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Company officials hope open house will shine favorable light on factory

When Molded Dimensions hosts an open house Saturday, Oct. 22, officials at the Port Washington company hope it will be more than a feel-good photo opportunity.

MOLDED DIMENSIONS EMPLOYEE Tito Ramirez opened a press to remove a molded rubber part. The Port Washington manufacturing plant will be open for tours on Saturday, Oct. 22.
Photo by Molded Dimensions

“We hold our open house every five years as kind of a safe chance for employees to show their friends, neighbors and families what they do,” said Linda Katz, the company’s CEO.

“But the other reason we hold the event is to introduce the community to Molded Dimensions. For whatever reason, industry seems to be very much an under-appreciated sector of the economy. People usually think of manufacturing as dirty jobs. That is not the case here.”

According to Katz, whose husband Mike is company president, they hope is that the adjusted perception will pay dividends down the road.

“We don’t have any manufacturing positions open right now, but we have had openings in recent years and have had a very difficult time filling them. That seems odd during this time with unemployment at 9%, but it is the case,” she said.

“When there are openings, it is a challenge to find someone who can read a slide rule and pass a drug test.”

Katz said by putting its best foot forward, the company hopes to open the eyes of prospective

employees.

“Quite frankly, the manufacturing sector doesn’t have a very sexy reputation. Industrial jobs just are something you hear a lot about these days. We feel we need to do a little PR to get the best people into our building. The open house is our chance to shine a little light on jobs in the industrial sector,” she said.

“To work at our company, you don’t need a lot of technical knowledge, just the ability to follow on-the-job instructions and show up for work five days a week.”

In return, Katz said, Molded Dimensions rewards its employees for their dedication.

“Our pay rate is in the 90% percentile for manufacturing, and once people get a job here they tend to stay. The average employee has been working here for 10 years,” she said.

The company also pays to send its workers to technical school. Students have pursued varied coursework beyond basic engineering, including certification to become a nursing assistant.

“We feel improving their education makes them better workers and better citizens,” Katz said.

Her husband, David, serves on the board of Milwaukee Area Technical College, largely in response to an ongoing complaint by business owners that the school systems are failing to produce qualified workers.

“Addressing that problem is something David is committed to,” Katz said.

While admitting to a bit of a bias, she said a change in attitude about manufacturing jobs is overdue.

“The way I look at it, when you make something — which is what we do in the manufacturing sector — you are adding value to society, which is a good thing for our country,” Katz said.

Molded Dimensions specializes in the production of molded rubber and urethane components used in the automotive, healthcare, electronics and electronics industries.

The Katzes have owned the company for 10 years. It employees 75 people.

The open house will be from 9 a.m. to noon, Oct. 22. Tours, games and refreshments are planned.

The company is at 701 Sunset Rd.

For more information, call 284-9455