

## **From Pharma to Fabrication: How Making that Leap Brought Steel Jobs Back to Bedford County**

*Alum Bank, PA – (September 20, 2016) --* What do a pharmaceutical executive turned entrepreneur, and a seasoned mechanical engineer with expertise in production and operations have in common?

A passion for helping to revitalize the Bedford County, Pennsylvania steel manufacturing sector through their company, Mission Critical Solutions™, LLC in Alum Bank.

CEO, Bob McGowan founded Mission Critical Solutions (“MCS™”) in 2008, deciding to leave a lucrative sales management career with a contract pharmaceutical company based in New Jersey with a desire to develop his own business and be closer to his growing family in Johnstown, PA. He purchased a 50,000 square foot facility that had been left vacant when Starrett Tool, a manufacturing mainstay in the area since 1991, moved its production overseas in 2004. McGowan reinvigorated the abandoned shell of a building, and hired a small group of skilled welders who had been displaced by the tool manufacturer four years prior. At its launch, MCS served as a telecommunications assembly and product development house, with most of its business coming from the government sector.

In 2011 when McGowan looked to expand MCS’ capabilities to include full metal fabrication, machining and engineering services, he joined forces with engineer George Bohrer, an Ashville, PA resident who has spent the last 30 years managing defense manufacturing facilities. Within the five years of their partnership, MCS has grown to employ 50 people, many of whom had originally fallen victim to the downsizing of other powerhouse companies like JLG, Hedstrom, Cannondale Bicycles, and ESCO. These organizations abruptly exited Bedford and Somerset Counties citing reasons related to time- and cost-efficiencies. McGowan and Bohrer capitalized on the skilled workforce that was left behind, and transformed MCS into a trusted supplier of fabricated and machined steel parts for the transportation, utilities and defense industries. The company currently manufactures over 400 parts for rail industry giants like Trinity Railcar and Freightcar America, and is honored to supply the US military with a variety of fixtures and training munitions that support the nation’s warfighters.

CEO Bob McGowan explains, “MCS has grown from three employees to fifty in a span of almost nine years, and our revenues have doubled, year-over-year for the past 3 years. This evolution has always been driven by a desire to deliver quality products and professional services, using the skills and dedication of local talent. Our team is invested in growing Mission Critical Solutions into an innovative national resource for fabricated and machined products.”

MCS’ President, George Bohrer also notes, “We have a tireless commitment to the quality process and are ISO certified in accordance with the 9001:2008 standard. MCS is also proud to be AAR M-1003 certified which demonstrates that our quality system meets all of the requirements of the Association of American Railroads (AAR) Quality Assurance Program. We have built a manufacturing infrastructure, somewhat unique to the industry, which pairs an on-site team of mechanical, electrical and quality engineers with AWS-certified welders and experienced CNC machinists. This partnership between science and craftsmanship results in engineered processes that deliver high-quality components and finished goods, time and again.”

McGowan points out that Mission Critical Solutions has earned business from many customers by, “picking up the ball when an original supplier begins delivering substandard product. He adds, “By marrying our engineering and fabrication teams, we aim to exceed the overall demands of our clients and often end up enhancing the design or quality of their original product. Our engineering team is

always available to take on the challenge of converting a customer's concept or dilemma into a cost-effective solution."

Looking ahead to 2017, MCS already has purchase orders in queue from many of their rail and defense customers, and the company is expanding their metal bending and machining capabilities to meet the short- and long-term demands of their growing client base which now extends into the aviation and alternative energy industries. And when media reports announce the closure or downsizing of a local business, Bob McGowan and George Bohrer take pride in knowing that their efforts are contributing to the local Bedford County, PA economy, and their once empty building is now home to a growing professional staff and 3 shifts of skilled craftsman, all dedicated to moving Mission Critical Solutions into the next level of commercial success.

### **About Mission Critical Solutions, LLC**

Mission Critical Solutions™ (MCS™) offers a full range of Engineering, Fabrication and Machining Services. Our quality systems have been certified to be in compliance with the ISO 9001:2008 quality standard, as well as the AAR M-1003 standard related to railroad component manufacturers. In addition, all MCS welders are AWS-certified. MCS' extensive array of equipment can process carbon steel, stainless steel and aluminum and we also offer vertical and horizontal machining services, as well as CNC turning. The company's on-site team of mechanical, electrical and quality engineers thrive on taking a client's concept or quandary and transforming it into a cost-effective solution; they also oversee all aspects of a job from inception to completion to ensure all quality standards are exceeded. For further information, please visit our website: [www.MissionCriticalSolutions.com](http://www.MissionCriticalSolutions.com).

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