

GPM, INC.

Duluth-based GPM manufactures and distributes the GPM-Eliminator line of reliable, submersible and horizontal slurry pumps to world customers.

From its campus in the Duluth Airpark, where it has been located since the 1980s, the business also distributes for world-class manufacturers that provide solutions for fluid processing, mechanical seals, gearboxes, cooling towers, valves and more. GPM also services equipment at one of its repair centers and in the field. The company serves industries such as mining (open pit and underground), oil and gas, pulp and paper, and power generation companies, among others.

When GPM selected its current location, “We were looking for an industrial setting, and the Airpark just made sense,” said Peter Haines, GPM’s chief executive officer. As the company grew, it went through a demolition of its original office and building of a new facility, which included a manufacturing plant. Haines said the site was not only selected for the location, but for the local “northland aesthetics” the Airpark provides.

“We not only have access to the airport and logistical service and support but also the availability and accessibility of shipping products to North American and global destinations,” Haines said.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2018, the company reached record-setting revenues. Throughout 2018, GPM placed high importance on sharing the depth and breadth of its capabilities.

GPM is on a mission to help management, engineering, manufacturing, operations and service personnel understand that there are ample industry jobs in Duluth, many with GPM. One of the ways it is accomplishing this mission is by hosting industry events. Last October, GPM hosted a Pathways to Prosperity event, welcoming women in manufacturing and a variety of city leaders to its facilities. In addition, GPM hosted an Arrowhead Manufacturers and Fabricators Association meeting in 2018 with more than 60 people in attendance.

“It’s another driver toward workforce development and coordinating educational programs, even down to high school level, to promote manufacturing and to get more visibility into different types of manufacturers in the Arrowhead region,” said Blake Kolquist, GPM’s marketing director.

www.gpmco.com

4432 Venture Ave. | Duluth, MN 55811

- Founded in 1978
- Employs 70 people
- 4.5 acre facility



Courtesy GPM, Inc.

Business is Duluth

BY KELSEY ROSETH

On top of the hill, adjacent to the Duluth International Airport, is a 300-acre section of land that has contributed to the growth of about 40 local businesses. This is the location of the Duluth Airpark, a light industrial and commercial park owned and developed by the Duluth Seaway Port Authority to promote entrepreneurial development.

Phase I wrapped up in 1973, and Phase II opened in 2004 with 18 new lots, more than half of which sold in four years. Today, it is about 80 percent full and only a dozen buildable lots remain. The park is

PRO PRINT

More than 40 years have passed since Pro Print was founded by partners Gary Hanson and Dick Jannetta—and it has grown to become the largest general commercial printer in northern Minnesota. Pro Print moved into its custom-built Airpark facility in 2008, which set the stage for further success by giving Pro Print room to create efficiencies and acquire new technologies.

“Our [Airpark] location gave us a lot more space,” said Pro Print president Creston Dorothy, in comparison to the company’s previous location on Central Entrance. “There’s a lot of free parking, and we have plenty of room to do the manufacturing that we need to do.”

Today, Pro Print works to churn out quality print jobs at a value-based price. It is a one-stop-shop for customers, providing start-to-finish assistance on digital and offset printing, bindery and mailing, and banners and displays. Pro Print proudly owns a UV press, which means the company can print different textures, such as sandpaper and glitter. The company also owns a Scodix Press, which is one of about 50 such machines in the United States, providing a “Pro Touch” process known for printing textures, including Braille, as well as specialty foil treatments.

Following the retirement of its founders in the early 2000s, the business is now owned by Dorothy and has since experienced significant growth.

“[Our customers] don’t have to go out of town, and they can support the local community here with good-paying

soaring at Airpark

surrounded by forested areas and includes several pockets of wetlands that will remain undeveloped.

The companies invested in the Duluth Airpark employ more than 800 people and serve diverse industries, from aerospace machining to construction and from medical systems supply to engineering. The Airpark is home to many longstanding local companies and has played a significant role in their success.

Here is an introduction to some of its long-term tenants. Additional companies will be featured in the spring issue.



Robert Welton

SPEE-DEE DELIVERY

4408 Haines Rd. | Duluth, MN 55811

- Founded in 1978
- Employs 35 people
- 24,000 sq. ft. facility

From its initial Airpark lot (which it selected in the 1980s) to its new, expanded location, Spee-Dee Delivery Service, Inc., has been at the Airpark since it was founded. That is because “We’re having to go up to Grand Rapids and up the North Shore,” said Donald M. Weeres, president and owner of the regional carrier, which today has 35 locations and serves the majority of the Midwest.

“We have better pricing, and, being a small company, we’re easier to work with,” said Weeres, in comparison to competitors such as the United States Postal Service, United Parcel Service and FedEx. “[Customer service] is something we work on all the time.”

Spee-Dee also has custom ship software, helping customers process packages more quickly and track their shipping activity.

In late 2018, Spee-Dee moved to a new lot and now has capability to double its workforce when ready. “We were more efficient the day we moved into it,” Weeres said.

“When our client was looking to expand, we evaluated numerous sites that fit their logistical needs,” said Robert Strack, chief executive officer of Strack Companies, a St. Cloud-based developer who helped Spee-Dee select and expand to the new location. “Their mobility and logistics are pretty important to them in regard to where they are located in any city and in Duluth in particular. With the hill, there’s a lot of reasons you want to be in the Airpark. It just makes it easier for logistical reasons.”

“There are a number of routes that leave this building every day and return every night,” said Strack, noting that an Airpark location makes the route matrix of Spee-Dee more efficient, providing them access to major highways and the airport, if needed.

www.speedeedelivery.com

For details on Airpark parcels available for sale contact Kate Ferguson, director of trade and business development: kferguson@duluthport.com or (218) 727-8525, ext. 103.

3920 Airpark Blvd. | Duluth, MN 55811

- Founded in 1977
- Employs 50 people
- 26,000 sq. ft. facility



CourtesyPro Print

jobs,” Dorothy said. “Our prices are as good, or better, than the Twin Cities. We have all the great technology they have. We are environmentally responsible, and all of those benefits come through when you do a print job with us.”

Pro Print is the only green printer north of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. It is certified by the Printing Industry Midwest Environmental Initiative, which means Pro Print voluntarily offers soy-based inks, a range of recycled/green paper choices, UV printing options and boasts a companywide recycling program. Pro Print has twice been named as one of the 5,000 fastest growing private companies in America by *Inc.* magazine. This year, the company is celebrating continued success as it bought another company based in Superior, Wisconsin, in late 2018. www.proprintduluth.com



Courtesy Spee-Dee Delivery