



**Vadnais Heights Economic
Development Corporation**

Presents Workforce Success Stories: *Showcasing Careers in Manufacturing and Skilled Trades*

WORK IS GOOD THERAPY ... HARD WORK LEADS TO SUCCESS

By Nicola Kelley Hyser

Larry Zack, CEO of Fresh Paint Inc. in Vadnais Heights, credits a good mentor for shaping his work ethic, which he believes has led to a successful career. In turn, with the well-being and success of his employees in mind, he has modeled good habits and given helpful advice to them.

Zack says, "Sometimes, my employees are experiencing rough times in their lives, and they find it difficult to come to work, so I encourage them to work their struggles out on the job because work is good therapy. The easiest thing to do is fail ... You've got to go to work everyday and not fail." Zack's mentor was the president of the previous company he worked for, Multi Clean in Shoreview. He began working there shortly after graduating from high school, and within 10 years he was the general manager and continued in

that position until 1996, when he bought Fresh Paint from a friend. He trained in "the painting business" from the ground up and, over time, transformed it from a seasonal, residential business into a leader in commercial and industrial painting, decorating and restoration in the Twin Cities and western Wisconsin.

Of Fresh Paint's early days, Zack says, "Our equipment literally consisted of a few bent ladders and a couple broken sprayers." Today, Fresh Paint employs nearly 30 professionals. Its relatively new offshoot company, Fresh Blast, has about five employees, and specializes in dry ice and dust-free blasting and floor grinding. Neither company uses subcontractors, which Zack is proud of. "We train and promote from within the company."

Another source of pride for Zack is "the fact that we can take on the largest projects the industry offers and do them successfully." Fresh Paint projects include: the Uptown Theater marquee and the KSTP radio tower at the state



**Larry Zack,
CEO of Fresh Paint, Inc.**

fairgrounds; the Calhoun Isle condos, converted from old grain silos; industrial floor coatings for factories; a 30' x 3' stencil across an entire wall at Schwing America; Venetian plastering the double story atrium (about 2,500 square feet) of the 510 Marquette Building; exterior painting of a new design for multiple U-Haul locations; and, the recently completed restoration of the Landmark Center atrium.

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