

BUSINESS

20 years in carts, HUI going strong

HUI Manufacturing is celebrating a milestone in 2021 of 20 years in the medical device cart industry.

In 2001, the sheet metal fabricator and contract manufacturer expanded its business into designing and building medical device carts, a decision that has paid dividends in innovation and sustaining its workforce.

Today, the Kiel-based manufacturer designs and produces medical device carts for major medical technology companies that are used in hospitals

and clinics across the country and beyond.

The decision to expand into medical cart design and manufacture was a strategic move on the part of the small manufacturing facility. By finding a niche in the expanding medical market, the company was able to diversify its business model while playing to its strengths.

CEO and president Kurt Bell reflected on the evolution that the company has made. "We were looking for opportu-

nities for growth into a new niche that would capitalize on HUI's strengths. In developing the new process and practices required to service the medical device industry, we relied on our agility and commitment to continuous improvement. From 2001 until today our team has worked hard to learn new things while maintaining our standards and I couldn't be prouder about the success our team has earned."

Twenty years later, the bet on making medical carts has paid off in a big way. The medical device industry has grown into a \$156 billion market today. Medical carts now comprise a third of HUI's annual sales. The added value stream has allowed the company to weather dips in the economy and seek opportunities to grow its internal capabilities.

The early days of the journey presented challenges for the small company. The team had to shift its mindset and its production from making products designed by others to providing their own product development function. In fact, every part of the business has changed and grown. From design engineering capability to more complicated assembly, complex supply chain management to new quality and compliance standards, HUI has experienced an evolution in its processes.

The local community might be surprised to learn how innovative and far-reaching the products that leave HUI are. The company designs and builds carts that are used to carry and house devices that improve surgical outcomes, provide early diagnosis, and more. From neonatal cranial imaging to intricate eye surgery, HUI's medical carts are a part of how the device is used by doctors and medical staff. In fact, the company produces a cart that has been vital in the fight against COVID-19—a cart that houses a ventilator hood system used by clinicians in highly infectious environments like those experienced at the height of the pandemic.

When asked how HUI employees feel knowing that the products they make are helping people, medical team product engineer Mark Collins said, "I think many employees feel more inspired

about their jobs. These products are something that will ultimately be used to help improve people's lives through medical outcomes, and it feels good to know that. I know I certainly feel that way."

HUI is a contract manufacturer in sheet metal fabrication of cabinets and enclosures to the industrial and automations market, as well as custom medical device carts for major medical technology companies. HUI has approximately 125 employees at its Kiel facility who work every day to produce quality products that are used across the country and beyond. Founded in 1933, HUI is privately owned and has approximately \$17 million in annual revenue. Find out more about the company at www.hui-mfg.com or explore HUI's medical cart capabilities at www.medical-carts.org.