, Inc.
- Quist Electronics
- Sager Electronics
- TTI, Inc
- Watertown Box Corporation
- Atscott Mfg Company Inc
- Minntronix, Inc.
- Kurt Manufacturing Co
- Active Sales Associates, Inc.
- Donnelly Acquisition LLC

DELIVERING AGAINST THE ODDS

BOH Electronics was the winner of this year's ESI Legend Award. Even by 2020 standards, the company had to overcome significant challenges to serve ESI while maintaining their overall business.

"Like many other companies, we were hit with a ransomware attack which completely wiped out our computer system," explains Grant Lanka, BOH Account Manager. "We went to our paper copies and really didn't skip a beat. It helped that we are a tight-knit, family-oriented company. Our owner and our general manager jumped in and put in extra hours for weeks to maintain business as usual."

"Despite their situation, they never missed a shipment, didn't raise their prices, found ways to keep our costs in line and really went the extra mile for ESI," states Materials Manager Colin Sabby. "They hand delivered some critically needed products, and even took some items from us and delivered them to another of our suppliers simply because they were here."



Left to right: ESI materials manager Colin Sabby, BOH's Grant Lanka, ESI President Gary Larson

"We don't look at our customers as customers, but as partners," Grant says. "Without them, BOH is nothing. The most important thing is to make sure that our partners are happy and growing, because we grow with them. ESI is a critical customer to us, and we greatly appreciate their business. We hold this Legend Award in high regard." ♦

SUPPLIERS HELP CELEBRATE 40 YEARS

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

The surroundings were definitely different for this year's Supplier Appreciation Day, but at least one feature stayed the same. Digi-Key Electronics earned ESI's Best in All Categories award for the fourth year in a row. The competition is always intense, but Digi-Key continues to get high marks on our supplier scorecard and set the standard for service and delivery.

Our 40th anniversary provided the overall theme for our 2020 event, which was held in a tent outside our facility. That proved to be a great solution, and we had a number of suppliers tell us we should do it every year. Senator John Thune was also in attendance, and his presentation was a highlight of the day.

We introduced a new award this year, the Cost Savings award won by A2 Global Electronics + Solutions.



Left to Right: ESI Materials Manager Colin Sabby, Digi-Key's Lynn Kartes, Kari Jesme, Tom Treichel, ESI President Gary Larson

The winner is determined on a percentage of savings basis to level the playing field between larger and smaller suppliers.

Despite all the challenges of 2020, attendance at this year's event was very good. Once again, our 16th annual Supplier Appreciation Day provided a great opportunity to say thanks to our suppliers and keep building on the great relationships we've established. ◆

REACHING MILESTONES

10 YEARS

- Kristi Dosch.....Aug. 2
- Momina Hussien.....Oct. 4
- Nila Ostrander.....Aug. 2
- Nuria Seid.....Oct. 4
- Lori Stortroen.....Aug. 23

15 YEARS

- Mike Anderson.....Nov. 7

20 YEARS

- Jim Knight.....Oct. 15

30 YEARS

- Julie Boomhall.....Oct. 23



2020 SUPPLIER APPRECIATION WINNERS

Best in Class: Electronic Distributor
HEILIND ELECTRONICS, INC.

Best in Class: Printed Circuit Boards (PCB)
ACTIVE SALES ASSOCIATES, INC.

Best in Class: Custom Manufacturer (BTP)
WATERTOWN BOX CORPORATION

Best in all Categories (Overall)
DIGI-KEY ELECTRONICS

Best in Class: MRO/Consumables/Equipment
ER NORTH

Legend Award
BOH ELECTRONICS

(New Award!) Cost Savings Award
A2 GLOBAL ELECTRONICS + SOLUTIONS

"Sometimes I think, 'Really? It's been that long?' It seems like the time has gone pretty fast."

That's Julie Bloomhall talking about her 30-year run at ESI. Over the course of her career, she's handled a variety of duties. "I started in the prep area doing assembly. I was in the quality department and I've worked in repair, but mostly I've been on the production floor. Now, I work in the SMT final area."

As you might imagine, Julie has seen a lot of changes in three decades. "There was just one building when I started," she recalls. "The company has really grown."

Her experience makes her a versatile worker, but she still sticks to a few basic principles to maintain high quality on every job she does. "I like the work a lot, and I've been here so long I can do just about anything. I never take for granted that I know something, but I read through my instructions every time. Be thorough and focus on what you're doing. My rule is, if you're not sure what you're doing, ask someone."

In her free time, Julie enjoys grilling out, watching NFL football and joining her friends in their activities. ◆



**ELECTRONIC
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**An ISO 9001:2015 and
ISO 13485:2016 Firm**

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EFFICIENCY MULTIPLIER

The latest addition to the ESI production floor fills an important niche in the process — and it plays well with several other machines already in place.

“We’ve added Fuji Aimex II, SMT equipment” explains Senior Manufacturing Engineer Kevin Buffington. “They are surface mount placement machines capable of placing up to 40,000 parts per hour. They replace older equipment and their programming is perfectly compatible with our existing Aimex I and Aimex III machines. That also meant that our operators didn’t need special training — a major benefit.”

Kevin adds that the Aimex II will significantly increase production speed and enhance accuracy. “With the ability to

use the same program for all three lines, you greatly reduce the possibility for error.”

In the future, the new Aimex II placement line may be assigned a unique role in the production process. “We plan to have a dedicated setup on it,” says Production Manager Jamie Vonderheide. “With the other machines, each time we do a different job we have a tear-down and setup process which takes time. We’ve created a program for the Aimex II with 20 different assemblies combined into one setup. When we need to run one of those assemblies, we’ll just select it and go. The improved throughput will be truly significant.” ♦