

a guide to

STUFF

made and built in southeastern Wisconsin
FALL 2017

WHO
makes it?

WHAT
IS IT?

Could I make a
CAREER of this?



COVER STORY page 14

Cool stuff made and built in southeastern Wisconsin



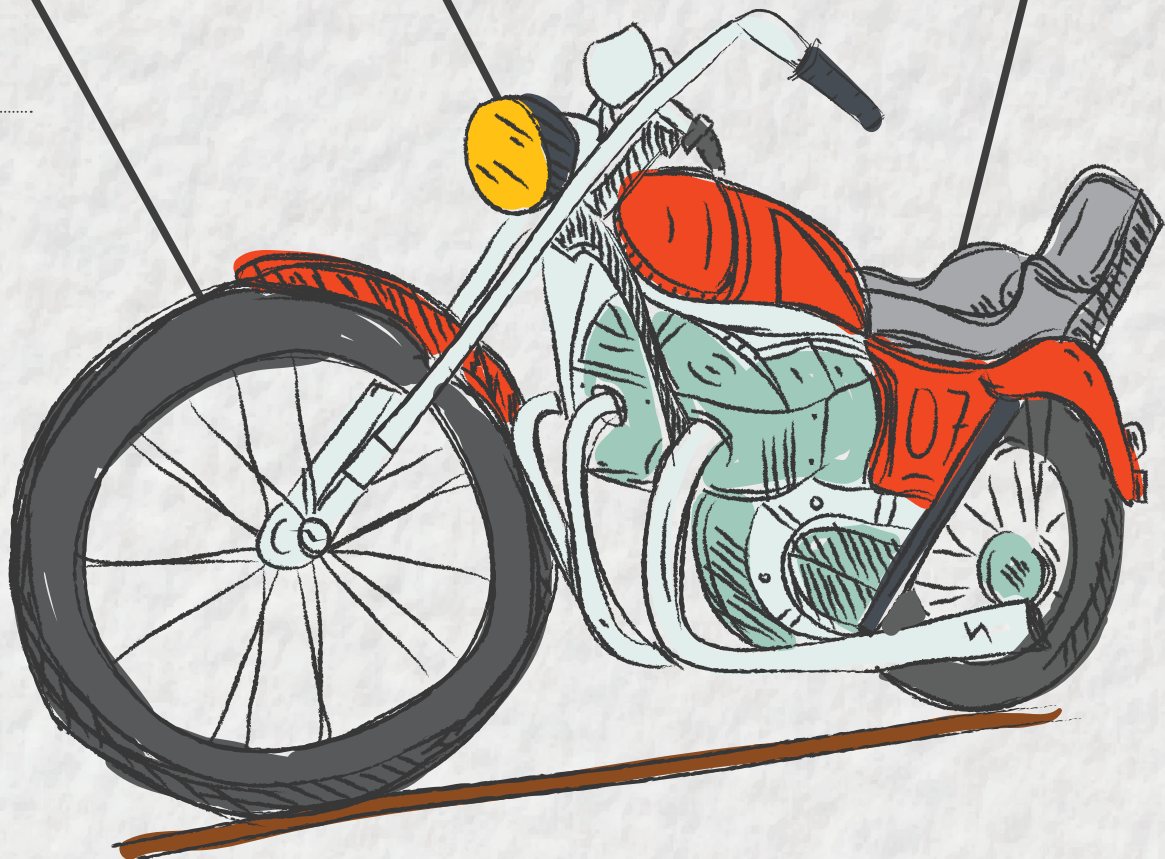
SALARY page 20

Personal budgets and finding a salary that works for you



STUFF BLOWN UP pages 10 & 22

Wisconsin sources for local products



welcome to

STUFF

made and built in southeastern Wisconsin

PREPARING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE TODAY

Right now, students across the state are starting new programs of study during the back-to-school rush of fall. There's never been a more exciting time to prepare to join Wisconsin's workforce. As new technologies, like Foxconn Technology Group's planned LCD manufacturing facility, begin to form a future vision of our state's economy, we all would do well to find out what we need to succeed. Whether you are in high school or recently graduated, entering a college program or uncertain of your future, our new STUFF magazine has something to offer you.

In our work at BizTimes Media with the leaders of Wisconsin's key industries, we keep our ears open. And one thing we've consistently heard from the vibrant manufacturing, building and construction sectors is that they need more workers. Not just bodies for labor, but skilled workers with the desire to learn in an ever-changing, high-tech environment.

In the pages of STUFF, you'll see some great stories about the manufacturing and building and construction sectors and the stuff they make and build. Young people are finding great career paths in these industries – whether in production, engineering, sales, marketing, human resources or IT. Between the stories and the company profiles, this magazine highlights several of them.

We went out and talked to some of the people working on the issue: hiring managers at businesses, school district administrators, the Wisconsin departments of Workforce Development and Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp., and more. They told us that to get these in-demand jobs, a four-year degree is great, but a two-year technical diploma will launch you into the workforce as well. And you can even do both. We hope the information we provide in our magazine about work and life beyond high school will give you some ideas and inspiration going forward.

BizTimes gathered the information here to shine a light on the important issue of workforce development in Wisconsin. In the process, we discovered some amazing resources out there revolutionizing academic career planning and hiring. We now think differently when we hear "postsecondary education," extending our definition well beyond a four-year degree.

A special thanks to the manufacturers, contractors, associations and advertisers that supported this publication. Thanks also goes to publication partner Waukesha County Business Alliance for its support and insights. We could not have created this publication without the community's help. The more we can all do to bridge the gap between employers and their future workforce, the stronger we all will be.

Whether you're a student looking to develop a career or a parent, teacher or business leader looking to learn more, I encourage you to spend some time with STUFF. You can also access a digital edition of STUFF with direct links to the companies profiled at biztimes.com/stuff. Best wishes on your learning and career search journey, and let us know what you think of STUFF. Please contact me anytime at dan.meyer@biztimes.com.



Dan Meyer
Founder and publisher
BizTimes Media



SPI LIGHTING

WHO WE ARE

When lighting is done well, you hardly notice it. Everyone feels comfortable, productive, and at their best but doesn't know why. It is a crucial design tool that helps define a space and set the mood. At SPI Lighting, we design and manufacture architectural and commercial lighting fixtures that illuminate buildings around the world. Our products are made with pride at our factory in Mequon, Wisconsin. Join us in producing lighting for the future.

STUFF WE MAKE

Our products include everything from powerful architectural designs, to full-scale performance and asymmetric systems that give off impressive amounts of light, to contemporary lighting solutions which include linear runs and discrete pendants. Or create something original by partnering with our custom lighting team.

COOL CUSTOMERS

We market to architects, engineers, interior designers, and lighting designers throughout North America who advise building owners on which fixtures are best for a particular project. Our lights adorn buildings of all kinds including offices, airports, industrial, healthcare, schools, pools, and recreational facilities. Look for our products throughout Milwaukee including at Marquette University, Mitchell International Airport, Children's Hospital, Sojourner Peace Center, and many area schools.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

METAL FABRICATORS - Because our products are made-to-order, our fabricators see a lot of variety. We look for candidates who enjoy this challenge and want to learn how to operate the machines on the floor including brake presses, punch presses, and machining centers.

ENGINEERS - To keep pace with LED advancements and changes in architectural design, we're constantly recruiting talented engineers and designers to join our team. Our engineers feel project ownership and enjoy thinking through problems, not just on a computer, but on the work bench too. We look for backgrounds in mechanical or electrical engineering but value experience in manufacturing engineering and industrial design, as well.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES/BENEFITS

Join our collaborative and welcoming environment, and earn competitive wages and benefits. We invest in cross-training and offer opportunities to expand skills by working in other departments or taking on management responsibilities. Metal fabricators have become engineers, temporary workers have been promoted to team leads, and entry-level employees have grown into directors. Beyond offering opportunities at work, we want our employees to be successful at home, too, which is why we offer the flexibility needed to accommodate life outside of work. Employee healthcare premiums (Single) is 100% employer-paid, and vacation starts at two weeks. See what it's like from the people who work here; watch the video at www.spilighting.com/careers.html. Additional benefits include:

- » Paid plant shutdown from Christmas to New Years
- » Wellness events



Health Insurance



Dental Insurance



Flexible Spending Account



Life Insurance



Disability Insurance



401(k)



Flexible Workplace (summer hours / flex time)



Dependent Care Reimbursement



INFO



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spilighting.com

facebook.com/SPILightingInc

linkedin.com/company/spi-lighting?trk=company_logo

youtube.com/channel/UChJwFMhnMQlotfD6bvH_Pdw

Employees: 95 full-time
 25 part-time/flex

Year founded: 1987

President: Lee A. Doerr, Jr.

NIC SATTERSTRUM

CUSTOM DESIGN ENGINEER

AGE: 28

YEARS AT COMPANY: 5

WHAT ARE YOUR JOB DUTIES?

I design and modify custom lighting fixtures.

WHAT DOES THIS JOB AND WORKING AT THIS COMPANY MEAN TO YOU?

SPI is a great place to work that continuously offers its employees opportunities to grow. I started out here as a basic fabricator with welding experience. Within the first few months, I was training on new machines. A few years later, I had learned how to operate every machine on the floor. Outside of work, I taught myself CAD/CAM software to make my own automotive parts. When SPI learned of my CAD abilities, they offered me a position in our YD Lighting department, designing and modifying custom fixtures. Now I get to combine my knowledge of how to build things with the creativity of making something one-of-a-kind. I couldn't be happier. These are opportunities that you won't find just anywhere.

A QUOTE FROM THE MANAGER

"We need versatility as much as skill, maybe more. Nic "pushed" to learn more - to be better. That's who we need because, as they get better, we become a better company."

THE JOB:

REQUIREMENTS

- » Must have working knowledge of AutoCAD and Inventor - company will send you to training to obtain these skills if aptitude is proven
- » Mechanical Design background and ability to think outside the standard fixture designs
- » 2-5 years of experience in a manufacturing environment is always preferred

SKILLS

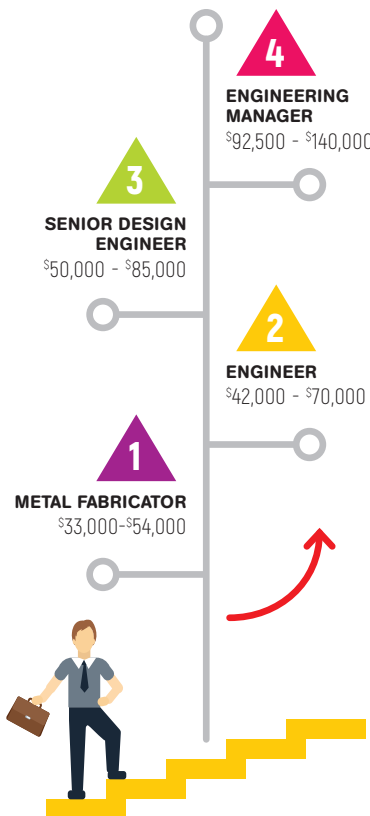
- » Excellent math and technical ability
- » Must be able to work with minimal direction and still produce a quality product
- » Problem solving skills

WHAT YOU'LL DO

You'll operate in AutoCAD and Inventor on a daily basis to design custom lighting fixtures. Working together with our Custom Design team, you will develop a well thought out solution to meet the customer's expectations. On a daily basis you will work with our fabrication team to design all parts for manufacturability, developing products that are cost effective and efficient.

CAREER PATH

- » This position has the potential to grow into a Senior Design Engineer or an Engineering Manager. At SPI, we also look at individuals on a regular basis who are driven and motivated to succeed. There are always opportunities in other departments as well if growth and versatility is your goal.



\$42,000 - \$50,000
 starter

\$45,000 - \$60,000
 experienced

\$55,000 - \$75,000
 expert

ALYSON BREE

HR MANAGER

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