2020 UID SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

FISA is delighted to announce the two winners of the FISA scholarships to the University of Innovative Distribution (UID) program in March of 2020.

Travis Perkins is in Technical Sales with Statco-DSI in Huntington Beach, CA. In his application for the scholarship, Travis said, “I have been working at Statco-DSI for six years and have taken on many roles to help expand my knowledge. This includes welding in the field, fabrication shop hand, inside salesman, project administrator and now currently technical salesman. Through each of these experiences I feel I have become well-rounded and have a thorough understanding of all the roles throughout the process. I also attained a Bachelor of Science degree in business management, a master’s degree in supply chain management, and an international business certificate simultaneously. I truly enjoy learning and am always trying to better myself and the people around me, which I believe makes me a great fit for this program. Now is a time of change in the food/beverage industry where the experienced individuals who have been in the industry for many years are becoming fewer and fewer. This gives young individuals like myself the opportunity to help shape the future of what our industry will become, and this program will help give me the tools needed to accomplish this.”

Jeff Bostic is with FCX Performance/Corrosion Fluid Products and is Operations Manager of CFP East. In his essay, Jeff commented, “Today’s challenging economic headwinds in the marketplace have created an environment that necessitates an evaluation of a commitment to inventory levels within distribution. As managers, we must look past the “number of turns” per cycle and restructure inventory purchases with the understanding that the requirements must be customer-centric and that the proper selections may be a formidable sales tool. An absolute commitment to both the customer’s and manufacturer’s success is a critical buy-in for inventory item selection and capital commitment. The University of Distribution Program will look to help me develop a firm understanding of how best to link customers, vendors, inside sales and outside sales with inventory requirements and levels of commitments. Additionally, a better understanding will help our operations/sales team use the inventory as an aggressive and effective sales tool. Not only should inventory serve past sales history, but a detailed analysis should be implemented to stock anticipated and mission-critical needs of our customers. I am hoping that the UID program will help prepare me to take a new approach, and as a “leader” to be able to develop concepts of change within our company and my division.”

UID is a concentrated educational program focused on the unique needs of the wholesale distribution industry which takes place March 8-11, 2020 in Indianapolis, IN. Known worldwide for excellence in education, UID is sponsored by the Association Education Alliance (AEA) a consortium of 40+ distribution professional associations which includes FISA, in cooperation with the Department of Technology Leadership and Innovation of Purdue University.

This year, there are two changes in the program. Courses are now grouped in one of six Education Tracks based on theme. The three tracks are Distribution Strategy, Leadership/Professional Development and Management (Incl HR) These groupings give participants the option to plan their curriculum based on interests in one or more areas. In addition, Instructors have assigned a Level of Complexity (LOC): Foundational, Intermediate or Advanced to their course.
As we close out the last few days of another decade, we can see how much our businesses have evolved over the last 10 years and the continued evolution from market pressures, to innovations and to our dependence on digital are just a few of the highlights.

I would like to thank those of you who completed surveys from our conference in Lake Geneva. Collectively the speakers received the highest reviews since we started keeping track. When the Board comes together in February, we will use these evaluations for consideration in planning next year's conference in Ponte Vedra, FL. Before our meeting, you will receive a request for a few minutes of your time to complete a survey seeking specific input from you about the key topics of interest in improving your businesses.

Networking with channel partners always ranks as a prime benefit of attending the Conference. Other than networking, the topics discussed by the speakers are the primary points of interest that provide specific take-home value. We encourage you to share ideas for speakers you may have heard at another conference or in a Vistage group. Do add specific speaker recommendations to the to the survey you will get in January or contact a Board member. It takes all of us working together to provide the conference content that will move our association members forward.

Each holiday season we take time to count the many blessings in each of our lives. Spending time with family and friends, being thankful for our businesses, team members, customers, suppliers and industry friends that make our careers fun and rewarding are blessings indeed!

In Lake Geneva, many members brought potential future leaders to the conference. This was our largest group of First Time attendees ever. I encourage each of you to consider others in your business who could benefit from hearing our speakers and meeting others in the industry. The impact the conference environment has is long-lasting and one of the main reasons why we attend year after year.

Lisa and I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very prosperous New Year!

Warm Regards,

Jason Ryan, FCX Performance

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CHECKING THE PULSE

In the electronic survey sent to member companies in early December, 48 members responded for a 43% return rate. Below is a summary:

Now that we are nearing the end of 2019, how does your business compare to the same time last year?

- Profits are up ...................... 44.68%
- Profits are down .................. 21.28%
- About the same size .............. 34.04%

Including this year, which of these three years has been your best year?

- 2019.................................. 40.43%
- 2018.................................. 42.55%
- 2017.................................. 17.02%

What effect have the tariffs had on your business?

- Positive effect....................... 10.64%
- Negative effect..................... 29.79%
- No effect............................ 59.57%

To read the responses to what single economic change would have the most positive effect on your business, go the Member's Only section of the FISA website.

If you have forgotten your password to log-in to this section, please contact stella@fisanet.org or call 336-274-6311.
Innovation is about moving boldly into the unknown. This groundbreaking research study will empower distributors to turbocharge their innovation journey!

Distributors can dominate through innovation. And, domination should be distribution’s goal because the intent of today’s disruptors is to co-opt, replace or eliminate distribution. Disruptive threats may or may not be existential, but they are always game changing. Distribution must match disruption’s intent with the same intensity and consequence. That’s why today more than ever before, wholesaler-distributors should innovate to dominate!

Innovate to Dominate: The 12th Edition in the Facing the Forces of Change® Series is every distributor’s essential roadmap for innovation! The primary purpose of this research is to help distributors connect the dots between the forces of change and innovating the distributor business model. Distributors can do much more than only defend themselves against the forces of disruption. Distributors can lead the way in this new era of B2B innovation!

You and your team will benefit most from Author Mark Dancer’s efforts to reframe the term “innovation.” His research into what leading companies from within and outside distribution are doing shows clearly that the current disruptive, digital transformation phase that distributors find themselves in today requires a new way of thinking about how to develop your business for the long term. He guides you to look outside distribution for insights while also finding new value in your traditional business strengths — such as the value of your personal relationships and how this can be a major differentiator when applied in a digital context.

Every chapter provides an all-important methodology with real-world examples from leading distributors and other thought leaders and innovators, plus innovative tools. Here is a breakdown of what is covered in each chapter:

Chapter 1: Enable the Future of Business: This chapter describes how to become the essential partner for helping customers embrace the future of business in the digital age.

Chapter 2: Embrace Virtual Markets, Chapter 3: Revitalize the Value Chain and Chapter 4: Reboot the Real World: These three chapters are in-depth explorations of future market scenarios and drive to potentially game-changing business model innovations created through brainstorming with distributor leaders.

Chapter 5: Connect. Collaborate. Create: This chapter fills a considerable gap by pressing distributors to build an innovation ecosystem of in-depth knowledge and disruptive services.

Chapter 6: Innovate to Dominate: This chapter is a call to action for every distributor to develop a distribution-focused innovation discipline, one that turbocharges distributor business models and leads to sustainable competitive advantage.

Innovation is a team effort and requires a strong culture. The best innovations require engagement and activity at every level of the distributor organization and through multiple coordinated initiatives. To help you drive the ideas and recommendations deep within your company, we’ve included in this study many activities as a template for you to use to design your organization’s work. You’ll find activities specifically for everyone in your organization — Distributor Leaders and Leadership Teams, Next-Generation Leaders and Innovation-Minded Employees, and Managers and Team Members.

Distributors have a massive opportunity to help lead the way for customers and suppliers. If successful, distribution leaders will not only modernize their business model for the digital age, but they’ll become a driving force for revitalizing the value chain and strengthening the entire business sector of our economy.

Let Innovate to Dominate be your essential tool and roadmap for your company innovations. It will help you plan and track your innovation journey and progress so that your business can sustain its competitive advantage in today’s fiercely competitive landscape.

To order, go to www.naw.org.
CONFRONTING THE LABOR SHORTAGE:
Strategies and Solutions for Distributors Facing a Growing Skill Gap

Finding and keeping talent is a top challenge for distributors, no matter the segment. And the challenge has grown even more severe with the tight labor market that has emerged in 2018 and 2019. In fact, 94% of distributors and manufacturers surveyed for this report said they struggled to find the right people. This report looks more closely at the obstacles distributors have encountered in finding talent, and examines ways some have overcome them, including:

• Focusing less on candidate’s industry experience and more on their willingness to learn and commitment to the role.
• Rethinking how they position the work they do from a rote description of a job’s duties to the impact that job has on their customers.
• Improving onboarding practices to ensure a new employee has what they need to contribute quickly.
• Developing a practical and well-planned internship program in partnership with local colleges that gives candidates real experience.
• Tapping into new sources of talent, including military veteran training programs and other industries.
• Flexibility in compensation programs

The Association Education Alliance commissioned this report on behalf of its more than 40 member distributor associations.

Among those interviewed by AEA, one pattern for success did emerge: Those who are willing to hire employees based on potential rather than actual experience. But 70% of respondents to our survey said that they struggle to find people because applicants don’t have the right skills. But in fact, prioritizing personal traits, competencies and potential in job candidates over strict adherence to sometimes arbitrary factors such as years of experience could become increasingly necessary to bring onboard the very talent necessary for businesses to thrive.

“This is getting to the point where distributors are willing to train. They had wanted people with experience.”

This flexibility, combined with improved employee onboarding and on-the-job training, could help distributors identify new employees with good attitudes who can adapt to and fit the needs of the job.

It’s getting to the point where distributors are willing to train. They had wanted people with experience.”

Mary Jawgiel, who heads up PT Workforce, which helps the Power Transmission Distributors Association’s 400 member companies find much-needed recruits, sees that evolution already occurring. “It’s getting to the point where they are willing to train. They had wanted people with experience.”

John Keller, vice president of Petroleum Solutions Inc., a distributor of fuel handling and vehicle maintenance equipment in San Antonio, Texas, was one of those. “We always wanted five or 10 years’ experience, but there are just not those people available.” Consequently, he said, “We just have to be constantly hiring and bringing entry-level people in.”

Dunn Rasbury, director of flooring for A & M Supply, a Georgia-based supplier of residential and commercial building supplies, is part of that shift. “We’ve had success hiring people without technical experience and training them. I look for intangibles: competitiveness, work ethic, go-getter attitude — those are all things I can’t train.”

Passmore has had similar success, and said he is convinced altering expectations about specific experience is vital to companies that hope to overcome the labor shortage. “I think one of the greatest flaws in our age is the fact that we are always looking for experience. We’re looking for people who have already done the job. What we need to be looking for is people who have the capacity to learn, who are resilient and resourceful. I think there are a lot of people we could hire and in very short order give them the tools they need to be successful in our industry. At every position.”

The Deloitte research projects there will be 4.6 million manufacturing jobs to fill by 2028, with only 2.2 million of those jobs likely to be filled. Of the 190 distributors and manufacturers who responded to an online survey of Association Education Alliance organizations members, 94% said they had difficulty recruiting new employees and filling open positions.

Top 3 Contributors to the Labor Shortage:
1. Technology changes
2. Misconceptions about the manufacturing industry
3. Mass Baby Boomer retirement
Tel-Tru is utilizing the excellent skills of Rochester Institute of Technology Co-Op students to advance development of the next generation of temperature sensors. Fifth-year Computer Engineering student Adam Gordon has spent the last five months developing the prototype code and user applications to test the new platform. The wireless prototypes Adam helped develop will be tested and eventually moved to production. “The past five months here at Tel-Tru have been nothing short of incredible. Unlike many other Co-ops out there, Tel-Tru had me working on vital projects that they plan on bringing to market. I've had many opportunities here to improve my coding skills, but also to improve my skills outside of my major. I can easily say I will walk away from this Co-op being a better and more well-rounded engineer than when I started. The beauty of this Co-op for me comes from the freedom that was given to me for each project. Help is always provided if necessary, but I was free to navigate a project as needed. The IoT field is new and on the rise, so getting the opportunity to be exposed to it is something that I value greatly. Working with Tel-Tru has been an amazing experience, has helped better my knowledge and passion for my major, and is definitely a Co-op experience I will recommend to my peers.” “Adam’s done a great job utilizing the latest coding techniques to get our IoT prototypes up and running. IoT is challenging because each layer of the technology stack requires unique skills and Adam’s done really well in bridging the gap,” commented Bill Harris, Director of Product Management.

**Here’s How One FISA Manufacturer is Meeting the Challenge**

WANT TO STAND OUT? Rethink Your Messages to Prospects

How can you position a job description to find the right talent?

A: Everything starts from the top. Stun-ningly, and also not surprisingly, many companies don’t even have well-developed job descriptions. They have a general guideline, but they don’t know what they’re looking for. Does senior leadership know what they’re looking for? It’s not just a candidate. It’s why you exist. Just because we’re in the housing industry doesn’t mean our job is to provide materials, right? May-be what we provide in that industry is helping people achieve the American dream and security by owning their home. That’s one of the problems for distribution; they have a hard time attracting people because of the nature of the industry. That requires you to be more creative, or to think deeper. It’s really about adding meaning to what they do. If people know what they do makes an impact – whether big or small – it’s our job as the organization’s leaders to communicate that idea.

How can distributors stand out in this job market?

A: Ultimately, people are emotional beings, right? People stay because they are emotionally attached, because you take care of me or because I believe your vision and share your values. If you use just the job position or compensation, there’s always a better job and better compensation. That’s not a sustainable advantage for you. Tap into the human side, and not just the skills. In one study, researchers talked to a custodial crew in a hospital in western United States. They expected everybody to say, ‘Oh, my job is boring.’ But they said, ‘I’m not a custodian. I’m part of the professional healing team.’ That gave me goosebumps. So, I’m not just cleaning your hospital room, right? They believe they are part of the healing. They gave a box of tissues to the family who comes and visits. They rearranged the photos to show them there is hope in life. They go above and beyond for their basic job description. The researchers came up with the term job crafting. It applies back to the distribution industry. How do we help people see the deeper meaning of the job so that they can go above and beyond just the basic job functions?

This is even more important for millennials and Gen Z, right?

A: Absolutely. In four years, millennials will make up 75% of the U.S. workforce. So, whether you like them or not, it’s an area you need to be concerned about. Millennials are team players. They’re innovative. They’re always looking for new ways to do things. And they are longing to make an impact. They would take a lower paid job because they believe in your vision. They care about your higher-level purpose. Why am I here? It’s important for distributors to really figure out their vision to exist as a company. That’s how you can ultimately attract people.

Wholesale distribution is, to many, an invisible industry. A career in industrial markets is not perceived as glamorous or attractive as, say, a job at Apple. So how can distributors rethink how they attract new college graduates or candidates from outside the industry? To get that answer, we spoke with Jia Wang, author of Optimizing Human Capital Development: A Distributor’s Guide to Building Sustainable Competitive Advantage Through Talent Strategy published by the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors.

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Here’s How One FISA Manufacturer is Meeting the Challenge
Member News & Views

The who, what, where, when and whys of the FISA membership.

How to Submit News

The Distributor News is published quarterly and the deadline for the next issue is March 1, 2020. Due to space limitations, we cannot print specific product information, but personnel changes, changes of address, expansions or other industry news is always of interest.

If you have a question, please call 336-274-6311.
Fax information to FISA at 336-691-1839 or mail to FISA at 1207 Sunset Drive, Greensboro, NC 27408.
Email: stella@fisanet.org

Fristam Pumps USA

Fristam Pumps USA, Middleton, WI, is pleased to announce Dan Johnson has been promoted to the position of Technical Inside Sales Representative. Dan has a Bachelor of Science degree and over 10 years of experience in the machinery manufacturing industry. In his new role, he will be responsible for providing in-house and in-field technical support and customer service. Fristam Pumps USA is a leading global manufacturer of sanitary centrifugal and positive displacement pumps, blenders and mixers used by the beverage, dairy, food and pharmaceutical/biotech industries.

Richards Industries

Astor Place Holdings (“Astor Place”), the private investment arm of Select Equity Group, L.P. (“SEG”), announced that it has acquired substantially all of the assets of Richards Industries, Inc. (“Richards”), a leading manufacturer of regulators, valves and other flow control products, through a newly-formed portfolio company of Astor Place. Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, Richards’ products are marketed under a series of distinct brands, each of which serve unique applications that require precise technical attributes. Richards serves a range of end markets including pharmaceutical, food & beverage, chemical, petrochemical and various industrial processing industries. CEO Bruce Broxterman and the management team will remain in their current roles. “Astor Place is an ideal partner for us as we continue to execute on a range of organic and inorganic growth initiatives. The group’s long-term ownership mentality and deep sector knowledge will enable us to methodically build out additional capabilities,” said Mr. Broxterman. Astor Place Senior Advisor Jim Graner will assume the role of non-executive Chairman of the Board. Mr. Graner brings over 40 years of experience in the flow control sector and was most recently the CFO of Graco, Inc. “Richards’ customer service-oriented culture, custom engineering and competitive manufacturing turnaround times differentiate the company in the marketplace,” said Mr. Graner. “The Astor Place team and I look forward to working with the management team to grow Richards as a leading flow control platform.”

Ace Sanitary

Ace Sanitary is pleased to announce the promotion of Greg Evans to the position of Sales Director. Previously, Greg held the position of East Coast Regional Sales Manager. However, in this new role, Greg will oversee the entirety of the sales function. Ace Sanitary is a manufacturer and supplier of premium flexible hose products for the sanitary and ultra-pure manufacturing markets. They exist to inspire and facilitate liquid transfer solutions around the world through a robust product selection, excellent product quality, and by redefining the meaning of customer service. Greg joined Ace in May 2015 and has been an integral part of Ace Sanitary’s progress since his hire.

Harvill Industries

Harvill Industries has moved into a newly renovated location configured to better serve their valued customers. They also have opened a retail sanitary and hydraulic Hose store at their new location. Harvill Industries is now located at 10553 Olympic Drive, Dallas, TX 75220.

M.G. Newell Corporation

M.G. Newell is pleased to announce that Casey O’Rea has joined the company as an Outside Sales Representative for the southern Georgia and Jacksonville, FL territory. In this position, Casey will report to Gray Sherrill, Vice-President and General Manager of the Greensboro Division. Casey brings over 18 years of sales experience to M.G. Newell. Previously, he spent eight years as a Diabetes Business Manager and Cardiovascular Speciality representative for Boehringer Ingelheim and Novartis covering Savannah, GA, Statesboro, GA and the Jacksonville, FL territory. He primarily sold Jardiance™ for Type 2 diabetes. Prior to that, he served for over 10 years as an assistant winemaker and in wine sales for Demitria Vineyards in Los Olivos, CA. He is a Certified Sommelier and an Advanced Master of Wine. Casey is a graduate of the Georgia Southern University with a B.S. in Environmental Science.
DCI, Inc.

DCI, Inc., a stainless steel tank and pressure vessel manufacturing company, is pleased to announce the strengthening of their sales leadership with the addition of Rolf Manser as VP of Sales and Marketing Life Sciences. Rolf brings a wealth of experience to the pharmaceutical industry with emphasis on bio-reactors, fermenters and skidded systems. In addition to this, DCI has promoted Ashley Dull to National Sales Manager of Life Sciences and Tim Johnson to National Sales Manager of Food, Dairy and Beverage. Ashley Dull has three years of experience within the food and dairy industries along with an engineering background and is located in Dallas, TX. Tim Johnson started with DCI in 2017, he has more than a decade of outside sales experience and is located in Atlanta, GA.

Dixon Sanitary

Dixon Sanitary located in Pewaukee, WI, has hired Chris Close as the Outside Sanitary Sales Specialist covering the Rocky Mountain Region and Texas. Chris brings over 18 years of pipe, valve, and fitting sales knowledge to the market. He will work closely with their distributor network to extend their presence in the sanitary market.

FCX Performance

Brian Tuel has joined FCX Performance as the Vice President of Sales for the Northeast. Brian served in the Navy and has extensive experience in hygienic processing having worked at Netzsch Pumps, Sudmo Valves and JBT A&B Process Systems. FCX specializes in distribution of engineered flow control products for a variety of industries including Pharmaceutical, Food & Beverage, Pulp & Paper, Chemical and Primary Metal manufacturing.

BEECO

Bykowski Equipment Company (BEECO) is proud to announce the addition of three new employees this quarter. Linda Quevedo has joined Bykowski Equipment Co. as an Inside Sales Representative, with a strong background in business, including order processing and over 10 years of customer service. She has her Associate in Business Administration, and her Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice and Business Management. Ananda Gutierrez recently joined the company as a Process Engineer with a BS in Chemical Engineering and Materials Engineering. He has experience in process simulations and extensive research of distillation and oxidation behaviors. Sergio Sosa was hired as a Service Coordinator. He has extensive experience in Projects and Program Management, as well as customer service, business analysis and client management. They are excited to welcome all three aboard! Bykowski Equipment Co. (BEECO) serves the food processing and beverage industry in several ways, including: Engineering and Installation of Process Systems, Inventory and Distribution of sanitary parts, and Service of Sanitary Equipment such as pumps, homogenizers, and plate and frame heat exchangers.

Welcome New Members

Complete Gaskets Solutions Inc.
PO: Box 1265
Englewood Fl. 34295
Contact: Dominic DiCentes
941-460-3001
ddicentes@cgsmfg.com
www.cgsmfg.com

CGS™ manufactures and stocks a wide variety of Gaskets, O-rings, and Seals. Our products are made to meet and exceed FDA and USP Class VI requirements.

CGS™ uses the highest quality hygienic elastomers and fluoropolymers. Our compounds are designed to be compliant with FDA CFR – 21CFR177.2600, FDA CFR 177.1550 and USP class VI. We have developed specialty materials to enhance product systems in the food, beverage, dairy, poultry, and pharmaceutical Industries. Key words when thinking of CGS™ are innovation, knowledge, excellence, integrity, and quality. We manufacture a complete product line to include Sanitary Clamp Tri-Clamp® style gaskets, screen gaskets, orifice plates, bevel seat gaskets, flange gaskets, O-rings and more. Our key focus is a commitment to product quality, safety, regulatory compliance and service. We carry large inventories and drop ship with private labeling. We work through a network of distributors serving the sanitary process industries. We are adding new distributors.

Ultibend Industries, Inc.
Contact: Matt Turley
13238 Florence Ave.
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
matt@ultibend.com
www.ultibend.com

Ultibend’s founders are brothers, born and raised in Wellington, New Zealand, where we still manufacture today. Their story starts humbly in 1992, as general fitters and turners taking on anything from bed-frames to balustrades in a garage workshop. Their drive for perfection lead to opportunities to supply the sanitary market. The brothers quickly realised they had a crucial edge – quality.

FISA is dedicated to strengthening the distribution channel.

Remember to send names of prospective members to stella@fisanet.org.

continued on page 8...
Welcome New Members, continued from page 7

Quite simply, they made beautiful product. Their hands-on experience led them to develop special techniques with an advantage on traditional manufacturing. They designed and built our machinery in-house, allowing greater control and process consistency. Their dedication to crafting perfect fittings was backed up by fast delivery and first-rate customer care.

To this day the founding brothers are still involved daily, and Ultibend is entirely family-owned, giving us that upper hand in service and quality.

Originally specialising in butt-weld fittings, we traditionally supplied throughout Australia and New Zealand. After gaining our 3-A symbol authorisation, we opened a branch in Los Angeles in 2015. We now hold substantial stock here, with a dedicated and friendly sales staff, supplying right across USA. Our expanded range includes a wider variety of fittings for your sanitary needs, including tri-clamp options and valves. We can help with anything from small urgent shipments, to bulk indent shipments direct from factory.

Our story leads us here today... still chasing perfection and passing it on to you.

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**NOTE:** Remember to update your company information. Go to www.fisanet.org and look under the Membership Listing. Email changes to stella@fisanet.org