



Some Assembly Required: The CSI Newsletter

November/December 2021

Welcome to the Seventeenth Edition of *Some Assembly Required!*



Above: On December 21st, Brian Koch (Workforce Development Manager) led a tour of the shops located at NSP. The tour was for employees of Duncan Aviation. Thank you to the shops for welcoming our visitors and showing them what CSI is all about!

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Welcome to the Team!

Andrew Wehrman - Accountant I

Frank James - CSI Canteen Operations Manager @ TSCI





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3 Questions With a CSI Employee - Jeremy Elder - Deputy Director

1. What have been the major highlights for CSI this past year? Much like 2020, 2021 feels like a blur. As I look back, we have made some major progress despite the continued challenges that we've faced. We just completed the first cohort of construction and electrical vocational training with the Home Builder's Institute. We launched a partnership with the Lincoln Manufacturing Council to provide manufacturing training and connect participants to employment opportunities in the community. We continued to build opportunities for collaboration through the National Correctional Industries Association (NCIA), the Coordinated Re-Entry Initiative, presenting to the Rentry Alliance of Nebraska (RAN), participating in conferences, and conducting multiple shop tours with local employers and workforce development stakeholders. We also continued investment in CSI including the purchase of a new laser engraver, replacement of our forklift fleet, new license plate equipment, a new CNC, virtual desktop computer infrastructure, and many other investments that will provide job training opportunities to our workforce. We also continued to work to add additional CSI jobs through the full launch of t-shirt production, adding a new private venture operation, developing additional prototype projects, and a soon to be opened consolidated canteen. Since early spring we have assisted Iowa Prison Industries in the production of extruded signs. Finally, our staff received a well-deserved increase in compensation during special contract negotiations.
2. How has CSI been able to overcome the challenges that 2020 brought? 2021 has been a challenge as the effects of the pandemic have lingered far longer than anyone hoped and brought additional effects on the economy. During the year, we continued to fill in the gaps when areas are affected by quarantines and absences. That part of the pandemic almost seems routine now. An issue that has become exacerbated by the pandemic is staffing within our facilities. Facility staffing shortages had reduced the number of hours we could operate at some institutions. LCC and TSCI were further impacted as they switched to a Monday through Thursday operational schedule. As with all the challenges in 2020 and beyond, we have been able to succeed only through the initiative and perseverance of our staff and workforce. Our staff has made adjustments to schedules, worked extra hours, and staff has traveled from other shops and locations to contribute where they are needed most. That dedication continues to be a bright spot during these last two years. The other major impact during 2021 has been the limited availability and cost increases of just about any item we purchase. To overcome limited supplies, our buyers are collaborating with vendors more closely and working to build back material inventories. We have launched a comprehensive review of our product pricing to stay current with the economic conditions.
3. What message would you like to give the CSI staff for 2022? First and foremost I would say thank you! Our staff makes the difference every day to evaluate the challenges and opportunities in front of them and determine how to make the organization successful. It was wonderful being able to have many of our staff gather together a couple of weeks ago. I look forward to being able to gather together more often in 2022 to showcase the ways you contribute to Keep People Safe within NDCS and how you are Building Opportunities for CSI workers. Here's to a great 2022!

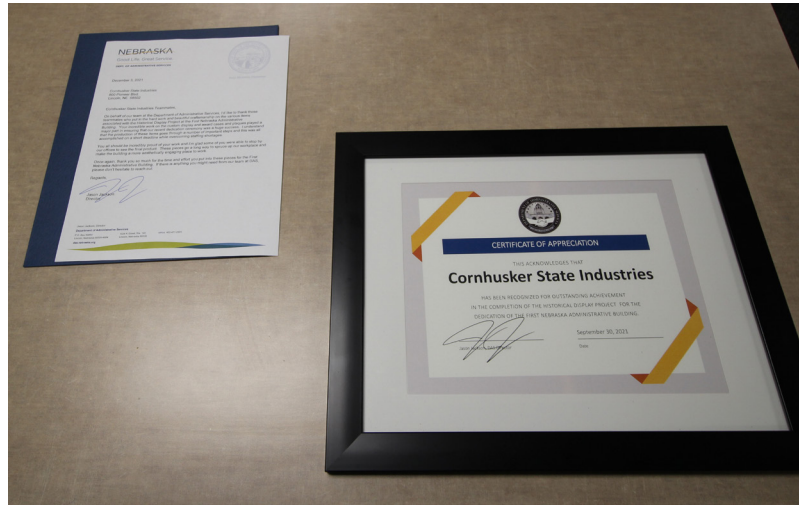


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Special Thanks from DAS Director



On December 3rd, Director of Administrative Services Jason Jackson stopped by the CSI Administration Offices to present the team with a certificate of appreciation for the display cases CSI built for DAS's conference rooms. To read the full letter see the next page. Congratulations again to the staff and shops that helped make this project happen!



Above: Dieter, Burton, Ross, and Hardin are having some fun during break time at Shop 16!

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Service.

DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

December 3, 2021

Cornhusker State Industries
800 Pioneer Blvd.
Lincoln, NE 68502

Cornhusker State Industries Teammates,

On behalf of our team at the Department of Administrative Services, I'd like to thank those teammates who put in the hard work and beautiful craftsmanship on the various items associated with the Historical Display Project at the First Nebraska Administrative Building. Your incredible work on the custom display and award cases and plaques played a major part in ensuring that our recent dedication ceremony was a huge success. I understand that the production of these items goes through a number of important steps and this was all accomplished on a short deadline while overcoming staffing shortages.

You all should be incredibly proud of your work and I'm glad some of you were able to stop by our offices to see the final product. These pieces go a long way to spruce up our workplace and make the building a more aesthetically engaging place to work.

Once again, thank you so much for the time and effort you put into these pieces for the First Nebraska Administrative Building. If there is anything you might need from our team at DAS, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Regards,

Jason Jackson
Director

Jason Jackson, Director

Department of Administrative Services

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2021 CSI Holiday Gathering

On Friday, December 17th, some CSI staff gathered for the first time in a couple of years for annual training, team-building exercises, and a fun game! In the afternoon there was a pot-luck lunch and thieving Santa game. Thank you to all that could participate as well as those who worked in the shops! See some photos from that gathering below.





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Below are more photos from the 2021 CSI Holiday Gathering



Congratulations on Years of Service!

Thomas Clark, TSCI - 10 Years

Randy Weyer, TSCI - 20 Years



Left: Deidre Boyle (Marketing Specialist) completed the First Level Leader Academy course on November 5th. The photo is from the graduation!