



TMA MEMBER PROFILE

JOEY BETTINARDI OF BETTS PRECISION

BY FRAN EATON

“Joey” Bettinardi, Vice President of Sales and Operations at Betts Precision in Alsip, Illinois, represents well “Gen Z” – a generation that focuses on two key components in their life work: environmental consciousness and company culture.

For Gen Zers like 25-year-old Bettinardi, working to make the world a better place is a crucial motivating factor for their careers.

“Here at Betts, we’re a high-tech precision machining company. We service the food industry, the medical industry, and the aerospace industry. Our customers rely on us every day to give them the best quality parts and the best quality customer service so they can meet their needs when they’re building their different components,” Bettinardi told TMA News in a recent interview.

He said creating quality parts for the food industry helps to feed the world. Providing high-level components for the aerospace industry assures safer air travel and accessibility. And having a part in creating prosthetic limbs for the medical industry is becoming increasingly crucial.

“We’re big in orthopedic instruments,” Bettinardi said, beaming. “A lot is for repairing foot, ankle, hip, spine, and shoulder injuries. Any of those medical products will be in hospital surgery rooms, helping patients. It’s rewarding for our employees and all of us here at Betts Precision to know we’re making instruments that make people’s lives better.”

The medical instruments made at Betts Precision range in size anywhere from less than an inch up to 12 to 15 inches. The company does work on smaller, lower quantity, and highly complex parts as their clients require.

“Our clients like that they have the talent and all of our people, who want to learn more and more and get more ingrained in what they currently are doing. They also love a challenge – it keeps things exciting, and rewarding,” he said.

Betts Precision’s company culture is also important to Joey, as it is to most Gen Zers.

As a third-generation manufacturer, he perceives those he works with as a part of the extended Bettinardi Family – creating a positive environment where their 26 employees can thrive.

From an early age, Joey spent time with his father and uncle on the workshop floor where he learned how to create a positive work environment.

“I learned the importance of the industries we serve, but also the people. I saw the way managers like my dad and my uncle treat their people with kindness, respect, and charity,” he said.

Joey has used their example to establish an 8-week introduction for new Betts Precision employees that he calls a “boot camp.” The newbies learn the business’ offerings by spending weeks in the shop, quality department, the deburring polishing department, and specific tasks needed to complete the jobs.

Over the years, the manufacturing Bettinardi Family has developed a group of small businesses, ranging from creating the world-renowned Bettinardi putters to Donson Machine and Betts Precision.

Joey's father, Joe Bettinardi, and his uncle Jim bought Donson Machine from Joey's grandfather, Dan Bettinardi, in 2005. The eldest Bettinardi studied machining in high school, then worked as a machinist at Argonne National Laboratory for five years before starting Donson Machine with his brother-in-law in 1978.

"I think one big thing my dad taught me is to treat your people great, and they'll treat you great. That's a nice thing about our companies," he said. "We're family-owned and -operated. We're not owned by some private equity company, so our people really feel grateful, and they feel like they're cared for - and we do care for our people."

Betts Precision highlights family and environment, he said.

"We're flexible and in our shop, we highlight controlled temperature and air filtration systems, with LED lighting. The floors are spotless."

That's the opposite of what so many think about the industry, Joey said. "So many people look at manufacturing as like getting dirt or grease on their hands, as a dirty job. We welcome everyone to come in and look at our shop. It's not like it used to be at all. We think of all our employees as engineers on the job, engineers on the machines. And they are - they have to know their numbers. You can't have a bad part. Every part has to be perfect."

Joey recently returned to the manufacturing industry after working in corporate America after receiving a Business Administration degree from St. Xavier University in Chicago's southwest suburbs.

The time was well spent, he said.

"I was able to meet a lot of great people and learn more about things like CRM systems. I remember they made us do cold calls by picking up the phone and not being scared. It helps a person get more confidence and build more confidence. I took that experience and knowledge and transferred it to this company," he said.

Joey returned to the manufacturing industry recently and focused on learning more about machining while taking TMA's Related Theory course in CNC Programming. He proudly displays the TMA diploma and graduation photo in his Betts Precision office.

Being a member of TMA has been beneficial for Betts Precision, especially in helping with one of the challenges small and midsize manufacturers have in Illinois - keeping informed and aware of local, state, and federal public policies. Betts Precision recently hosted their district's Illinois Senator Bill Cunningham, who was very interested in what Joey and his father had to say about the challenges of running a business in Cook County.

"We want to always remind our local politicians and local elected officials that we're here investing back into the community by supporting great jobs and hiring great people so they can have careers in manufacturing," Bettinardi said. "So we want our state and our country to continue to stay business-friendly for people like us."

With 49% of Gen Zers reporting that they'd like to start and run their own businesses, Bettinardi agrees wholeheartedly.

"As I'm younger, and of the next generation, I want our state and our country to support small businesses now and in the future."

Betts Precision

Find out more about Betts Precision at www.bettsprecision.com.

