

Waltonen is Looking for a Few Good People

by Jim Stickford

The Warren-based company Waltonen is looking for a few good men and women.

The company has placed a "help wanted" sign on the front lawn of its headquarters on Mound near 13 Mile Road.

Company president Lloyd Brown said that Waltonen performs a diverse set of services for the military, automakers and the aerospace industry.

"Our roots are in the auto sector," Brown said. "They go back to 1957 when GM was one of our early clients. We still have a strong relationship with them and we assist them with their automation assembly equipment."

This type of equipment, Brown said, is seen in the body shops of assembly plants. Waltonen delivers to GM the designs, the simulations of engineering and processes. They are all digital. And there is also the 3D plant layout.

These plans and processes are typically used in the manufacturing of the lower structure of the vehicle, Brown said.

"It works like this," he added. "GM will come to us with a couple hundred parts and a lot of areas in a car that need spot welds, adhesives and other joining methods and say to us, 'We need these parts to fit together and a process to put them to-

gether and get them installed.'"

Right now, Brown said, the car side of Waltonen is very busy.

"We're about 24 months ahead of the curve in the auto industry," Brown said. "When there's a slow in new development of vehicles, we are hit first. But the OEMs, especially GM, are in the middle of a strong new development phase."

"Things have been strong and steady for the last couple of years and we've been involved in many projects with GM. I can say that over the years we've touched just about everything GM has on the road."

Additionally, Waltonen's aerospace division is working on light commercial jets.

What all this means, Brown said, is that despite the defense spending slowdown, there is a great need for engineers and technicians with specific skills. This is coming at a time when the labor pool is beginning to tighten up.

"Right now, we're looking for folks with experience in LS-Dyna systems. That's a high-end modeling and simulation tool used for crash analysis. It's what's called a 'finite element' program that is an FEA (Finite Element Analysis) tool."

The company is also looking for people experienced with Process Simulate, a tool that allows Waltonen to better use the

Siemens Technomatic portfolios to simulate and optimize the Siemens robots used in the manufacturing process.

"We're receptive to looking at folks who meet the definitions I just described, of course," Brown said.

But we're also looking for people who are experts in cars, who come with a wealth of information on cars and their production histories. We're like the Marines, we're looking for a few good men."

The company is also looking for people known in the trade as "checkers" who can check on CAD in the tube.

"I know that's technical, but people in the industry will get it," Brown said. "We are also looking for people NX and Pro E designers. We're excited. Our motto is, 'It's made in America.' There are a lot of talented people out there and we have partnerships across the United States to serve our diverse customer base."



Waltonen President Lloyd Brown said good times are ahead.

Brown is also excited about Metro Detroit's future.

"Detroit is a huge technical hub," Brown said. "Some of the data I've seen shows that by 2020 there will be a shortage of technical people of around 700,000. If you look to the future, we will see

Detroit and Michigan get back the title, 'top technical hub.'

"Developing products all start with the idea. These ideas need to be developed, analyzed and then made. There is no better place to do that than here in Detroit and Michigan."

GM Joins Forces with Stanford University

General Motors is joining the Center for Automotive Research at Stanford University, its latest effort to mine the school's best and brightest ideas and recruit top students studying toward careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

Mary Barra, GM senior vice president of Global Product Development, confirmed the membership last week following a visit to the school of engineering where she spoke to faculty, students and researchers.

"Joining the Center for Automotive Research at Stanford is a natural fit for GM," Barra said. "In order to create the world's best vehicles, we make every effort to remain on the cutting edge of automotive development. Our membership in CARS will allow us both to expand and share our knowledge with students, faculty and industry partners as we work together to move the industry forward."

The Center for Automotive Research at Stanford is a community of faculty and students from a range of disciplines aimed at discovering, building, and deploying critical ideas and innovations for the next generation of cars and drivers. Barra said it's unique in its infrastructure and that CARS provides shared resources for research, teaching, student project teams and new educational ini-

tiatives across many research centers, including the law and business schools.

"GM is dedicated to helping develop the next generation of science, technology, engineering and mathematics professionals and advancing the industry," Barra said.

"The Center for Automotive Research at Stanford offers us not only the chance to contribute to the education of future leaders, but also cultivate new and creative vehicle technology

solutions," he explained.

This membership fortifies GM's long-standing relationship with Stanford. Barra is one of many GM leaders to have earned a degree from Stanford, which is one of GM's key engineering and business recruitment institutions.

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From left, Bill Foxall, Bill Dupree, Joe Tocco and Bill Baird

GM Retirees Hit the Stage

Not only does GM manufacture cars, they also produce actors.

The Heart of the Hills spring production of the classic musical, "Anything Goes," features four retired GM employees.

The show will be performed at the Warren Community Center, 5460 Arden, on June 5 and 6 at 2 p.m., and at 7 p.m. on June 7 and 8. Heart of the Hills is a senior theater group that got its start in Rochester back in 1985 and now has members from throughout Southeast Michigan.

Included in the cast of "Anything Goes" are retired GM employees Joe Tocco, Bill Foxall, Bill Dupree and Bill Baird.

Joe Tocco, 87, plays the ship's captain. He worked as an engineer at the GM Tech Center in Warren for 24 years and retired in 1993.

Bill Baird, 65, plays Moonface Martin. He worked as an IT specialist for 39 years at various GM facilities including Detroit, Auburn Hills, Madison Heights and the GM Tech Center in Warren. He retired in 2008.

Bill Dupree, 73, plays an FBI Agent. He was an engineer for Fisher Body, a GM division at the Tech Center, for 17 years. He retired in 1977.

Bill Foxall, 75, plays keyboard with the band. He worked 37 years for GM Advanced Engineering at the Tech Center and retired in 1999.

For more information, visit www.hohplayers.org.

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