

HALFTIME



PROFILE

YEARS



EST. 1977



HOMEBASE



POSITION

VP of MANUFACTURING

and EXTRUSION

Jeff Paradise

Todd: Jeff, how many years have you been with MI Windows?

Jeff: 40

Todd: Did you ever think you'd be here this long when you first started?

Jeff: Never really gave it a thought, actually. Time's gone pretty quick. It's been a great ride, a great career.

Todd: Why do you think you're still here 40 years later?

Jeff: First of all, I love what I do. Second of all, the company has offered many, many – especially if you date back to the 70s – just offered many, many opportunities. I love opportunities, I love challenges. I've done many things, so it was never really one thing within the company. I just really enjoyed it. It was really cool.

Todd: Can you tell us about some of the different positions you've held since you've started here?

Jeff: Sure, I actually came in and started as a laborer. At that time, we only made window screens, and then I had the opportunity to become the supervisor of the window screen/patio screen line, so I took it. And then in 1981, we decided to go into vinyl windows, so Pete DeSoto offered me that opportunity to kind of spearhead and get that off and going. As I ran that production line, I then became the Pennsylvania Operations Manager, and then from there went into being the Senior VP of Operations, where I pretty much went around the country and oversaw the production of all the plants.

Todd: And what's your title right now?

Jeff: Right now it's Vice President of Manufacturing and Extrusion of the eastern plants, which would be here in Pennsylvania.

Todd: How do you think you've contributed to MI's success through the years?

Jeff: I hope a lot. Number one, I've also had a

can-do attitude, a positive attitude. As I stated earlier, when a challenge would come about, I took it personal and wanted to see the company grow. I always knew we had a great company, a great team, and just kind of felt we had that secret sauce for success. Pretty much everything I've done, I've tried to do as a team. Just keep looking forward to say, 'We're the best.'

Todd: How has the company changed in the years since you've started here?

Jeff: Wow. A lot, we grew a lot. Quite a bit. So actually we went through many, many changes. We used to, as I stated, we used to be in a lot of aluminum products, window screens, which then that broke off into another division. We went into aluminum storm doors, aluminum storm windows, both of those were set by the wayside. And then we started focusing mainly on windows. We used to do a lot of aluminum windows, also, and we still do some aluminum windows, in our Texas plant, but mainly went all vinyl. We grew, managed to secure a lot of the big business, the big builders, through our great sales team. Growth – when I started here, I believe there were 64 people in the Pennsylvania operation. Now today, I think it's around 1100, 1200. So we grew quite a bit. Always looking to make a good product. So there's been a lot of changes.

Todd: Can you name one memorable day or event that you've had during your tenure here that really hits home as to why you're happy to be part of MI?

Jeff: Jeez, there would be many, many. I will say just recently we had a retreat and I was fortunate to receive the Founder's Award. That there to me was like a pinnacle of all the work you do,

and what a wonderful feeling to know that, as far as being part of a team, that the reward can be so great.

Todd: Did you have any idea that you were going to get the award?

Jeff: I did not. It was pretty cool. It was an awesome feeling. And it was great to know that my wife was there also to see it because let's face it, years ago I was on the road traveling a lot, and it takes a team. She was part of the team and took care of the kids while I wasn't at home, and she was very supportive. So it was a great night.

Todd: What are your proudest accomplishments working at MI?

Jeff: My proudest accomplishments would be seeing the team succeed, being part of that team to come up with the plan to make it succeed. Actually, I look at my whole tenure here at the company as just many, many accomplishments and to pick one would be hard. I just love seeing success and I love challenges. I love what I do, and I do it with the best of you, you know?

Todd: How do you think the fenestration industry has changed in your years at MI?

Jeff: Oh, wow, a lot. So think back in the early years of making windows, a lot of the codes did not exist. A lot of requirements we need to meet today as far as the impact or high performance along the coast, a lot of that has changed. Fortunately, as these regulations or codes started changing, through our engineering department, we were able to come up and meet all these codes. We've done a lot of things. Sealants, forced entry, many, many things from the time that we started making a vinyl window which was basically mechanical

and now everything is all welded together. The fenestration industry has changed a lot, and it's all for the good. It makes us all better. And fortunately we were able to stay ahead of that mainstream and meet everything we had to meet.

Todd: What does it mean to you that you work for a company that's so important to the residents of this region, because it does employ so many people?

Jeff: It's very important, very important. So the valley, as we call it, really is depending on the company. We are a very vital, integral part of the valley, somewhat of a heartbeat. Many times when you see cars out in the parking lot, they're for families. As we succeed and we're successful, we're not only fulfilling the company's needs, but we're also fulfilling the opportunity to support a family, which is very, very important.