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This issue of *The Lehigh Way* is a special one for me as I authored the first article and have deep respect and admiration for the clients whose projects we feature in the other articles. I also enjoy a special friendship with our Expert and was thrilled when he agreed to be interviewed for the magazine.

The article about Amy Betros and Norm Paolini chronicles my and Lehigh's 30-year history of supporting St. Luke's Mission of Mercy. I was devastated when Amy passed earlier this year and a day hasn't gone by since I haven't thought about her. Her dedication to meeting the basic needs of the most impoverished and vulnerable of our brothers and sisters was inspirational to me and to everyone she touched.

The creators of "Bubble Hockey" and a world-wide leader in the manufacturing and distribution of high-quality arcade games, Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE), reached out to Lehigh to reimagine their Clarence offices. The owners wanted to create a world-class showroom for clients and visitors, while designing inviting and aesthetically pleasing offices, conference spaces, entertainment and common areas for their employees.

Staub Precision Machine is a Hamburg-based innovator and contract manufacturer of precision machining for the aerospace, medical and communications industries. Celebrating their 50th year in business in 2025, Staub will consolidate multiple operations within their new 60,000-square-foot state-of-the-art manufacturing building.

Our Ask the Expert spotlights one of WNY's most benevolent citizens, Scott Bieler, president and CEO of West Herr Auto Group. As a winner of the prestigious Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Association Crystal Award, Scott reflects on the importance of ethics in driving his philanthropic endeavors and giving back to the WNY communities loyal to West Herr.

Please enjoy this 28th issue of *The Lehigh Way*. It is, perhaps, my favorite.

My best,

David E. Knauss



President

Contents

Carrying Out a Vision	5
Innovative Concepts in Entertainment: A New Addition and A Clean New Look.....	9
Staub Expands to Consolidate and Grow.....	12
Ask the Expert.....	15

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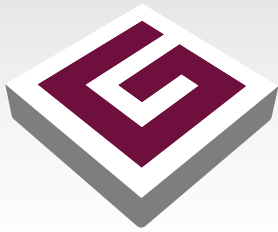
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Interior lodgings

The Motherhouse

CARRYING OUT A VISION

by Dave E. Knauss

It was around 7 a.m. on April 30, 2025, and I was at the kitchen table with my laptop open, as is usually the case at that time of day. The house phone rang. We seldom answer the landline and let the answering machine pick it up, as the calls are usually just automated messages. But it never rings that early. I did not have a good feeling as I picked up. A familiar voice said: “Dave, this is Sue. Amy passed away overnight.”

Sue Gilhooley is a longtime missionary at St. Luke’s Mission of Mercy on Buffalo’s east side. Amy Betros and Norm Paolini co-founded St. Luke’s. I cried a lot that morning. In the days and then weeks - and now months since - I have yet to completely come to grips with my incalculable loss.

Amy was a fixture in my life for a very long time, but it’s still hard for me to describe our relationship. Was she my

spiritual advisor? Mentor? One of Lehigh’s longtime “clients”? My prayer warrior and conduit to God? A wonderful friend who was also a saint living among us? Someone who referred to me as the brother she never had? Yes, to all these.

It began about 30 years ago. I had volunteered for a work weekend at St. Luke’s through Churches in Action (CIA), a group of churches in the Southtowns that banded together to complete mission projects. I was somewhat anonymously shoveling out a trash-filled basement in an old house on Sycamore Street when someone came up to me and said, “Amy Betros heard there is a contractor here today, and she wants to meet you.” Great, I thought, so much for being anonymous. Walking over to her office in the sacristy of the former St. Luke’s parish church in my work boots, jeans and sleeveless t-shirt, I was already

feeling a bit annoyed. I just wanted a day away from my usual “work.”

After introducing herself, she immediately said, “You probably don’t realize this, but God sent you to me today. I prayed for someone to help carry out our vision for St. Luke’s, and He sent you.” Sure, He did. I sat in the office for more than an hour as she laid out that vision in extreme detail: all the people she needed to feed, to clothe, to house and to lift up from their circumstances. More than a few times during that hour I thought “Who is this woman, and what am I doing here?” I left without saying yes to being their contractor, but I didn’t say no either. I would come to find out that it was very difficult to say no to Amy ... and over the next 30 years, I don’t think I ever did.

Amy Betros met Norm Paolini in 1992 when they were both on a pilgrimage to Fatima,

Portugal. Amy ran her successful Amy's Place restaurant near the University of Buffalo, and Norm was a Roswell Park researcher. Amy was known for giving out free meals to those in need. Together, they gave up their previous careers and, with a gift received from a donor, purchased the St. Luke's church, school, rectory and convent from the Diocese of Buffalo and opened St. Luke's Mission of Mercy in 1994.

Though not officially affiliated with the Catholic Church, they adopted the practice of the Divine Mercy. The Divine Mercy is a devotion centered on God's infinite mercy. Amy was the most faithful, trusting and merciful person I've ever met.

In talking about the introduction to Amy with my partner Tom Glomb, he shared he grew up in the neighborhood, and St. Luke's had been his family's parish — the first of many connections in the Amy experience.

Good Shepherd House

The first project Amy asked Lehigh to undertake was the renovation of the rectory into Good Shepherd House, a residence for men recovering from addiction. Mike Young from Empire Building Diagnostics met me at the building to look at some asbestos abatement in the basement. I took him to meet Amy, and, as usual, there was a long line of neighborhood people outside her office waiting to see the Madonna of the Streets (St. Luke's corporate name) for a variety of their needs and concerns. Amy saw us and we cut the line so I could introduce Mike. I explained why Mike was there, and she told him she loved him and thank you. We walked outside and Mike said: "That woman needs more help than I'll ever be able to give her, so just figure whatever the asbestos removal costs is on me." This was the first of many instances where the benevolence and charity of our great construction industry was revealed to me at St. Luke's. Mike also went on to become one of my and Amy's go-tos when neighborhood houses donated to St. Luke's needed to be demolished for other land uses or because they were too far gone to be rehabbed.

Feeding the Hungry

Next came the renovation of the kitchen in the basement of the school. At the time, St. Luke's was serving hundreds of meals a day out of a kitchen with not much more

capability than most single-family houses. A friend of St. Luke's (or FOSLs as they are called) was a Tim Horton's district manager and arranged for the donation of used commercial equipment to re-outfit the kitchen. The kitchen capacity doubled or tripled overnight. Around 2006, when that kitchen equipment had outlived its useful life, a donor from the CIA funded all new replacement equipment. It was for this project that Lehigh's longtime design partner Scheid Architectural pitched in their services. Doug and his team are still serving St. Luke's today.

Gospa Village

During my original meeting with Amy, she laid out her plans for Gospa House. Gospa translates to the Virgin Mary in Croatian. Gospa House was to be a place to reunite mothers with their children after their recovery from addiction. The mission would often petition the courts for custody of children while mothers went into rehab, so they didn't go "into the system." A Gospa committee of FOSLs was convened, and, in 2009, they held the first Gospa Gala fundraiser. It became evident that funding the construction of a large building to house many mothers, children and staff would be cost-prohibitive. So, Amy pivoted to Gospa Village, a development of 12 single family homes. Scheid Architectural teamed up with Adam Walters from the Phillips Lytle law firm to help secure most of the lots on the block just west of the Mission from the city of Buffalo, as well as approval to develop the parcels. The homes were designed by Scheid to provide for a live-in missionary. With the assistance of Alliance Homes of Hamburg, ground was broken on the first three homes in 2012. Alliance built three more, Lehigh completed the seventh and we have the eighth and final home under construction.

The Motherhouse

Amy always put the needs of others before her own. This was never more evident than where she chose to live with fellow missionary JoAnn and the five children they were raising. It was a house in very rough shape that we learned had also become rat infested. A push came from many FOSLs to provide Amy with a suitable place to live and work, where she could "age in place." Climbing the stairs up to her office in the sacristy had also become very difficult, so a single story was preferred. The team at Scheid went to work designing a "Motherhouse." The

new residence — with a large office and meeting room, a wonderfully sized and equipped kitchen, a great room, along with two suites and four bedrooms — became a place to not only live and work but it is also large enough to host and entertain the entire missionary team. The Motherhouse brought more joy to Amy than I can describe because she told me so many times how much it meant to her. In addition to it being an incredible home, I think it also signified a thank-you for her selfless support to so many for so long. My only regret was that we didn't build the home long ago. She got to enjoy it for less than a year.

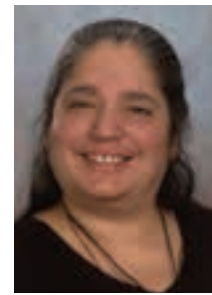
The Biggest Swing of All: Build Promise

The plight of the homeless and forgotten has always been at the forefront at St. Luke's: housing men at Good Shepherd and Lazarus House (the former convent) or in many neighborhood houses donated to the Mission over the years, or hosting a Code Blue center in the school dining room. But Amy and Norm envisioned a place that could not only provide shelter but also a sense of dignity and wraparound services to transform lives. Build Promise: Amy's Place of Hope is the big, bold culmination of that vision. Dedicated on October 9, 2025, the new 24,000-square-foot facility is a 96-bed men's homeless shelter with a full kitchen, dining room, private showers, personal laundry facilities, a barber shop, library, chapel and a medical clinic. Grandma's Nook will have grab-and-go food available 24/7. Everyone called Amy Grandma, and her motto was "always feed first." During the day, Build Promise will become a community outreach center open to all, with more than 20 human service agency partners onsite. The DMV will also operate a satellite office in the building.

The story of Amy's Place of Hope cannot be fully told without mention of Lehigh superintendent John Kasper. John oversaw the construction of the Motherhouse and then immediately moved across the street to tackle an even bigger challenge. After Amy met John for the first time, she told me with a very serious face, "I know a good man when I meet one and John is a good man." John embraced everything about St. Luke's and quickly developed relationships with the neighbors. He talks about his "scrappers," guys he caught trying to steal from the projects and the deal he made with them. If they didn't steal



St. Luke's Mission of Mercy Campus



*St. Luke's
Co-Founder
Amy Betros*



*St. Luke's
Co-Founder
Norm Paolini*



Amy's Place of Hope/Build Promise

material, he would place leftovers aside and give to them to take to the scrapyards for money. John was also devastated by Amy's passing, but it only deepened his commitment and passion to deliver a world class facility.

Many of Lehigh's subcontractors and vendors were moved to contribute a percentage of their contracts back to the fundraising effort. This group included Alp Steel, Brawdy Construction, Conley Casework's, DWC Mechanical, Empire Building Diagnostics, Heritage Flooring, J&R Specialties, KT Construction, PCS Plumbing, Specialized Tree Service and Union Concrete & Construction.

Scheid Architectural and their consultants, Buffalo Engineering and Richard Haight, donated all of their design services. Phillips Lytle also provided pro bono services to secure a Medical Campus designation for the entire St. Luke's campus.

Amy and Succession

Many people, including me, questioned Amy about her succession plan. Her answer was always the same: "There is nothing I can write as a plan and put in some file cabinet that will ensure future success for the Mission. If God wants St. Luke's to exist and thrive after I'm gone, it will." Dennis Gilhooley, Sue's husband, was tapped by Amy to be her successor. From the time she told him this, Denny prayed Amy would live to be 100! When

suddenly thrust into this unimaginable role, through the shock and the grief, he is emerging as the leader Amy knew he could be. All nine of the St. Luke's lay missionaries are playing roles they never had to before, but what is sustaining them is evidence every day that God is still blessing St. Luke's. A wonderful example was the recent success of the "Turn Up the Heat" fundraising campaign. When it was determined that the nearly 90-year-old steam piping in the shallow crawl space under the church floor couldn't make it through another winter, putting the entire structure at risk, Denny reached out to the WNY community for help. \$400,000 was raised to fund the \$375,000 project ... in just a month's time.

You Can't Make This Stuff Up

Amy and Norm ran the Mission based on total faith and trust in God spiritually and ... financially. They never took any money from the government, relying solely on donations, contributions, in-kind gifts and grants. No one at St. Luke's receives a salary, so nearly 100 cents on every dollar goes to funding mission. Yet it's still a multi-million dollar operation that always operates in the RED. Amy always said, "God only gives you what you need, so when you have surplus, you stop trusting in Him." She also was fond of saying, "God has lots of money; if I keep praying, it will come." Sandy Bernstein, the CFO, can attest to the times she's written checks for

amounts that exceeded the bank balance, only to open the mail that day to find a donor check for the same amount. I often doubted Amy about where the funds would come from for a project, and I always ended up with egg on my face.

However, nothing is more "only at St. Luke's" than the timing of Amy and Norm's passings. On April 30, 2000, they traveled to the Vatican to witness the canonization of Saint Faustina. Sister Faustina Kowalska was a Polish nun in the early 20th century whose visions of Jesus led to the spiritual practice of the Divine Mercy. Norm passed on April 30, 2018. Amy passed on April 30, 2025.

Carrying It Forward

There is more to Amy Betros and Norm Paolini's vision for St. Luke's Mission of Mercy than could be shared in this article. But after witnessing the educating, feeding, clothing, housing and spiritual uplifting of thousands in our community over the past 32 years, I am among the many ready to keep building on Amy and Norm's legacy, trying my best to act without judgment and always with grace and mercy.

I was honored when Amy referred to me as the brother she never had, but somehow it always made me uncomfortable, probably because I didn't think I was worthy. Now, that is the element of our relationship I treasure the most.



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INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS IN ENTERTAINMENT: A NEW ADDITION AND A CLEAN NEW LOOK

by Doug Eberhardt

On a busy stretch along Main Street in Clarence, New York, sits the manufacturing campus and corporate offices of premier game manufacturer Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE).

Most people who drive by have no idea that the company is the largest manufacturer of coin-operated games in the U.S. and that their products are a staple of major arcades and family game centers throughout the country. ICE is also a global leader in the manufacture of games where players earn points or tickets to exchange for prizes with an international reach in more than 80 countries.



ICE President & Co-Founder Ralph Coppola with Super Chexx.

‘Bubble Hockey’ Was Just the Beginning
The young company scored right out of the gate, when owner Ralph Coppola and partner Jack Willert successfully merchandised the iconic Chexx “bubble hockey” game, patterned after the staple tabletop cardboard game from the 1950s, which had become a fixture in U.S. households.

The growing popularity of hockey coupled with the U.S. Olympic hockey team’s “Miracle on Ice” gold medal win paved the way for the successful introduction of the distinctive game during the height of the pinball and video game boom.

When Ralph and the ICE team displayed their Chexx game at a Chicago tradeshow in late 1982, he challenged booth attendees to try and break the games signature indestructible dome with a sledgehammer. After no one could break it, the ICE reputation for quality and durability was established, and a legendary game and company were launched. The first unit shipped months later, with the fledgling start-up company selling 7,000 units over the next 18 months.

Other notable games in ICE’s vast entertainment portfolio include Cyclone, Basketball, Hungry Hungry Hippo, Dodgeball Arena, ICE Ball (an improved version of the old Skee-Ball), the crane machine (claw), Coin Pushers, Putting

Challenge, Down the Clown, and hundreds of others.

ICE has also expanded their reach through licensing and relationships with major sports leagues, including the NBA’s global brand. Most NBA teams have at least one international player, and fans in those home countries become passionate supporters of that team which translates into NBA Hoops incremental game sales internationally. Other licensing includes the NHL (Super Chexx Pro), NFL (Quarterback Pro), NBA (Hoops & Smash N Win), MLB, Collegiate Hoops and a collegiate version of Smash N Win.

You’ll find ICE products in familiar entertainment centers including Chuck E. Cheese, Dave & Buster’s, restaurants and bars, malls, sporting facility lobbies and increasingly in private homes, which have become an important segment for the company.

Growth Leads to a New Addition and a ‘Clean, New Look’

As a significant contributor to the Clarence economy over four decades, this

“Working with Lehigh was a great decision.”

— Joe Coppola

employer of more than 200 people needed to expand their footprint to streamline operations due to growth and accommodate the expanding ICE team. The second-generation family owners also wanted to upgrade their headquarters' look and feel to match the high quality and appearance of the games they manufacture.

After the untimely passing of their father Ralph, sons Joe Coppola, president, and Dan Coppola, vice president, were looking to create a showpiece facility with a WOW Factor, while refreshing the company impression and atmosphere for employees, clients, business partners and guests.

The Lehigh Impact

As Orchard Park natives, the sons turned to Lehigh, initially reaching out to Dave in 2019. While the pandemic put a hold on expansion plans, they reached out again in 2023 to restart the process of creating an office renovation, addition and a world-class showroom.

While the ICE team had previous design conversations with Scheid Architectural, they didn't realize the unique and successful design-build relationship that Lehigh and Scheid share through a strategic partnership dating back more than 30 years. The owners were presented with several design options by Scheid and were then taken on tours of similar projects, including The Martin Group (a previous Lehigh project) that impressed the ICE ownership and gave them the confidence moving forward with the project.

The owners chose their favorite of the three designs presented. The plan was to create new offices, conference spaces and a showroom that could be customized with unique games for each individual client or guest. The renovations totaled approximately 10,000 square feet, and the new lobby addition approximately 2,000 square feet. The design also incorporated a beautiful new façade that gave a fresh modern look to the exterior.

After researching important aspects for creating successful office spaces, ICE chose an exterior wall of office windows to maximize ambient light, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. ICE's HR Vice President Tim Finney went on to say that "We wanted to maximize the daylight for our employees, so we decided on floor-to-ceiling windows while adding skylights

with LED's surrounds to our main showcase hallway." The new office design also incorporated "heat cascade" ceiling grates, allowing heating and cooling to effectively drop down from above to provide year round comfort.

Tim remarked that "Scheid team members Jim Gannon, Marshall Morehouse and Kris Kemmis were all wonderful, experienced professionals and excellent listeners. They were very patient with us. This was our first remodel, so we needed coaching. They took time to learn about ICE and our wish list of needs, which paid off because we accepted most all of their suggested designs."

Tim became the primary client contact and translated the owners' wish lists into day to day requirements that he relayed to the Lehigh team. PROJECT group leader Marty Knauss; Project Managers Joe Migliore, Liz Cardarelli and James Racette; and superintendent and Lehigh point man Tom Terhart quickly became invaluable resources for Tim and the owners.

Joe, Dan and Tim were complimentary of Tom, and mentioned that "Tom went out of his way to overcommunicate. Anytime anyone had a question or concern, he was right there to address the issue. We could see his truck in the parking lot and knew he was here every day." Tim also added that "Not having performed a remodel of this scope before, we needed our hands held. Weekly meetings with detailed action items and delegated tasks with two-week-ahead outlooks were the standard. Tom and Lehigh were well organized, communicated often and kept us abreast of what we needed to know. He was always accessible, which raised our level of comfort knowing that he was here and could immediately execute tasks, which was a huge time save."

Joe and Dan mentioned that having Tom on site was important to the project and really integrated well with ICE employees. Dan also related that "Tom treated our employees like we would. It was an absolute pleasure working with Lehigh, and we consider Tom part of the family. He is an exceptional people person."

An advantage of having the superintendent for Tim "was that Tom was gracious in answering ICE employee questions and concerns firsthand. This was especially

"The new space has really helped revitalize our employees."

— Dan Coppola

important for our long-term 'influencer' employees who are fully invested in the company, and who treat the business and building like owners." Tom also shared that "Once the demolition was complete and we began to put the office back together, we arranged after hour 'tours' of the renovated space. It was a pleasant experience to answer the questions of 'what was going where and when.' The feedback from the ICE staff during the tours was nothing less than spectacular."

Tom also enjoyed working with Tim. "It didn't take long to build a good relationship with Tim. Whether it was coming to me for clarification on a specific aspect of the job or simply sharing our weekend adventures, it was always a pleasure to have some of his time. Tim had a good sense of what upper management wanted and what the facility needed. Constant project updates via text, phone calls, emails, office meetings or a simple passing in the hallways kept Tim's concern for the project satisfied."

Benefits of the New Space

Tim was also charged with an exponentially increasing need to hire new employees to support the expanding operations. He was often forced to take prospective candidates through the middle of the office before the renovation, including the executive area where sensitive topics and day-to-day business items were being discussed, making it difficult to find privacy for either group. Tim mentioned that the new conference room, showroom and hospitality areas "have provided the additional benefits of impressing job prospects while providing the privacy required for conducting sensitive interviews."

Joe, Dan and Tim also referenced the new and improved camaraderie that has sprung up among ICE employees as a result of the new kitchen/cafeteria area that can now accommodate many more people at once. They all shared that the new communal space has been a great place for cross-pollination of various department managers and team members

who now share a common lunch time and break space, whereas they previously ate alone or at different times.

Tim remarked that the “previous remodel was in the mid ‘90s, so the interior was long in the tooth for sure. We wanted our new offices and renovations to be representative of the games we make, featuring modern materials — sleek, inviting, bright — and also provide an attractive atmosphere. In our case, we decided on an achromatic, grayscale motif, which is very clean and we love it.

“Updating our showroom was a must, and we’re very pleased with the result. The baffled ceiling absorbs the sound of our games, and the suspended LED hockey rink above looks fantastic. The jumbotron adds a nice touch since we have four different hockey games in our catalog. In addition, our hospitality room next door is already loved by our visiting guests who can now relax and settle in after their travels. We have affectionately named this room after our founding Past President Ralph A. Coppola.”

Joe, Dan and Tim shared the positive impressions from employees, visitors and guests alike, relating that many have commented favorably on the new improvements: “Whether first-time visitors or people we’ve worked with for years, everyone loves the new space. We’re excited each time we have new guests visit. Many more visitors will enjoy the new space in the future, and we are happy to be a part of the Lehigh portfolio,” said Tim.

When asked about critical project milestones, Project Manager Joe Migliore felt that “achieving watertight completion of the roofing, windows and façade of both the renovated areas and the new addition marked a major step forward in securing and enclosing the building,” and added that “the clean, crisp design has created a modern and inviting workspace that reflects the professionalism and attention to detail ICE is known for. Its open, streamlined aesthetic has made a noticeable positive impact on ICE employees, fostering a sense of pride, productivity and collaboration.”

Homage to Ralph

The lobby is the original location of Ralph’s office and now provides a fitting tribute to him whenever sun bathes the space. Dan mentioned that Ralph “can see all of the smiles on the faces of ICE’s employees, guests and visitors in the beautiful new lobby space.”

“We were excited to turn it into a modern office with a cool showroom to show off ICE’s unique arcade games.”

— Joe Migliore, Project Manager



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STAUB EXPANDS TO CONSOLIDATE AND GROW

by Doug Eberhardt

Staub Precision Machine Inc. is a manufacturer of high-precision machined components located in the Village of Hamburg, New York.

The advanced precision machining contract manufacturer has recently completed a new world-class machining center. The new build will allow Staub improved manufacturing throughput and capabilities, greater capacity, and a state-of-the-art, temperature controlled area to meet stringent industry quality standards and client needs.

History

Since their inception in a garage in 1975, Staub's growth has seen them move several times, initially relocating into a former Hamburg grocery store and then adding two more buildings in 2010.

Staub is celebrating their golden anniversary in 2025, and the new ownership wanted to create a new building to improve operational efficiencies by consolidating and streamlining operations into a showpiece facility on a 7.1-acre field near their existing plants.

“We were very happy working with Mike and Nick, and Lehigh delivered a great project on-time and on-budget.”

— Joe Pinker

Lehigh became involved in the project when President Joe Pinker received a local referral recommending Lehigh. Staub had previously worked on a project with another contractor and experienced poor results according to Chief Innovation Officer (CInO) Jonathan Halas.

The Staub team reached out to Lehigh to quote on their new project in 2022 and was extremely impressed with the thoroughness of the submission. Joe mentioned that Lehigh “listened to our concerns,” and Jonathan remarked that “Lehigh excelled in the RFQ process and went above and beyond our expectations with a most thorough proposal. Lehigh was transparent with their quotes and information and laid out expectations up front.” Staub had a prior project go over budget and over schedule with a number of setbacks, and Joe and Jonathan both said they really appreciated the professionalism and response Lehigh brought to their project.

Construction of the new 60,000-square-foot facility started in early 2024 and was completed in late spring of 2025. Staub began populating their new space with machining equipment and adding to its growing campus. The new building is located at the end of the street in close proximity to their transplanted engineering and administrative offices in a former bank headquarters.

Lehigh Experience

The project was overseen by Lehigh Project Manager Mike Quigley, who channeled his vast experience with similar facilities into successfully delivering the new design-build. Mike immediately established a good rapport with Joe and Jonathan at the beginning. Joe shared with Mike that “Lehigh was clear with their plan and project schedule from the start and delivered the building we wanted.” He went on to say that “Mike was extremely knowledgeable. He is very concerned about doing things the right way and was always available.”

Mike said that Staub originally came to the table with someone else's drawings. Working closely with Scheid Architectural Project Manager Marshall Morehouse, Lehigh helped value engineer out many of the extraneous items originally proposed to meet Staub's budget expectations, which were nearly half of the initial estimates. Mike noted “We told Staub where they could cut and gave them options to meet their targets.”

“I enjoyed my relationship with Joe and Jonathan. While this was similar to other projects, each owner's needs are different, and I strived to meet their requirements and expectations.”

— Mike Quigley

Superintendent Focused on the Client's Schedule

While Mike was often onsite, Lehigh Superintendent Nick Lewandowski was the daily Lehigh presence driving the job. Nick worked closely with Joe and Jonathan to help keep to the owner's schedule. One of his favorite aspects of the Staub job was "working with a great team of subcontractors who went above and beyond to make the job successful." Mike also remarked that "the preferred subs enabled the great performance in delivering on-time and under budget."

When asked about project challenges, Nick remembered the torrential rains that plagued the project at the beginning of the construction, which required additional pumping and attention to water resource management. Nick also nimbly adjusted to several modifications to the original plans to accommodate revisions to support operations including placement of mechanical systems in the ceiling as well as plumbing and utility locations. Joe felt that "Nick had a great attitude and really seemed to enjoy his job."

Jonathan mentioned that "Nick was always onsite, always there. He provided a superior and consistent performance compared to what we had experienced with previous contractors."

Joe, Jonathan, Mike and Nick all shared details of the pristine new space including unique building features like the two mezzanines and a crane to facilitate production and streamline shop workflow and throughput. Another feature was the installation of four uninterrupted power sources (UPSs) to improve the quality of power feeding equipment to reduce unnecessary equipment downtimes during power outages and interruptions.

While production will still continue in Staub's other nearby facilities, the new building will add dedicated areas for improved quality and inspection, climate controlled storage and warehouse areas, and new areas for inventory. The unique floor layout and separate loading dock will enable raw materials to be received while maintaining strict quality control measures, and there will be additional meeting spaces and employee training areas once finalized.

When asked if he would recommend Lehigh to colleagues, Joe said he "would do so without hesitation," and told Mike that if he wanted to show Lehigh work to prospective clients, that Joe would open the doors for tours. Jonathan noted, "The improvements and investment will lead to new growth and allow us to gain access into new markets and industries."

Nick summed up the project by saying how proud he was to have built "a big, beautiful building, and give Joe and Jonathan exactly what they wanted."

When asked about how the project could have gone better, owner Joe Pinker admitted to Mike that, "My only regret on the project was that I didn't get to say goodbye to our Superintendent Nick for all the great work he did."

"Nick was extremely dedicated — working weekends and nights — and worked well with our maintenance team."

— Joe Pinker



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Ask the Expert:

Scott Bieler

President and CEO, West Herr

Our guest expert this month is West Herr President and CEO Scott Bieler, who began his automotive career as a salesman in 1975, was elevated to president in 1997, became majority owner in 2000 and now oversees 3,048 people at 40 locations throughout western New York. Scott shares the importance of ethics and relates how they have informed his philanthropic endeavors in his answers to the questions below.



Q: West Herr and Lehigh were both awarded the prestigious Buffalo Niagara Business Ethics Award in 2008. What did this mean to you and West Herr?

A: Being recognized for strong ethics was and is crucial to our customers and makes winners in our industry stand out. The ethics award has been one of the most important we've received in my 50 years with West Herr. Winning that honor validated to our employees the importance of individual integrity.

When Brad Hafner changed my life making me a partner at 29 years old, he didn't talk about profits, performance or measurements but impressed upon me how important it was to him to "never have to walk down the sidewalk and have to cross to the other side to avoid an unhappy customer." That taught me about his ethics and his passion to please customers, which made a big impression on me at this early juncture in my life.

Q: While you publicly acknowledge the importance of your customers, you also stress to your management team that "the customer comes second," recognizing the critical role ethical employees play in taking care of your customers. How important are your employees?

A: They are crucial to our success! Our managers are there to support and listen to our team members. I look

for prospective managers who exhibit a strong sense of empathy and want my team to see employees as people first. They make the ultimate difference in treating our customers right. It is important that if someone is going through a hard time, they know that the company cares about them, which inspires loyalty for the rest of their career with us. We are looking for servant leaders who are highly engaged. High employee satisfaction results in outstanding customer satisfaction.

Q: You've held numerous board positions, with one of the most visible being Roswell Park, and have been recognized with many philanthropic awards for your civic efforts. You've also made significant gifts to countless charities and organizations. What has driven you to give back to so many groups?

A: West Herr and I have been blessed beyond what any person can imagine. After 50 years, I never get used to the loyalty that our customers have shown us. It has become our mission to give back to the many communities that have supported us over so many years. Our giving is, in reality, regiving what we have already received from our customers.

Q: West Herr has been chosen as one of the "Best Places to Work in WNY" 21 consecutive years and won the BBB "Torch Award" for Marketplace Ethics eight times. How important are these awards?



West Herr President & CEO Scott Bieler

A: While we win many awards for our dealerships, sales and service, our most important recognition comes internally from our employees for the "Best Places" awards and anything to do with ethics. We are immensely proud of our team and our culture.

Q: One of the finest examples of your ethics in action is how you quietly support many groups behind the scenes and never get recognized. How important is this to you?

A: While I'm proud of our public support for cancer centers, hospitals, pediatric groups, schools and others, we also privately assist individual families in need. We have 280,000 active customers, and inevitably some of them need confidential help. Each year, we offer deserving families handicap vans and vehicles quietly and with dignity.

Q: What is your latest motivational book read or inspiration?

A: *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life* by David Brooks is a very powerful book. Also, the poem *What Will Matter* by Michael Josephson reinforces the importance of both making a difference and the need to do something in this life. I would encourage people to read both.

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