



News from the Minnesota/Dakotas Chapter of the **ESOP** Association

Employee Ownership Moves America

We're Coming to The Hill!

The Minnesota/Dakotas Chapter of the ESOP Association will be descending on Washington D.C. for the ESOP Association's Annual Conference on May 10-11.

Our chapter Government Relations Committee members will be working with you and schedulers to set up meetings for our chapter employee owners to meet with their respective legislators. We want you to hear the powerful stories directly from employee owners who are benefiting from their company's Employee Stock Ownership Plan and ask for your support of current proposed legislation. We look forward to seeing you in Washington on May 10-11!

MN/Dakota's Company of the Year - Summers Manufacturing

AN ADVENTURE INTO EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

Summers Manufacturing's ESOP story begins in 2001 when the Summers family decided that an ESOP plan would be a good way to help diversify their substantial investment in the family business. While there were outside offers to consider, in the end, the family decided that the employees were best suited to carry on the business that they had helped build. Summers Manufacturing became 100% employee owned in 2006, seeing over 30% stock growth every year since!



Implementing the leadership vision, the movement towards open book management began. Finance 101 classes educated all employees on basic business fiscal terms with follow-up classes to keep everyone abreast of the company's current financial status. Probably the most significant and visible catalyst that helped begin the shift to an employee ownership culture was when leaders from every department were assembled into a planning committee to develop a Strategic Plan. Every department in the company has input as well as ownership in the plan. A Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Company Values were defined. Everyone is accountable not only to themselves but also to everyone else.

But the absolute most intriguing and exciting part of the Summers Manufacturing story is what is yet to be written. The establishment of an ESOP combined with an engrained ownership culture can provide a foundation that holds infinite possibilities.

MN/Dakota's Employee of the Year - Andrew Freyholz, Douglas Machine

Andrew has been a valued employee at Douglas Machine since 2000, coincidentally the first year Douglas Machine became an ESOP company. During the last two years Andrew has received a Performance Leader rating on his annual performance review. Less than 5% of Douglas employees achieve this type of rating. All Douglas employees are measured against four core competencies. "Spirit of Employee Ownership" is one of the core competencies; Andrew consistently receives a Performance Leader rating for this. Andrew is consistently recognized for his leadership ability, good communication skills, positive attitude, and ability to work on teams. All attributes of a great employee owner.



Andrew has been instrumental in the development of our ESOP Ownership Council, coordinating a legislative visit from Senator Al Franken, participating in the Government Relations Committee of the Minnesota/Dakotas Chapter, and fostering overall engagement of employees at Douglas Machine.