



Meet Mandi Morrissey

Tru-Vue – Faribault

Human Resources Manager

*SE MN Workforce Development Board (WDB) Member
since 2018*

Current WDB 2nd Vice President



How long have you been with Tru-Vue? I have been with Tru-Vue for 3 1/2 years.

What is your position with the company? Human Resources Manager.

We live in an ever-changing environment; how has Tru-Vue been aware and responsive so that they can survive, sustain and grow?

We are diligent about trying to stay current and competitive in wage, benefits, and opportunity. We believe in educating our team. Whether that means 100% tuition reimbursement, onsite or offsite specific education, basic literacy education, or culture education, it is all very important in our ever changing environment. It is how we all keep our skills and knowledge relevant. Most importantly though, we listen to the community. We poll the community directly through social media, we collaborate several community leaders, and we have strong partnerships within the community.

What has been Tru-Vue's response to the current labor workforce shortage?

When we listen to the community and their needs in the area of employment, we can offer solutions. In some cases, we meet them where they are as far as skills or experience and supplement the gap onsite. Other times, we can help remove barriers to employment, like schedules, flexibility, etc.

Are you adapting and welcoming diverse populations as a part of your solution moving forward?

Yes, of course! Without diversity, Tru-Vue would not be able to offer all of the value added products we do. Diversity helps us remain a great place to work!

During our listening exercise with the community, we learned Muslim women feel they have a barrier to employment in manufacturing because of the clothing they are required to wear. We overcame this challenge. We found acceptable skirts and hijabs (head pieces) that are not too loose. They were willing to wear pants under the skirt (keeping the skirt secure with Velcro) and keep the ends of the hijab tucked in. This minor modification gave many people the opportunity of manufacturing employment, which wasn't previously available to them.

We conduct “Muslims in the Workplace” training for all new leaders, as a required component of their onboarding. In addition, we have an annual training/refresher that is open to anyone in our workforce. We found that education was a large component of the success. When employees feel informed and they begin to understand the how and why, they begin to see the similarities more than the differences. This also allows us to answer the questions our teams have and educate them on the real reasons. This has allowed education on things we see in the news and social media or hear, that aren’t true, to be redirected to the truth.

Would you say there are more women, less women, or about the same number of women working at Tru-Vue - from when you started?

We have a lot more women, especially Muslim women, working on our production line than when I started here.

What have you learned and how have you been impacted by the changes?

I learn every single day. I plan to keep improving, growing, and moving forward, so I don’t see an end in sight. Tru-Vue has been able to use human capital to reach record breaking business goals. It doesn’t mean these changes are easy. There is a constant push/pull between the impacts of changes. There are new guidelines, new ways, new ideas, and then modifications to all of these things as the processes evolve. However, the beauty really lies when you can step back and see your teams grow into confident, dedicated, high performers. You hear their stories about the impact to their lives both inside and outside of work that this opportunity has given them – that is powerful.

Is educating your workforce a priority and if so what has Tru-Vue done to increase education and training opportunities for its employee?

Absolutely!

- a. Local ABE – FEC. We brought Adult Basic Education in house to teach basic literacy in the areas of: reading, writing, math, and computer skills.
- b. Local Post-Secondary Partners. We partner with South Central for Mechatronics and Normandale for Vacuum Science.
- c. Advanced Technical Training
- d. Tuition, Books and fees. We offer 100% tuition reimbursement for undergraduate degrees and 75% for graduate degrees.
- e. We began offering flexible schedules last year after hearing from the community that full time employment with a regular schedule was a barrier to pursuing education. We now offer a flexible schedule for part time work. Think of this like Uber or Open Table; but instead of using an app to get a car or table, you login to an app and pick up a work schedule that works for your availability. This has been very helpful for Tru-Vue to get qualified applicants onboarded that were previously unemployed or maybe under employed.

Have you had new employees leave other local companies to come and work for Tru-Vue? Did they give you a reason?

We all share the same workforce. We hope at Tru-Vue that we can meet the needs of everyone. Some people have come for our culture; others have come because we offer flexible schedules, and some for the benefits we offer. It all just depends where they are in life and what we have to offer.

Can you describe the difference in your company culture from when you started to what it appears to be now?

Tru-View has always been known as a great place to work. They have always had a diverse workforce and a strong focus on education. I would say most recently we have nudged our culture to reflect our community better. Our community partnerships are strong. We have leveraged them to offer more to our employees and to make a difference in our community.

Are you worried about Tru-View's future ten years from now if so why, and if not why?

With the diminishing workforce by sheer numbers, it is enough to keep an HR professional up at night. Aside from that, I am not worried about Tru-View ten years from now. We have incredible employees, great leaders, and a will to win like no other team I have ever worked with. Our team is open to change and collaborative in nature. They make things happen. It won't be easy day to day over ten years, but I am not too worried about it. We will continue to change to insure our relevance in the future.

Interviewed by Sonji Davis, Area Manager, WDI Faribault