At Cascade Engineering, everything we stand for culminates in our Triple Bottom Line (TBL) – People, Planet, Profit. Our ultimate purpose is to have a positive impact on society, the environment and to be financially successful.

Looking across our operations, this focus has become a permanent and palpable part of our culture. It feeds our drive to create a winning mentality, new innovations, and prosperity for every individual.

**OUR CULTURE**

The Cascade Engineering Family of Companies is a family-owned business that is committed to creating an inclusive work environment in which every employee knows they are valued.

Our True North aspiration is being an Employer of Choice through achieving world class health and safety along with maintaining a strong culture of engaged employees. We strive to attract and develop top talent while providing skills, leadership training and opportunities to grow from within. We provide external resources and support for each employee and their families to remove barriers to their success.

We have found that a culture based on inclusion unlocks each employee’s full potential and empowers them to be actively engaged and committed to our mutual success. We believe diversity drives our innovation and as an organization, we thrive on collectively solving difficult challenges that will improve our community, our environment and our financial prosperity.

**BUSINESS PRINCIPLES**

**Vision and Values**

Our vision is to be the highest value partner to our customers, by shaping ideas in plastics. We operate under the Triple Bottom Line through empowering people to drive innovative solutions and excellence in manufacturing.

**Customer Driven Innovation**

We create customer intimacy by building competitive differentiation, rapid invention and flawless launch.

**Employer of Choice**

We strive for the safest and healthiest workplace in the world. We provide learning and development opportunities, along with excellent benefits, to build a strong culture of engaged employees.

**Organizational Excellence**

Ongoing efforts to establish an internal framework of standards and processes intended to engage and motivate employees to deliver products and services that fulfill customer requirements within business expectations.

**SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT**

In 2021 Fred Keller appointed Bill Manns as the Sustainability Director for the Board of Directors and Kenyatta Brame as the Sustainability Officer who reports to and will work with Bill.

The Sustainability Director is responsible for providing an ongoing evaluation of the company’s profits, personnel and ecological outlook. This multi-faceted position provides an opportunity to improve our carbon footprint, water and energy consumption, supply chain and logistical issues and many more areas that may directly impact sustainability.

The Sustainability Officer works with managers, employees, customers and shareholders to address the organization’s approach to its environmental responsibilities with the goal to improve the company’s impact.

**FY 21 LEVEL 0 OBJECTIVES**

*5 year goals

**PEOPLE**

- Be an Employer of Choice
  - Zero Injuries

**PLANET**

- Be a leader in Sustainability and Customer Driven Innovation
  - Reduce Environmental Impact through Responsible Production and Consumption

**PROFIT**

- Healthy Profitability
  - Be Organizationally Excellent

**TURNING THE PAGE ON 2020**

After such an unprecedented year, we were able to adapt and learn how to move forward in a changed world.

Our top priority was maintaining careful consideration of health, safety and the efficiency of our entire family of companies. We implemented entryway screenings, mask wearing while necessary, sanitizing stations and supplied cleaning and disinfectant solutions across our facilities.

We sustained our great health benefits for employees and their families and routinely shared resources and events to help maneuver the impacts of the pandemic such as mental health counseling, rental assistance, child care or tutoring, tuition reimbursement, and more.

Cascade Engineering created a vaccination incentive program for all our employees. We were not going to mandate employees to be fully vaccinated however this was an innovative attempt to increase our numbers, protect employees and fight the spread of COVID-19.

This span of time has showcased how dedicated, resilient and hard-working our family of companies is. We are immensely proud of and thankful to every employee who gave their all for Cascade Engineering’s success.
LEADERSHIP

CHRISTINA KELLER: PRESIDENT & CEO

Christina Keller has held the position of President & CEO since September 2018. Prior she was the President of the Cascade Business Team as well as President of CK Technologies. “I am honored to have an opportunity to foster a vibrant culture based on trust, diversity and inclusion, established over more than 40 years”

She was ranked as one of West Michigan’s 40 under 40, recognized as a rising star by Plastics News Magazine and recently nominated for the Corp! Magazine’s Most Valuable Professionals Award, amongst 70 honorees for their careers, community involvement and passion, making Michigan a better place to live and work.

KENYATTA BRAME: EXECUTIVE VP & SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

Insightful, dedicated, and genuinely caring, Kenyatta Brame embodies the principles and values Cascade Engineering was built on. Kenyatta joined Cascade Engineering in 2006 and has been crucial in leading several of our Employer of Choice initiatives, including B Corp certification and a Full Partner designation from the Partners for a Racism-Free Community.

Earlier in his career, Brame was an attorney with Miller, Johnson, Snell & Cummiskey, PLC, a leading Grand Rapids, Mich. employment and labor law firm.

JANICE OSHINSKI: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Janice is a senior level financial executive with a demonstrated passion for delivering enhanced bottom-line performance and innovative process improvements. A hands-on leader, she partners with other business leaders in the development and implementation of strategic plans to facilitate business growth.

She is a Certified Public Accountant from the State of Michigan and earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Aquinas College.

FRED KELLER - Founded Cascade Engineering in 1973. He believes that business has the unique opportunity to complement its efforts on financial performance with important work in the social and environmental arenas. Business and industry publications regularly feature his innovative management approach and work in advancing sustainability.

BRIAN WALKER - Experienced chief executive officer with a demonstrated history of working in the furniture industry. Formerly the CEO of Herman Miller, Brian Walker is a Partner, Strategic Leadership with Huron Capital. He is a hands-on resource providing the business insights and strategic direction to portfolio company management teams necessary to create value in the private equity environment.

MARIE ECKSTEIN - A performance-driven Senior Executive and Consultant with success across the chemicals, manufacturing, electronics, silicon/rubber, automotive and solar industries. Marie has worked for some big name companies and is the founder and CEO of Red Dirt Road Inc, a social enterprise business benefiting impoverished women in rural Cambodia through the design, manufacture, and marketing of handmade silk fashion accessories.

BILL MANNS, SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR - Bill Manns is the President and CEO of Bronson Healthcare, an innovative, award-winning organization that partners with patients and families to achieve an exceptional care experience. He has a bachelor’s degree in Organizational Psychology and a master’s degree in Health Services Administration. In addition to his healthcare-specific background, he is experienced in LEAN and Six Sigma.

DEREK KAUFMAN - Derek Kaufman started his career in 1975 as a manufacturing process engineer with the Chevrolet Division of General Motors after his graduation from General Motors Institute. Today, Derek is a Managing Partner at Schwartz Advisors LLC, a La Jolla, CA-based firm supporting the M&A activities and organizational development of companies in the automotive aftermarket.

DR. LORISSA KELLER MACALLISTER - Dr. Lorissa MacAllister is a researcher and architect who is blending her experience and expertise in healthcare to pioneer a unique approach to design in the healthcare industry and beyond. As the Founder and President of Enviah, she leads the consulting firm to create fully integrated environments with the organizations’ people, technology, and systems. She has worked actively in the Grand Rapids community to help many organizations transform and grow.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BRIAN WALKER - Experienced chief executive officer with a demonstrated history of working in the furniture industry. Formerly the CEO of Herman Miller, Brian Walker is a Partner, Strategic Leadership with Huron Capital. He is a hands-on resource providing the business insights and strategic direction to portfolio company management teams necessary to create value in the private equity environment.

MARIE ECKSTEIN - A performance-driven Senior Executive and Consultant with success across the chemicals, manufacturing, electronics, silicon/rubber, automotive and solar industries. Marie has worked for some big name companies and is the founder and CEO of Red Dirt Road Inc, a social enterprise business benefiting impoverished women in rural Cambodia through the design, manufacture, and marketing of handmade silk fashion accessories.

BILL MANNS, SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR - Bill Manns is the President and CEO of Bronson Healthcare, an innovative, award-winning organization that partners with patients and families to achieve an exceptional care experience. He has a bachelor’s degree in Organizational Psychology and a master’s degree in Health Services Administration. In addition to his healthcare-specific background, he is experienced in LEAN and Six Sigma.

DEREK KAUFMAN - Derek Kaufman started his career in 1975 as a manufacturing process engineer with the Chevrolet Division of General Motors after his graduation from General Motors Institute. Today, Derek is a Managing Partner at Schwartz Advisors LLC, a La Jolla, CA-based firm supporting the M&A activities and organizational development of companies in the automotive aftermarket.

DR. LORISSA KELLER MACALLISTER - Dr. Lorissa MacAllister is a researcher and architect who is blending her experience and expertise in healthcare to pioneer a unique approach to design in the healthcare industry and beyond. As the Founder and President of Enviah, she leads the consulting firm to create fully integrated environments with the organizations’ people, technology, and systems. She has worked actively in the Grand Rapids community to help many organizations transform and grow.
We believe achieving our goals shouldn’t come at the expense of our people, but because of them. With that mentality, we’ve adopted pioneering programs rooted in the appreciation of all people, regardless of age, race, or background.
We are pleased to announce the joining of the FoC Talent Development Department (TDD) and the Cascade Enterprise System (CES) under the new name “People Advancement and Cascade Enterprise System” or “PACES”. This will be the corporate team that owns the standards and strategies of our company-wide lean systems and the training and development of our people.

Tasked with bringing a lean mindset to the work of aligning our business objectives with our training priorities for our employees, the PACES team’s mission statement is to “Actively develop our people and continuously improve our systems in the journey towards an Employer of Choice culture and Organizational Excellence”.

We know that our employees are what make us successful, and that our people are our most valuable and important asset. By combining forces of these two key groups, we can maximize our effectiveness toward our shared goal of building the skills of our employees in pursuit of continuously improving all of our business systems, including our talent development programs. By aligning our training and development offerings with our FoC-wide CES strategy deployment, we have a clear path forward to achieving organizational excellence while keeping a key focus on advancing our people, our most valuable asset. We will further our efforts around People Advancement by utilizing and creating standard systems and tools for the development of our employees to reach their goals and fulfill the needs of their roles.
INFORMATION SYSTEMS (IS) DEPARTMENT

During 2021 the entire nation was hit with an astonishing amount of cyber related attacks. “Cybercrime” shot up 600% due to the COVID-19 pandemic with an increased level of sophisticated schemes. Several companies fell prey to these occurrences and Cascade Engineering was no different.

Thankfully this article is one of victory rather than defeat. Due to our incredible IS Department led by Terry Tyler, we managed to escape the clutches with minimal production time wasted. Some damage was inevitable but the entire team spent countless hours defending attacks, reinforcing our networks and protecting our systems data.

The team was vigilant in foreseeing incoming threats and constantly communicating throughout the company of how we all could play a part in protecting against subsequent attempts of fraudulent email “phishing” scams.

Once we were 100% free of any issues the work still was not over. This experience prompted us to be even more protected from future attacks. Our IS department initiated multiple additional safeguards to keep us on the right track. All networked hardware and software was checked, cleaned and updated with proper security measures. We implemented a stronger password management system and a “two-factor authentication” for external log ins to our network, requiring a secondary device like a mobile device or smart phone.

We want to express our deep appreciation to our entire IS department for preventing potential catastrophic attacks that so many other companies unfortunately had to face in 2021.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

KIM KARR  Software Developer  |  MICHAELA LAVELLE  ERP Manager  |  PABLO CRUZ  MODS Coordinator
TERRY TYLER  IS Director  |  MITCH JOHNSON  Associate IT Professional  |  CINDY LATELLA  Business Systems Analyst
TAD SMEDES  Technical Services Manager  |  JESSE MONROE  Network Analyst  |  PAT CHARTIER  Client Services Manager
*not in photo  JIM BRISCOE  Programmer Analyst

PATRICK SCOTT  IT Manager  |  ERIC PICKERING  IT Professional

GRAND RAPIDS MICHIGAN CAMPUS - TEAM PHOTO
UKG

Early 2021 we switched our Human Resource Information System (HRIS) system to UKG which is a state-of-the-art cloud-based system. This change replaced our former ICON, Kronos and Taleo systems into one consolidated upgrade to help improve payroll and data accuracy while bringing efficiency to all departments.

The intuitive UKG software is also an improvement and far more accessible to all employees. With the “UKG Ready” app all employees can access their own portal on any smart device for information about pay statements, time sheets, PTO and attendance points. This is the easiest way to schedule time off and personal choice holidays.

From a systems point of view this helps keep all our information in one place and allows us to filter through various forms of employee-based data quickly.

THE DCC RETURNS

The Diversity Coordinating Council was reinstated in 2021. The DCC was in a brief absence due to the pandemic as it was difficult to hold gatherings especially when this group attempts to bring people from multiple locations together.

The purpose of the DCC is to create a work environment in which every employee in the Cascade Engineering Family of Companies, regardless of cultural or individual differences, knows they are respected and valued as a human being.

Mission Statement: To develop a culture of inclusion by increasing and heightening sensitivity to our individual differences, and help to actively defeat racism.

The DCC meets on a monthly basis in varying locations, dates, and times to allow for representation from all shifts, and all facilities. All employees are encouraged to join the conversation and contribute to future meetings.

A new improvement has been the extension of DCC topics to our intranet website and all facility display monitors. This allows everyone access to the monthly briefings, challenges, contests and discussion points.

TRAVEL TEAM!

As we were still recovering from the pandemic, sales were up but we were short of people. The labor shortage in Michigan and Ohio led to 100 skilled workers needed. Volunteers from the Rio Grande Valley in Texas traveled to help out our manufacturing facilities up North.

The program started as a three month period and kept renewing. The workers had the option to stay at the two northern facilities permanently, to stay temporarily, or to come back and work in the Brownsville facility. Griselda Muñoz was pivotal in partnering with Select Staff to find qualified workers for this program.

“Our main goal is to become the employer of choice in advanced manufacturing and to impact our communities in a positive way. We know that this group of 100 people that are now working up north, we have impacted their lives forever,” Muñoz said.

Many thanks to the team members who helped with orientation, onboarding and creating a welcoming and receptive environment. The feedback was positive from the group in Montpelier and the positive impact they had on both morale and output, giving our employees some breathing room. This initiative highlighted our company’s efforts in collaboration, creativity and diligence in maintaining a strong work force.
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

The Young Professionals of Color Conference (YPCC) is incredibly special to Cascade Engineering and all of West Michigan. Started by Kenyatta Brame and a core group of employees here at Cascade Engineering, it was always meant to impact as large of a crowd as possible.

This conference was designed and geared for the next generation of leaders. Young professionals of color from the West Michigan area are invited to learn what it takes to be successful in corporate America as a person of color. Presenters include leaders from the Grand Rapids community, entrepreneurs and nation-wide speakers. Our goal is to have participants leave equipped with knowledge about various topics including personal growth, professional development, leadership and more.

Since its inception in 2012, YPCC has become a huge event every Summer in Grand Rapids, Michigan. What started in one conference room has moved to much larger venues such as Universities, Companies and Convention Centers. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic the event had to switch to a digital format for years 2020 and 2021. The energy was not lost but simply redirected and the 10th year felt just as special.

As we celebrate a decade of YPCC, we look forward to the next 10 years of conferences and community we will help build for young professionals of color in West Michigan.
There’s only one earth, so we do everything possible to reduce our impact on it. We work hard to build a sustainable organization and are committed to continuously reducing waste emissions into the air, land, and water.
WASTE MANAGEMENT (WM)

One of Cascade Cart Solutions’ largest customers, Waste Management, was passionate about this project from the start. The CCS team designed the cart alongside Waste Management and Liz Bedard, the Director of the Association of Plastic Recyclers’ (APR) ‘Rigid Plastics Recycling Program’.

The Black Waste Management EcoCart was on display in the 2020 Sustainability Forum as a pillar of focus.

By mid 2021 the EcoCart was successfully running multiple colors and finally ran a successful roll out of the branded Green and Yellow WM Cart.

A BRIEF HISTORY

This project was first presented at a 2019 Michigan Recycling Coalition Conference under the initial title “EUCHR program” (Expanded Utilization of Curbside Household Recyclables). The concept was reclaiming curbside recyclable plastics back into the production process of the cart itself. The first goal was 10% post-customer curbside recyclables with goals of increasing that percentage over time while still maintaining a strong lasting product.

In 2020, the program officially launched and 250,000 pounds were processed to make black carts. In December 2020 four more colors were released and Cascade Cart Solutions (CCS) continued to expand its color portfolio in order to increase content. It was on track for 2.2 million pounds of curbside HDPE for 2021.

The EcoCart continues its journey being one of the most successful products of the Cascade Cart Solutions Team. The project has gained a lot of traction over the years with 2021 being the most notable yet!

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN ROLL OUT

The city of Holland recently reviewed and evaluated its current recycling program. Officials looked for a solution that fit with its sustainability goals. The EcoCart story aligned with Holland’s recycling direction. In April of 2021, Holland rolled 10,000 EcoCarts to its residents, who can efficiently recycle materials curbside. This was the largest roll out of EcoCarts thus far.

The stunning Blue and Orange EcoCarts mark an incredible milestone in this journey.
THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our current economy is often a linear process of materials to products to waste. The circular economy is a booming business and sustainability philosophy to eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials and regenerate nature. It is a resilient system that is good for business, people and the environment.

Cascade Engineering has been driving its business practices towards the circular economy model. Our Triple Bottom Line focus on environmental sustainability has always shared similarities with this system but now we can apply our focus to a more widespread movement. As more business and industry leaders shift in this direction it will make our attempts even easier.

CLOSED-LOOP MANUFACTURING

The term “closed-loop” manufacturing defines a company that collects its own products from customers that go right back into producing the same types of parts they came from. It’s an innovative solution to challenges like end of life-cycle products, scrap and waste.

Our efforts earned recognition from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) who named Cascade Engineering as its 2021 Design for Recycling Award winner. ISRI President Robin Wiener says a main draw was the company’s deep commitment to a closed-loop system.

“They pull often hard-to-recycle plastic out of residential recycling programs for use in the EcoCart and can use a majority of the cart to make new ones. This demonstrates Cascade Engineering’s dedication to circularity, as well as recycling and sustainability, in product design and manufacturing,” Wiener says.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Having a custom compounder as part of the Cascade Engineering Family of Companies gives us an incredible edge. Noble Polymers continues its effort to supply high quality materials to both the FoC and our customers.

To eliminate waste, a screen changer was added to our extrusion process that allowed for scrap material to be pelletized while removing contaminants that may have been present in material from post-consumer products. Pelletized field scrap materials has the potential to be used in a variety of products that are produced throughout the FoC.

Since 2019 Noble has partnered with The Hemp Plastics Company to create a new line of hemp filled bio-based plastics. Noble has since been developing products within four targeted resin systems: PLA, PE, PP, and ABS. Each of these base polymers is filled with 20-33% coarse hemp powder, which is a byproduct from the extraction process where hemp is used to make products for the health food industry.

Noble always strives to create new and remarkable materials. One example was the recent Regis Thermoplastic Olefin 6304 used in automotive and heavy truck industries for many applications. This material also highlights the synergies across the FoC as this was a project between CKT and Noble.

SUSTAINABILITY

We were highlighted on Forbes.com for our sustainability initiatives. Here’s an excerpt:

Cascade Engineering began exploring zero-waste-to-landfill opportunities before the sustainable concept was a trend. Today, there is an inevitable demand for companies to consider their waste practices. What consumers and partners are asking for is balanced by the potential bottom-line benefits of minimizing, or even eliminating, waste streams.

Sharon Darby, Director of Environmental, Safety and Sustainability led the charge at Cascade Engineering, and has overseen the transformation for the last 10 years. “When we started the journey, there was no talk about zero waste. Nobody had even heard about zero waste,” she says. “But we kept plugging away until that became a thing. And it’s like, why not?”

NOBLE POLYMERS

Our current economy is often a linear process of materials to products to waste. The circular economy is a booming business and sustainability philosophy to eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials and regenerate nature. It is a resilient system that is good for business, people and the environment.

Cascade Engineering has been driving its business practices towards the circular economy model. Our Triple Bottom Line focus on environmental sustainability has always shared similarities with this system but now we can apply our focus to a more widespread movement. As more business and industry leaders shift in this direction it will make our attempts even easier.

CLOSED-LOOP MANUFACTURING

The term “closed-loop” manufacturing defines a company that collects its own products from customers that go right back into producing the same types of parts they came from. It’s an innovative solution to challenges like end of life-cycle products, scrap and waste.

Our efforts earned recognition from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) who named Cascade Engineering as its 2021 Design for Recycling Award winner. ISRI President Robin Wiener says a main draw was the company’s deep commitment to a closed-loop system.

“They pull often hard-to-recycle plastic out of residential recycling programs for use in the EcoCart and can use a majority of the cart to make new ones. This demonstrates Cascade Engineering’s dedication to circularity, as well as recycling and sustainability, in product design and manufacturing,” Wiener says.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Having a custom compounder as part of the Cascade Engineering Family of Companies gives us an incredible edge. Noble Polymers continues its effort to supply high quality materials to both the FoC and our customers.

To eliminate waste, a screen changer was added to our extrusion process that allowed for scrap material to be pelletized while removing contaminants that may have been present in material from post-consumer products. Pelletized field scrap materials has the potential to be used in a variety of products that are produced throughout the FoC.

Since 2019 Noble has partnered with The Hemp Plastics Company to create a new line of hemp filled bio-based plastics. Noble has since been developing products within four targeted resin systems: PLA, PE, PP, and ABS. Each of these base polymers is filled with 20-33% coarse hemp powder, which is a byproduct from the extraction process where hemp is used to make products for the health food industry.

Noble always strives to create new and remarkable materials. One example was the recent Regis Thermoplastic Olefin 6304 used in automotive and heavy truck industries for many applications. This material also highlights the synergies across the FoC as this was a project between CKT and Noble.

SUSTAINABILITY

We were highlighted on Forbes.com for our sustainability initiatives. Here’s an excerpt:

Cascade Engineering began exploring zero-waste-to-landfill opportunities before the sustainable concept was a trend. Today, there is an inevitable demand for companies to consider their waste practices. What consumers and partners are asking for is balanced by the potential bottom-line benefits of minimizing, or even eliminating, waste streams.

Sharon Darby, Director of Environmental, Safety and Sustainability led the charge at Cascade Engineering, and has overseen the transformation for the last 10 years. “When we started the journey, there was no talk about zero waste. Nobody had even heard about zero waste,” she says. “But we kept plugging away until that became a thing. And it’s like, why not?”

NOBLE POLYMERS

Our current economy is often a linear process of materials to products to waste. The circular economy is a booming business and sustainability philosophy to eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials and regenerate nature. It is a resilient system that is good for business, people and the environment.

Cascade Engineering has been driving its business practices towards the circular economy model. Our Triple Bottom Line focus on environmental sustainability has always shared similarities with this system but now we can apply our focus to a more widespread movement. As more business and industry leaders shift in this direction it will make our attempts even easier.

CLOSED-LOOP MANUFACTURING

The term “closed-loop” manufacturing defines a company that collects its own products from customers that go right back into producing the same types of parts they came from. It’s an innovative solution to challenges like end of life-cycle products, scrap and waste.

Our efforts earned recognition from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) who named Cascade Engineering as its 2021 Design for Recycling Award winner. ISRI President Robin Wiener says a main draw was the company’s deep commitment to a closed-loop system.

“They pull often hard-to-recycle plastic out of residential recycling programs for use in the EcoCart and can use a majority of the cart to make new ones. This demonstrates Cascade Engineering’s dedication to circularity, as well as recycling and sustainability, in product design and manufacturing,” Wiener says.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Having a custom compounder as part of the Cascade Engineering Family of Companies gives us an incredible edge. Noble Polymers continues its effort to supply high quality materials to both the FoC and our customers.

To eliminate waste, a screen changer was added to our extrusion process that allowed for scrap material to be pelletized while removing contaminants that may have been present in material from post-consumer products. Pelletized field scrap materials has the potential to be used in a variety of products that are produced throughout the FoC.

Since 2019 Noble has partnered with The Hemp Plastics Company to create a new line of hemp filled bio-based plastics. Noble has since been developing products within four targeted resin systems: PLA, PE, PP, and ABS. Each of these base polymers is filled with 20-33% coarse hemp powder, which is a byproduct from the extraction process where hemp is used to make products for the health food industry.

Noble always strives to create new and remarkable materials. One example was the recent Regis Thermoplastic Olefin 6304 used in automotive and heavy truck industries for many applications. This material also highlights the synergies across the FoC as this was a project between CKT and Noble.

SUSTAINABILITY

We were highlighted on Forbes.com for our sustainability initiatives. Here’s an excerpt:

Cascade Engineering began exploring zero-waste-to-landfill opportunities before the sustainable concept was a trend. Today, there is an inevitable demand for companies to consider their waste practices. What consumers and partners are asking for is balanced by the potential bottom-line benefits of minimizing, or even eliminating, waste streams.

Sharon Darby, Director of Environmental, Safety and Sustainability led the charge at Cascade Engineering, and has overseen the transformation for the last 10 years. “When we started the journey, there was no talk about zero waste. Nobody had even heard about zero waste,” she says. “But we kept plugging away until that became a thing. And it’s like, why not?”
With our model, generating positive returns benefits all stakeholders, not only the shareholders. Through our manufacturing work, we seek to make a true difference in the world—and when we profit, we’re more capable of doing that.
GM SUPPLIER QUALITY EXCELLENCE AWARD

Suppliers who receive this recognition have met or exceeded a very stringent set of quality performance criteria and have achieved the cross-functional support of the entire GM organization. This recognition was for our superior quality rating for the GMT 610 Dash mats that we provide to GM. These parts came from the West Plant on the Grand Rapids Campus. We are very proud of all our employees for their hard work and aspiration for top quality.

*This award was received in 2021

CASCADE ENGINEERING EUROPE

A key part of our automotive strategy has been to build off of the outstanding work from our partners in Hungary, Cascade Engineering Europe (CEE), Zsolt Szincsak and his team have built a successful model for the growing fluid connector business with the automotive OEMs throughout Europe.

We are pleased to announce that we are in receipt of our first Letter of Intent from Akwel Automotive for 14 tools for our very first fluid connector award. The parts will be developed and launched at CEE and will transfer to Grand Rapids in late 2021/2022. This establishes CEE as the innovator in this automotive space as the first manufacturer of fluid connectors in the United States. With this award we will continue to move forward in this market space for our customers of these products.

AUTOMOTIVE SOLUTIONS

ELECTRIC VEHICLE MARKETS

Electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing has certainly developed into an exciting and rapidly growing part of today’s automotive industry. Start-up manufacturer Rivian Automotive is dedicated to “exploring the world” with sustainable electric vehicles. Rivian refers to these 100% emission-free vehicles as EAVs – Electric Adventure Vehicles. In a nutshell, Rivian Automotive is turning the EV market upside down and Cascade Engineering Automotive Americas is considered one of only a few long term strategic supply partners with them here in North America.

Cascade Engineering has been awarded contracts to supply engineering services, exterior body panels using in-mold film technology, interior plastic assemblies as well as some very large injection molded and painted assemblies. Cascade is currently working on the Rivian R1T – truck, the Rivian R1S – SUV and the all new Rivian/Amazon electric delivery van.

Working alongside a start-up vehicle manufacturer in the mature automotive industry requires dedication, commitment, patience and a shared vision of the future. Sustainability is core to who we are here at Cascade Engineering. Aligning our manufacturing and engineering expertise with a sustainable vehicle manufacturer like Rivian Automotive looks to be a marriage made in automotive heaven.

Rivian made history by rolling the first electric pickup truck off their line and we are a part of that history. The launch is not without its challenges, and we are incredibly proud of our innovative team helping to make history.
GOLD SUPPLIER AWARD FROM HERMAN MILLER

Each year, Herman Miller recognizes suppliers that have outstanding quality, delivery and overall performance. “We thank you for the focus on putting the customer first and continuing to stay attentive to the daily shop floor management in support of Herman Miller”, Jeff Krass, VP Global Supply Management.

*This award was received in January of 2021.

Cascade Engineering and Herman Miller have a thirty-five year partnership creating new and innovative products in the office furniture market.

“Both companies share similar values and are passionate about having a purpose, treating people with respect and treating the environment respectfully,” said Steve Shamery, Senior Sales Manager.

It takes teamwork from both companies and multiple departments in order to create successful product launches time and time again. Herman Miller is a strategic partner and Cascade Engineering looks forward to continuing our partnership. Congratulations to all employees who supported this work!
EXCEEDING OUR GOALS!

2021 was a great year for Cascade Cart Solutions with the successful launch of the EcoCart and constantly growing more customer relationships. The fiscal year goal for carts produced was set at 1.5 million which was exceeded to an ultimate count of 1,516,551 carts. An incredible accomplishment earned by a hard working and determined team at the Buursma Plant in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

A HISTORY OF IMPACT

After 11 years of a successful partnership with The American Cancer Society (ACS), Cascade Engineering and its employees have helped raise over $760,000 with its Pink Cart Program and subsequent fundraisers like the Real Men Wear Pink Campaign.

"On behalf of the American Cancer Society, and those we serve, I’d like to extend our sincere appreciation to Cascade Engineering and its dedicated employees, for supporting us in 2021."

Natalie VanSteenkiste & Ginger Feldman, American Cancer Society

ENGEL PRESSES

A large investment in 2020 was a new ENGEL duo 4400 ton plastic injection mold machine. It was fully operational in mid July of 2020 and was smoothly integrated into the production schedule. The new machine has allowed for the production of more than 8,000 carts per week.

This addition to the plant was such an improvement that a second ENGEL duo 4400 press was ordered. At the time of this publication the second press is still being installed and tested and will soon be ready for production.

“We’re big on process control and we want to make sure that the carts we make today are the same carts we make a year from today. The reliability and consistency of the ENGEL duo 4400 are by far my favorite features. Key to our partnership with ENGEL is that they help us keep sustainability at the forefront of our business — particularly because their machines can run faster and more efficiently, with the iQ weight control program that eliminates part inconsistencies” says Ron Hoppa, Plant Manager of the Buursma Plant & Noble Polymers.
SUCCESS DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

The arrival of COVID-19 certainly changed the way business was done on a global scale. Suddenly, trade shows we rely on for new leads were virtual or canceled, in-person sales calls were replaced with zoom meetings, and many other challenges arose that proved tricky to navigate. Thankfully, Decade rose to the challenge in 2021.

DIGITAL PRESENCE

Decade launched a new website in 2020 and since then has worked hard to increase online sales and a digital presence through the use of Google Ads and other resources. When COVID came around and shut down our usual trade shows for most of the year, we decided to invest more heavily in our online efforts to gain new lead opportunities and sales. Thanks to that work, Decade’s online sales doubled in 2021. With that experience in our back pocket, we are excited to see what more we can do with our online presence and grow Decade as a whole.

PARTNERING WITH GLK FOODS

In response to the nationwide pandemic, food processing giant GLK was looking for a way to store and process their many brands of products. With their commitment to farm-to-table freshness, Decade’s MACX bins were the perfect solution for this very important task. We provided over 12,000 bins to GLK, which helped them continue their relentless focus on quality, food safety, and continuous improvement in their state of the art processing methods. Remaining flexible in an ever-changing world and investing in our business and people has made sure that Decade remains a leader in the industry.
PACCAR SUPPLIER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ACHIEVER

PACCAR is a global technology leader in the design, manufacture and customer support of premium light, medium and heavy duty trucks under the Kenworth, Peterbilt and DAF nameplates.

PACCAR uses the Supplier Performance Management (SPM) program to evaluate supplier performance in the areas of product development, operations and aftermarket support, as well as alignment with PACCAR’s key business objectives. The SPM program is designed to drive “collaboration and continuous improvement between PACCAR and its suppliers, which leads to performance enhancements and product innovations,” according to the company.

PACCAR has awarded Cascade Engineering with an Achiever Level customer scorecard for the second year in a row. Despite the difficult pandemic year, we have been recognized by our largest customer at a 65 which placed us in the achiever category. Their leadership also recognized our improving trend relative to past due product as we continue to progress towards zero past due in the face of labor shortages.

It was because of all of the hard work of the team that we were able to accept and build on this award. We are incredibly humbled and grateful to the operations and commercial teams for keeping an eye on this important scorecard. This gives us a great opportunity to continue building our relationship with a leader in the heavy truck industry.

“High performance from our key suppliers is instrumental to PACCAR’s success. We appreciate what our suppliers have done in support of PACCAR, and the investments they have made.”

Darrin Silver,
PACCAR’s Senior Vice President