

RHODE ISLAND JOB SHOP PURSUES ISO TO OPEN DOORS

ABOUT R & R MACHINE INDUSTRIES INC. R&R Machine Industries, Inc. is a full-service, CNC contract machine shop. The job shop sets itself apart by providing clients with seamless service, not only milling and turning but also guiding outsourced parts through other manufacturers for heat treating or other work. "We deliver the complete part," explained Vice President/CFO Renay Legare Curran. Founded in 1980 by Roland Legare and his wife out of their home basement, the North Smithfield, Rhode Island family-owned manufacturing business now employs 17. They serve a variety of industries including fire suppression, automation technology, metrology and wind energy.

THE CHALLENGE. Curran says R&R's quality system always followed the international quality standards published by ISO. However, "Even though you follow the standards of ISO, not having that certificate can close doors. They won't even recognize you." Wanting to expand the business, the team set its sights on ISO 9001:2015 certification. Curran and sister/teammate Diane Legare Ranslow contacted their industry association, the Rhode Island Manufacturing Association, for recommendations and were introduced to Polaris MEP, part of the MEP National Network™.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. "Changes can be scary and you have no idea if extra work is going to come from changing processes. But, we all knew that this was a path we wanted to go down," says Curran. When [project manager] Chris [Cinieri] came with the program it didn't seem as scary. The Polaris MEP process meant we always knew what was the next step to be prepared for, what was the next step that had to be achieved." Polaris MEP implemented an ISO 9001:2015-compliant quality management system (QMS) that would pass registration audit and begin opening doors to more sales.

Polaris MEP walked the client through a document review and gap analysis of their existing quality systems. The MEP assisted in writing a quality manual, associated procedures and work instructions to ensure conformance with ISO Standards. Polaris MEP also helped R&R secure grant funding from the State of Rhode Island for training for all 15 employees. Finally, Cinieri conducted an internal audit to ensure they were on their way to success. R&R passed their ISO 9001:2015 Certification Audit on their first attempt and immediately began promoting the achievement to current and prospective clients.

Curran says "From the moment Polaris MEP stepped into our facility, the way Chris explained the program, we felt confident in the support. Of course the financing - the grants that made it reachable. We were going through a time during the pandemic which could have been like, geez, we really need these funds for other things. But we had to also look at what direction we needed to go. We were locked. There were certain doors we couldn't open that Polaris MEP and NQA helped us open."

"Not only did the program that Polaris MEP offered make [ISO Certification] possible, they also made it reachable."

-Renay Curran, President/CFO

RESULTS



17 jobs retained



2 skilled worker jobs added



\$9,950 in client investments

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