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The Ethics Issue

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The Lehigh Way

A publication from



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Welcome to The Lehigh Way



This issue of *The Lehigh Way* focuses on our long-term mantra of “Work hard and treat people right.” We felt it was important to do an issue about the Lehigh values, because they have guided our business practices over the last 35 years. We still approach our customers and prospects with the same honesty, fairness and commitment that we did back in 1984.

This issue includes articles about how Lehigh’s values are applied to our daily operations and to the importance of the Lehigh safety program. Our expert in the “Ask the Expert” article is the president of the Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Association, and he shares his thoughts on business ethics in the western New York community. The regular Lehigh PRO article features our experience in the many food-processing plants around the area.

In other company news ...

Chris Reichert has moved into the general superintendent role at Lehigh. Chris is a longtime superintendent and a 24-year company veteran. Many of you know him from the projects he has run at Rich Products Corporation, Derrick Corporation, Try-It Distributing, the Reg Lenna Center for the Arts, Sorrento Lactalis, Goodnature Products and many other Lehigh customers.

We are in the process of forming a new industrial services division. Lehigh’s roots have always been in the industrial sector and this new division, led by Nick Sabal, will more closely focus on self-perform concrete, masonry and steel projects for current and new clients. We’ll certainly provide more information and updates on Lehigh industrial services in future issues!

Jon Wilcox will step into Nick’s former role as PRO group leader and will oversee the office operations and drive the continued growth of the Lehigh PRO division.

Chris and Nick, along with Jim Drzewiecki, PRO Operations Manager, will form a new field operations team that will oversee all of the PRO, project and industrial work.

We wish these guys the best of luck in their new roles at Lehigh.

Spring is here — we are looking forward to things warming up, and we have big things in store with our clients, partners and subcontractors for the remainder of 2019!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DKnauss'.

David E. Knauss
President

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Far-Reaching Emotion Sends Everyone Home Safely

by Amanda Pennington

A solid safety program has far-reaching consequences. Like ripples from rocks thrown into water, safety at a construction company changes more than just workers' lives, it changes their careers and their loved ones' lives as well.

At Lehigh, Tom Glomb, one of the founders of Lehigh Construction Group, is the leader who starts the momentum of the ripple effect. Glomb helps Lehigh achieve excellent safety standards, using emotional appeals to keep workers mindful of the dangers that come with working in the construction industry.

"We have a wall where we have pictures of families of workers here," Glomb said, "and above it, it says 'Why we work safely.' You walk by that wall ... and you look down and you see a fellow with his wife and his three children. You need to get home for them. So don't take a chance."

Choosing a Rock

Of the 4,693 worker fatalities reported in private industry in 2016, one out of every five happened in construction. Most of these deaths are due to what OSHA calls the Fatal Four:

- Falls – 38.7 percent of fatalities
- Struck by object – 9.4 percent
- Electrocution – 8.3 percent
- Caught-in/between* – 7.3 percent

(*Please note that caught-in/between includes workers being hit, caught or crushed by collapsing equipment, structures or materials, as well as workers caught-in by objects or equipment.)

To keep Lehigh's employees off the

fatalities list, the company uses a number of tactics. First, they divide the company's work into two groups. "We do large projects — \$500,000 and up — and we have another division, called the Lehigh PRO division, which does much smaller jobs, like \$30,000 and under," Glomb said.

"Every single person in the company, whether they're a laborer or a superintendent, gets exactly the same training," Glomb said. OSHA requires only a 10-hour card, so many companies only invest 30-hour training in their top employees, but Glomb states that all

of Lehigh's field employees and project managers are required to obtain their 30-hour OSHA cards. No matter the size or type of project, all the jobs are held to the same safety standard, and all employees receive the same training.

To keep them sharp, employees receive safety training topics in the mail with their paychecks each week. They're required to sign off that they've read the topic they received.

Additionally, "every month we have the whole company, project managers and field people, in one hour of safety training," Glomb said. "It could be myself or an outside safety consultant. We'll pick a topic, and it's done as part of their ongoing training. So the guys that are out there have their resources and the knowledge within themselves, so ... I feel pretty good that things are being done correctly."

Starting the First Ripples

Thanks to the safety program, Lehigh recently reached a significant milestone. "For the second time in our history, we've exceeded 1 million man-hours without a lost-time injury, which, when you have somewhere in the neighborhood of 40 people in the field, when you do the math, that's a big piece of time," Glomb said.

This elevates Lehigh to the upper levels of its industry. "There's an insurance metric called an EMR [Experience Modification Rate] ... which is really important to get work," Glomb said. "A lot of places will tell you that if your EMR is over 1, they don't really want you working in their facility. It's a factor of injuries versus the number of people you have. Knock on wood, we haven't had a serious injury."

Glomb states that Lehigh's current EMR is .72 — a significant achievement. "Companies don't want risky people on

In 1972, there were 10.9 incidents of injuries and illnesses for every 100 workers. In 2016, there were 2.9 injuries and illnesses for every 100 workers.

Source: osha.gov

their sites. They don't want somebody getting hurt or killed on their jobs," Glomb said.

Lehigh was also recently recognized by the insurance captive group they belong to. The company earned a Gold Award for risk control, which is only given to the top 1 percent of the 443 members. Lehigh placed fourth overall.

Keeping Up Momentum

The driving factor is emotional because workers' loved ones have an important role in Lehigh's safety program, and Glomb isn't shy about discussing exactly what that means. "We sat down early on and said, 'We don't ever want to make the phone call to someone's family to say they aren't coming home.' It would be something that would just be devastating. It tears me up. And the guys know that, and that's what we push on them."

Without deaths from the Fatal Four, 631 U.S. construction workers' lives would be saved each year. For Lehigh, 631 deaths in one year is 631 too many, but statistics don't always drive safety home when it comes to workers' long-term habits. Emotion is the only way Glomb sees to make workers understand the full ripple effect of their safety decisions.

From day one, Lehigh workers know that safety isn't just about them alone. "If I have somebody come in for a job interview," Glomb said, "I'll sit down with the individual, letting them know

that safety here is paramount. Before we worry about productivity and profit and everything else, we want people to go home every day to their families."

Glomb adopted the emotional approach to safety from attending seminars. He noticed guest speakers would list statistics, "but when they get down to it, they'll have some very, very emotional, personal story that affected them. And that's what knocks your socks off."

"You can have a safety consultant on every particular job, but if people won't believe in your program and your core values and your culture, it's lost," Glomb said. "So ... my belief after the 35 years I've been doing it is if I can get inside people's heads with emotion, they buy into it more — when you let somebody know that their family is counting on them."

For example, "last month we talked about a caught-in, and I had a video of a fellow who was in our area here who survived a trench collapse, which is remarkable," Glomb said. (Even though falling is the main cause of death in construction, statistically, most workers don't survive after being trapped in a caught-in.) The man's video recounted his story not only of how the caught-in accident injured him physically, but also how it changed his personality and destroyed his marriage. He went from being a newlywed to divorced, all due to the accident.

Glomb hopes the serious consequences to themselves and their loved ones are not lost on the workers. "When the guys walk out, I hope they're sniffing a little bit, wiping their noses with a handkerchief," Glomb said, "and I hope they go out there and don't do something stupid."

In 2016, there were more than 14 deaths in the construction industry each day — a significant improvement compared to 38 deaths per day in 1970.

Source: osha.gov

How Much Does Safety Cost?

While there is no price tag for a human life, many companies need to financially understand that safety offers savings in the long haul. The cost of developing and enforcing a safety program at work is worth the price.

Determine What Fits Your Company:

Larger companies can hire outside help for their safety programs, but smaller companies can manage their own programs within budget and scope. Decide on the overall cost versus value of your company's program, and adjust it as needed to align with your company goals.

Understand Cost Versus Value:

Collaborate with your management team for efficiency and affordability. As you look at each step of the program, remember that the value of a safety program far outweighs the cost of risking lives or handling lawsuits. Evaluate every detail of your program to plan for upfront costs, like personal protective equipment (PPE) for your workers.

Pinpoint Direct Costs:

These include hazard research, safety training, attorney fees, PPE, OSHA fines, workers' compensation, hazard identification and more. Do your research and set your budget.

Name Indirect Costs:

These include poor employee retention (along with on-boarding, new hires, training), poor morale (especially after a workplace accident) and employee sick time (due to injuries).

Look to the Future:

Avoid shortsightedness by imagining the expensive — and tragic — consequences of not having a safety program. Lawsuits, citations, fines and death cost much more than new PPE or training. Remember the big picture!

Source: superiorglove.com



Tom Glomb accepts safety award from AGC of NYS.

Watching the Ripples Spread

Glomb hopes others see safety like Lehigh does: life-changing. “You don’t want to have fear,” Glomb said, “but sometimes it’s a good thing to have fear.”

To keep the program fresh, Lehigh has a safety committee of both office and field workers. The committee rotates members every six months, giving everyone the opportunity to serve on the committee. A schedule is set for weekly audits of each job. If a safety breach is noticed, they conduct a jobsite safety analysis to address the issue immediately. “A little team will get together and make sure everybody understands what we’re going to be doing, and avoid any miscommunications, etc.,” Glomb said.

To take the safety program to the community, Glomb and an OSHA compliance officer regularly visit colleges and high schools, as part of an alliance the company has with OSHA, to speak to young people about safety, and share photos and

stories with them. “With younger people, they think they can’t get hurt,” Glomb said.

In a classroom of teenagers and young adults, Glomb asks them to raise their hands if they’ve lost a friend from an accident. “And you’ll have 100 kids in there, and you might see 12 of them raise their hands. And I’ll say, ‘So you do know, when you’re 16, you can die.’ And that sets the tone right there. It gets quiet when I say that. And so then you go forward from there.”

Rotating through the safety committee, consistently reinforcing the safety program through training — none of this is new for Lehigh. Glomb has been visiting classrooms to present on safety for more than a decade. “It’s been the culture right from day one,” he said. “I think it’s a matter of staying on top of it constantly.”

While Lehigh may seem like it’s preparing for the future, the company is merely doing what it has always done. “At Lehigh,” Glomb said, “safety is a core value. Core values never change.”



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WORK HARD *and Treat People Right*



When Tom Glomb and Dave Knauss founded Lehigh in 1984, both of them had experience in the construction industry, but neither had any formal business education. They began with the basic belief that success would come if they worked hard and treated people right.

More than three decades later, “Work hard and treat people right” is still the simple phrase that epitomizes “the Lehigh way,” or how the company conducts its business. This mantra is a constant reminder to every employee that effort and integrity are required on the job every day.

In the early 1990s, a team of Lehigh employees met regularly for several weeks, and the six words of the mantra were developed into six value statements. These six statements became the Lehigh core values. Each of the core values embodies some element of working hard or treating people right and all are still in use today.



Core values are the fundamental beliefs of a company. They provide simplicity and clarity. Core values dictate behavior and can help anyone within the company distinguish between right and wrong. Core values will always lead to the correct path to follow. If a core

value changes or is eliminated, then it was never really a core value at all.

Core values create the cultural foundation of a company. Culture emanates from core values when the employees share the values and are empowered by them. A strong culture leads to better alignment, superior performance and employee retention. More than 30 percent of Lehigh’s employees have been with the company for more than 20 years, and the average tenure is currently 14 years.

At Lehigh, the core values developed from working hard and treating people right have created a culture that has

ultimately become a strategic choice in an industry often checkered with unscrupulous players.

The Lehigh core values begin with, “We believe that long-term relationships with our clients, partners and coworkers are the foundation of our success. Every day we strengthen these relationships by living the Lehigh values.”

Lehigh’s ultimate goal with any client is to develop a long-term relationship. The Lehigh values provide the roadmap to successful relationships.

Treating Our Clients, Partners and Coworkers Fairly and Honestly

Fairness, honesty, courtesy and respect are sometimes lost in today’s business environment. Treating people right is all about fairness and honesty.

Lehigh’s long-term relationships with clients are built on a foundation of trust. Projects are often completed in sensitive business areas or during off hours when Lehigh employees are alone in the client’s building. Most of Lehigh’s large projects are completed on a cost-plus “open-book” transparent basis, where only the actual costs incurred are charged to the client. There are plenty of opportunities over the course of a business relationship to tell a client what you think they want to hear, but Lehigh’s practice has always been to stick by the truth.

One of the most significant drivers of Lehigh’s success is the relationships enjoyed with subcontractors. The basis of these relationships is fair dealing. Lehigh considers subcontractors to be trusted partners, and many have completed hundreds of projects over many years. Those who share Lehigh’s values quickly become the go-to providers.

Those familiar with the construction industry say that if you want to get the most accurate take on a general contractor’s or construction manager’s business practices, ask the subcontractor community. Lehigh has secured several projects and new clients based on referrals from subcontractors. The employees of Lehigh treat each other with respect and integrity.

Their beliefs and values mirror those of the company and they are empowered and engaged to do what is right for the client.

Josie Stockweather, a 30-year veteran and the matriarch of the company, said, “Being part of the Lehigh family and living the values means we help each other and all work together to get the job done.”

Being Proud of Our Accomplishments

It is easy to take for granted the accomplishments that every company, and those within it, achieve on a regular basis, especially when they’ve been at it for a long time. At Lehigh, an effort is always made to recognize and celebrate achievements and milestones.

The Monday Morning Memo is an e-newsletter sent weekly to all members of the Lehigh family for the past 17 years. The memo is a vehicle for sharing employee achievements, milestones and the WINS of the Week.

Lehigh has received many prestigious local, state and national awards for its completed projects and its safety program and record. Many of these are on display in the lobby of the office in Orchard Park.

However, Dave Knauss has said many times that the Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Award (BNBEA) is the award that makes him most proud. Lehigh received this award in 2008. (For more

on this, see “Ask the Expert” on page 14.) “Most awards are about what you do, but the BNBEA recognizes you for how you do it. It’s about who you really are.”

Committing to Safety

Lehigh’s safety motto is “Send everyone home safely to their families every day.” Tom Glomb and Dave Knauss have stated many times at company gatherings that the day either of them has to make the call to the loved ones of a Lehigh employee to let them know that person won’t be coming home is the day the business changes forever.

Committing to safety is something each member of the Lehigh team must embrace — for their own welfare and for those working around them. The initial 30-hour OSHA training in Construction Safety is followed by weekly safety talks and monthly formal training sessions.

The training and top-down commitment to working safely has resulted in millions of hours of accident-free Lehigh jobs over the years. It has been more than nine years since the company’s last lost-time accident.

Lehigh’s commitment to construction safety also extends into the community. For the last 15 years, Lehigh and OSHA have had a formal alliance geared toward training young and inexperienced workers on the hazards of the industry. This highly successful alliance is one of



Frank Lloyd Wright Rowing Boathouse

only a few held with private companies nationwide. Tom Glomb and OSHA Compliance Assistance Specialist Gordon DeLeys estimate that they have conducted training for more than 10,000 high school, vocational, college and workforce-training students.

Finding Ways to Do Things That Seem Impossible

“Whatever it takes” is a common saying around Lehigh. Client relationships often improve by overcoming challenging situations or rising to meet new challenges. Few challenges are greater than industrial plant shutdowns. A client closes their facility for a week and needs a month’s worth of work completed in that time. Projects that are normally scheduled by the week or the day require around the clock, hour-by-hour or minute-by-minute timelines. And, unfortunately for Lehigh employees, these shutdowns often occur over holiday periods. “Impossible” generally describes these jobs until the team puts their heads together and works through the details to arrive at creative solutions.

Over the years, plenty of other “impossible” situations have been overcome on Lehigh projects. Martin Knauss, project group leader, recalls one such challenge when Lehigh was hired to construct the Frank Lloyd Wright Rowing Boathouse on the Buffalo waterfront. The project was significantly over budget and in danger of being cancelled when the non-profit organization created to develop this iconic landmark asked: “Does Lehigh have any silver bullets?” Knauss recalled, “The boathouse was to be located along the edge of the Black Rock Canal. This required the installation of a cofferdam in order to build the waterside foundation and retaining walls of the boathouse. Conventional cofferdams are typically constructed of driven steel sheet piling, which is very expensive. We sourced a company from New Jersey that installs ‘portable’ cofferdams and reduced the project cost by almost \$500,000 — the silver bullet that was required!”

Whether it is a seemingly impossible project schedule, jobsite task, budgetary restriction or quality requirement, Lehigh always works hard to deliver for the client.



Boathouse under construction with portable cofferdam

Expecting Everyone to Make Responsible Decisions That Are in the Best Interest of Our Clients

A Lehigh project manager once commented that one of the things he likes most about his job is the “latitude” he has to take care of the customer. Lehigh project managers and superintendents, along with PRO service managers and PRO service technicians, are often the face of the company and the key to the client relationship. Seldom do they ever need to use the phrase “I’ll have to ask my boss” when dealing with a situation.

The firm recently completed a 19,000 square-foot multi-phased renovation and adaptive reuse project for the Reg Lenna Center for the Arts in Jamestown, New York. The renovations were completed in five historic storefront buildings, connected on five different levels, which comprised the administrative offices of the Reg Lenna, as well as the local radio station, black box performance space, associated recording and mixing spaces, gallery, theater entrance, lobby, concession, box office and bar. The project modernized the administrative spaces, the historic theater entry and the support spaces, while adding the black box performance space, broadcasting/recording spaces and gallery.

Kathleen Eads, executive director of the Reg Lenna, said, “I can’t say enough about Lehigh and the professionalism that was present at all times. Project Superintendent Chris Reichert was definitely the key to our success once we started. I felt like he was my partner, which, given the daunting task at hand, made me feel very taken care of.” Eads also commented on working with Project Manager Jennifer Kinney:

“She solved a lot of the pricing issues, and again, I always felt she had the needs of the Reg first. What a great team you provided for us.”

Lehigh works very hard to never be anyone’s bad contractor story — because just about everyone has one. By empowering employees to make on-site, on-the-fly decisions, many challenges can be overcome before they escalate into problems.

Before you can expect everyone to make responsible decisions, you first have to allow them to do so. Lehigh endeavors to treat employees in a way that encourages them to do the same for clients. Eads adds, “You have wonderful employees, and that is certainly a reflection of the environment you have created.”

Above All, Honoring Our Commitments
Each of the Lehigh core values is important, but honoring the commitments that are made to clients, subcontractors, partners and coworkers ranks the highest.

Dave Knauss said, “Nothing is worse for me than letting people down. This is a pretty simple business if you just do what you say you are going to. It’s not hard to distinguish your company in the construction industry if you just focus on honoring commitments. There are plenty of other companies capable of building, renovating and repairing like we do, but it’s the culture created by the Lehigh core values that creates a unique experience.”

It’s a pretty simple concept, but “Work hard and treat people right” has stood the test of time for Lehigh, and should serve the company well into the future.

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Lehigh PRO Offers *Immediate Service*

by Amanda Pennington



An average day in the life of the Lehigh PRO Team can be an adventure. The team is available 24/7 — at a moment's notice, they could be called to any location that needs immediate maintenance or repairs. An industry where Lehigh PRO excels with emergency service and repairs is food processing.

Whether a national grocery chain, wholesale grocer, food manufacturing plant or global headquarters with presentation and tasting kitchens, Lehigh has worked in all of these places of business repeatedly over the last 35 years. Through preparation, quality work and safety protocols, Lehigh's PRO division upholds the company standards for clients both from our office and in field operations.

"Lehigh services the food processing industry by completing tasks in their facility that allow them to continue production," Jon Wilcox, Lehigh PRO group leader, said. "We will work around their schedule at any time of the day or night to complete this work."

The day starts when David Bixby, a PRO service manager at Lehigh, receives a phone call from one of his clients, such as Perry's Ice Cream, an ice cream manufacturer in Akron, New York. Bixby coordinates behind the scenes — bidding, verifying equipment, consulting with service technicians — for Lehigh PRO.

If Perry's plant needs maintenance or repairs, they call Bixby, and the

Lehigh PRO Team steps in to address the issue. "We're 24 hours," Bixby said. "If something happens at Perry's Ice Cream off hours, on a Saturday evening, they'll call me up and say, 'Hey, David, we have an emergency. We need you to come out here right away.' We will be out there. We have rotating PRO guys ... who are 24-hour on-call technicians. I can't think of anyone else in Buffalo who provides this level of service."

After receiving the call, the team confirms the technician's PRO van has the material and equipment onboard to prepare for the job at Perry's and to ensure that they have everything they need to complete the work in one visit.

Once they reach the site, the PRO service technician evaluates the work. A typical job that the team tackles in food processing plants is dairy brick repair or replacement.

At Perry's the production floor is covered with dairy brick. Bixby says: "They use dairy brick because it's strong and impervious, not porous like a house brick. And it's smooth, so nothing will stick to it or adhere to it, like ice cream, food or other organic products." This kind of brick is designed to withstand the unforgiving environment of food service. "However, over the lifespan of the dairy brick, the typical use of harsh chemicals required to clean the floor will cause the grout between

Emphasizing Lehigh's outstanding commitment to 24-hour service, Wilcox recounted a story that happened 13 years ago: "I was in the field on a crew that removed and replaced a 50-foot by 50-foot section of concrete on a second floor of a food plant on a 48-hour shutdown on the last weekend of December, while the plant was closed between Christmas and New Year's."

the bricks to deteriorate, or the brick itself may crack,” Bixby said.

According to Wilcox, “removal and regrouting of dairy brick requires specialty equipment” to meet OSHA silica prevention requirements, so preparation is crucial for meeting the quality and safety standards of Lehigh, OSHA and Perry’s.

Depending on the job, the team could be at Perry’s for four hours, eight hours or even a few days. If the dairy bricks need to be regROUTED, the team grinds out the existing grout before installing new grout. Similarly, with damaged brick, they remove the portion of bad brick before they can put in the new brick and return Perry’s production floor to working order.

“It’s a time-consuming process,” Bixby said. “It’s more than just getting a grinder out and starting grinding. You’ve got to be very careful in the food industry. You have to set up plastic protection around your work area and also carefully control the dust

generated with water and vacuum.” The work is lengthy and tedious, but guaranteeing the cleanliness and safety of the dairy brick is part of guaranteeing that Perry’s products are of the best quality.

Safety standards also apply to the Lehigh workers. “Our employees need to make sure they have their safety equipment on,” Bixby said, “Eye protection, ear protection, and respirator — because you don’t want any of them breathing in the potentially harmful silica dust that may be generated.” (See page 4 for more about Lehigh’s safety program.)

The process of replacing and repairing dairy bricks is for the skilled and very patient. “It’s very time consuming, and you’ve got to know what you’re doing,” Bixby said.

Ultimately, Lehigh is about honoring commitments. This commitment extends from the company’s 24-hour PRO service team to every maintenance and repair job Lehigh handles. According

According to Bixby, one of the goals of Lehigh’s PRO team is “to educate our new customers about the services we can provide so they can focus on providing great products for their customers.”

to Wilcox, “Our plant experience, the talent level of our PRO technicians and our willingness to accommodate the client’s needs” are what makes Lehigh unique in its approach to food service.

Lehigh is confident about its future growth in the food industry. “I definitely see Lehigh bringing new customers aboard in addition to continuing to provide great service to our current ones,” Bixby said. With its strong reputation for thoughtful preparation, quality work and thorough safety standards, the company looks forward to a positive future in the food service industry.





Ask the Expert:

Fred Holender

**President of Buffalo Niagara
Business Ethics Association**



The Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Association (BNBEA) originated in 2007 with the mission and purpose to foster, promote and recognize ethical business practices in the Buffalo Niagara Region. The Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Award was established to identify and honor companies that demonstrate a firm commitment to ethical business practices in daily operations, management philosophies and responses to crises or challenges. Lehigh Construction Group received this award in the Mid-Sized Category in 2008 and is honored to be part of this elite group of recipients.

Lehigh has received numerous awards over its 34-year history, but Dave Knauss has frequently commented that the BNBEA award is the most significant because “it recognizes not what we’ve accomplished, but who we really are.”

Fred Holender, president of the BNBEA, agreed to a Q&A session with us to explain this local organization and the important role business ethics continues to play within the workplace. Read the Q&A with Fred below, and for more information about BNBEA, visit buffalobusinessethics.org.

Q: Were you a part of the group that started the Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Award? How did you get involved?

A: I was introduced to BNBEA when it was founded in 2007 as a separate committee of the Buffalo Chapter of the Society of Financial Service Professionals. I became actively involved as a member of the award judging panel in 2008 and was then asked to get involved at the Board level. BNBEA became a stand-alone committee in 2009 and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2010. We are proud to elevate the important message of ethics in business on a year-round basis.

Q: Why did the founders of this organization feel it was important to recognize and award exemplary business ethics in the Buffalo Niagara Region?

A: There was an underlying belief by those that founded BNBEA that business ethics play an increasingly critical role in the conduct of our lives and work. It was their hope that BNBEA would highlight this issue and raise the bar by celebrating local companies dedicated to ethical business practices.

Q: Have MBA students always been involved with the award selection process, and what is the significance of this?

A: The Canisius College one-year MBA students have been involved in the preliminary review of applications since the beginning. Founding Board Member Antone (Joe) Alber was Dean of the Richard J. Wehle School of Business and made this project a priority for the students.

The MBA students gain insight into how a variety of companies approach ethical challenges. This project also helps them determine the type of environment that they want to be associated with when they move forward with their careers.

BNBEA’s partnership with Canisius and its MBA program have provided important academic support and ongoing engagement with a well-respected local college.

Q: What other activities does BNBEA participate in throughout the year besides the awards luncheon?

A: Last Fall, BNBEA held a half-day ethics seminar with the Center for Priority Thinking that drew great



attendance and excellent reviews. On several occasions, BNBEA has delivered business ethics presentations to local businesses. BNBEA's Board members are available to speak to businesses and organizations. We also support the ethics modules at Junior Achievement and have presented scholarships and funding for ethics classes in the past.

Q: How does a company get started with an ethics program?

A: Many companies do not have a formal written ethics program. And yet, every company has a culture that is established and demonstrated by leadership every day. Companies who are nominated for the BNBEA Crystal Award are invited to an orientation program where they are asked to complete a comprehensive application that addresses the ethical values of the leaders and how that culture is embraced throughout the organization. We also want to know how they treat their vendors, suppliers, customers and, finally, how they work to improve their local community. The value of the application is going through the process, and the final product becomes the organization's ethics program.

Q: What is the difference between business ethics and an ethical business?

A: Business ethics is an established set of qualities, behaviors and approaches to daily challenges. A company that demonstrates business ethics can be considered an ethical business.

Q: How do a company's core values relate to their ethics?

A: Core values are a reflection of a company's ethics. One of my favorite quotes is from Peter Marshall, U.S. Senate Chaplain, in 1947: "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything." These words hold true today. In recent years, we have seen companies that seek to gain not only at any cost, but at all costs.

The Board's commitment to BNBEA is rewarded by having the opportunity to meet many great companies in our community who demonstrate that "good guys" can, and do, finish first.

Q: What are some common ethical dilemmas that arise within an organization?

A: Organizations have two primary audiences: internal and external. There are ethical dilemmas involving both.

Internal dilemmas can involve how employees treat one another (lack of respect, harassment), how managers treat employees (demanding actions that are contrary to established protocols) and how employees treat the organization (theft, kickbacks, disregarding the organization's values).

External dilemmas involve interactions with vendors and/or customers and include asking for or receiving favors in return for business, or faulty workmanship that may or may not be the fault of the organization. How an organization treats customer service issues is a key indicator of ethics at work.

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