

Innovation in Southbury

By Joseph Violette
 Director of Public Policy and
 Economic Development
 Waterbury Regional Chamber

Gyre9 is an example of a modern manufacturing firm: a sleek, state-of-the-art facility where employees are solving problems and assembling products using sophisticated computers and machinery. Here, the shop floor is spotless, the products are environmentally conscious, and the culture is confident. Everyday Gyre9 is improving and innovating products for their clients around the world while keeping in mind their place in the local community.

Gyre9 is a contract manufacturing company that, over the years, has manufactured many different products including a light therapy device for treating skin conditions, power drill accessories, a flavored seltzer drink dispensing kiosk, electric vehicle chargers, and many other innovative devices. They also work on prototypes and help clients solve design issues. Since 2006, Gyre9 has assisted companies ranging from venture-backed startups to Fortune 500s to develop breakthrough technology, products, and systems. Although Gyre9 does not manufacture products for themselves, the work they do in the medical, consumer, and industrial sectors keeps them



Gyre9 team members put the finishing touches on an electric vehicle charger.

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Ed Gilchrist, president of Gyre9, used one word to describe the company: fearless. “We are here to solve other companies’ problems,” he said.

JuiceBar, a Norwalk-based company that specializes in electrical vehicle chargers, has had a partnership with Gyre9 for several years. Gilchrist and his team have been responsible for engineering and manufacturing the company’s Gen 3 product line. They were tasked to engineer and add additional design elements to the product. They designed and developed unique features such as a retractable cord storage system, an internal electrical module, and other systems to make the product the best-in-class in the market.

“It is the only charger designed,

engineered, and produced in America,” Gilchrist said. Gyre9 is currently producing hundreds of units for installation all over the country on behalf of JuiceBar and is working on other products that they will soon bring to market.

A constant challenge that Gyre9 faces is filling its workforce needs. Since they are a contract manufacturer, keeping the right size staff to meet the changing demands of their customers is essential. “Growing our systems at the right pace to meet the needs of our growing customer base is a balancing act,” said Gilchrist. Currently, Gyre9 has 35 employees and expects to add about 10 more over the next few months. He anticipates opportunities in several areas of the company; engineers, assemblers, and operations just to name a few. The company uses a variety of methods to recruit such as LinkedIn, Indeed, temp agencies, and the regional



workforce board.

“A career here gives you the opportunity to work with many different technologies. Something new comes along every day. We have a focus on products and projects that have a positive impact on the planet,” Gilchrist said.

Having a positive impact is important to Gyre9 and to Gilchrist personally. He believes as a businessman and member of the community that it is important to actively participate. Gilchrist is a past president of the Southbury Business Association. Recently, Gyre9 became a member of the newly- established Southbury Chamber, an affiliate of the Waterbury Regional Chamber.

“If you want your town or state to be successful you must participate. Being a part of the Southbury Chamber will allow us to connect with other businesspeople. We can share stories and information and be a sounding board for each other,” he said.

Early in his career, Gilchrist was a sponsor for a local robotics team. Initially he was a financial sponsor but later became more hands on with helping the team solve problems. His involvement with the robotics team led to him being asked to teach a shop class. “Each person has experience to share. Good and bad. I want to share my useful tidbits,” he said.

Gilchrist realizes the importance of students being exposed to manufacturing and STEM careers. “There are many issues confronting the planet and people in the technology field will be in the best position to help make a positive impact. Plus, you get to work on really

cool stuff,” he said.

Gilchrist advises young people who may be interested in manufacturing or STEM to “roll up your sleeves” early. “Take things apart to understand how they work. Then take a shot at putting them back together. You will understand a lot just doing simple things like that. Spend a good deal of your reading time digging into how things work in the world, what new technologies are coming along,” he said.

Despite being a veteran in the industry, Gilchrist brings a youthful energy to his team and the problems they take on. Gyre9’s biggest to date was designing and engineering an oxygen concentrator for a client and then setting up their factory and running it for a couple years. “Hiring and training their staff, creating all their process documentation, designing, and fabricating all their fixturing, finding and selecting all their suppliers, creating their quality system. It was a very large project that was handed off 10 years ago and they are still running and successful,” Gilchrist said.

As a community minded businessman, Gilchrist is always evaluating his business and its place in the community. As a multi-capable company, it isn’t in Gyre9’s nature to back down from a client’s problem. He strives to pass on his experiences to the benefit of other businesses and the future of his community. “We are willing to take on hard problems because if you can solve the hard problems you can definitely solve the easy ones,” Gilchrist said.

To learn more about Gyre9, their approach, and portfolio, visit Gyre9.com.



The manufacturing space at Gyre9’s facility in Southbury.

A promotional graphic for Traver IDC. At the top, the logo features the word "Traver" in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by "IDC" in a larger, bold font. Below the logo is the tagline "everything electrical". Underneath that is the text "Family Business Proudly Serving Connecticut Since 1938". Contact information is provided: "151 Homer Street | Waterbury, CT 06704" and "TraverIDC.com | 1.800.TE.MOTOR". A website link for career opportunities is also included: "For career opportunities, visit traveridc.com/employment". The bottom half of the graphic is a grid of six images, each with a text label below it: "Where Great Careers Are Made" (top left), "motor repair" (top middle), "contracting" (top right), "supply" (bottom left), "engineering" (bottom middle), and "energy conservation" (bottom right). The grid is framed by a thick orange border.