

Member of the Month

Mid South Machine & Supply has been in business in Putnam County for 21 years. From humble beginnings in the basement of a small grocery store in Baxter, TN in 1984 they have grown to 30 full time and 7 part-time team members.

Barry Wilson, president of Mid South Machine, graduated from Tennessee Technological University (TTU) with a bachelor's degree in industrial technology. Employed as a quality assurance engineer, Barry quickly saw the need for quality-machined products that could be delivered on time so he decided to begin self-employment.

With one part-time vocational student as an employee, a vertical mill and a lathe, Barry's first work order was from Gil, Inc., which involved machining a guide rail for a missile launcher. The material for the job was so long (and considering the limited space of 480 square feet in the entire building) it could not fit in the mill! Using his creativity, Barry knocked a hole in the exterior black wall of the building, and the material was then machined in the mill while the end of the stock was sticking outside the building.

In 1987, Mid South Machine moved to a new 3,000 square foot building in the heart of Baxter. In 1993, the Putnam drive-in theatre property was purchased with the long-range plans for expansion. Construction began in 1995 for what is now the home of Mid South Machine. It features 14,400 square feet of manufacturing space, 2,000 square feet of office complex, a 1,600 square foot lunch/break room and a 2,400 square foot painting and welding building.

Also in 1995 Barry's brother/partner Ronnie Wilson began working at Mid South Machine and assumed responsibility for the accounting and office management functions. Up until that time, Ronnie had been working as an insurance claims adjuster after he received his degree in business management from TTU in 1976.

In 2002, long time employee Dan Morpew became a partner in the company. Dan has had many years of experience in the field of purchasing and the metal industry, which he has brought to the organization.

In 2004, Mid South Machine achieved ISO 9001:2000 certification from BSI Inc., a quality management

systems registrar. This certification assures customers that Mid South is committed to providing the highest levels of quality and service. This achievement is attributed to the entire team at Mid South Machine and especially the hard work of Quality Manager, Jack Elmore and Plant Supervisor, Joel Hammons.

A sister company to Mid South Machine, Mid South Industrial Automation, was later established in 1999. (MSIA) is an Engineering based company, which provides turnkey assembly, test, and process equipment to a variety of manufacturing industries worldwide. Eric Smith, a mechanical engineering graduate of TTU and the Engineering/Sale Manager has been instrumental in the success of Mid South Industrial Automation. Along with Associates, Jim Lambert, and Steve Mahan, Mid South Industrial Automation has earned a reputation for being dedicated to customer service and a premier machine builder. They currently have 18 full time team members and have recently moved into a new 20,000 square foot facility.

Barry attributes the success of both Mid South organizations to a talented, hard working group of team members and the company's commitment to customer service.



Alliance of Tennessee Employers - Cookeville
October 2005