

Reflections of Jacob Anthony Giardina

I came from a truck farming background and knew that I wanted to be associated with machinery. Because of this agricultural background and the desire to be involved with machinery, I settled on agricultural engineering. However, at the time I attended LSU, there were only two of us enrolled in the agricultural engineering curriculum at the same level. Since it was not feasible to teach the course solely for two students, LSU allowed us to take the equivalent courses in mechanical and civil engineering. In the end, I honestly feel I finished with an engineering degree that was superior to finishing in either one of these three separately.

I always wanted to travel but never had the opportunity or the resources. Consequently, I wanted to pursue a career that would give me this opportunity. I did so and never realized that for the next 18 years traveling would consume about six months of every year, and in early days before marriage, many more. It was a great time to travel because in the Third World

countries the political situation was stable at this time and travel was not too difficult.

As I look back today, the start-up of a company in 1965 of which I was a stockholder, turned out to be a source of tremendous personal gratification. In the early days, we would go out, sell the equipment, come back and design it, build it, ship it, and then erect it on the customer's site and teach them how to operate it. Doing business this way gave you a tremendous amount of personal satisfaction when the job was done correctly and one hell of an incentive to get it corrected if it wasn't right. This way, each piece of machinery became an extension of yourself.

In later years, as the company grew and employees increased, the extension of their work continued to be a direct reflection on how well I was doing as a manager.

The amount of people that I need to thank for my many good fortunes in life are so numerous it is almost impossible to mention. I would like to thank the many people that are close

to me in the company today as well as some of my overseas associates who helped so much through the years; especially the ones that had faith in us in the beginning of the company. I would like to particularly mention Professor William Carter who gave me a great deal of guidance while at LSU. Unfortunately, Professor Carter passed away about a year ago.

I would like to thank my wife, Maxine, and my children for putting up with my being away from home while pursuing business.

And of course, I want to thank LSU for this award; especially Professors Mansul Mayeau, William Brown, Dennis Stipe, Lalit Verma, Billy Cochran and Harry Braud who had the confidence in me to present my name for this nomination.