A manufacturing company that was launched nearly 45 years ago to provide jobs for people with disabilities in and around Greater Hazleton is growing with the assistance of one of its largest clients and CAN DO, Inc.

CTC Manufacturing has recently expanded into two CAN DO-owned facilities with more than 33,000 square feet of space within the Valmont Industrial Park that will be used to complete work for Henkel, formerly Dial Corporation. Henkel has a manufacturing facility in Valmont.

Henkel uses CTC’s employees to put sleeves on Dial soaps that are shipped all over the country. CTC’s move to Valmont will allow the company to do even more work for Henkel, such as displaying, shrink wrapping and other aspects of packaging. “Having CTC employees in Valmont will allow Henkel to operate faster and increase its capacity and sales. Everybody wins,” said CTC CEO Steve Peterson.

Peterson said the increased work with the expansion into Valmont will help CTC in its objective of becoming 100 percent self-sustaining. The company is a non-profit organization. “Our location in Valmont makes us more competitive. Our new facilities will allow us to become a co-packer for Henkel. This means product will be able to be shipped directly from us,” Peterson said.

The new workspaces in the Valmont facilities will help CTC’s own growth as well, since the type of work will be more team-oriented, which helps increase productivity. This increase in production may also help the company to buy new equipment and provide new job opportunities.

Last year, the company packaged 10 million bottles of soap for Henkel. In 2015, they are projecting to double that amount.

Peterson said CTC’s relationship with CAN DO has been “very positive.” He said his company really wanted space in Valmont Industrial Park and CAN DO was very helpful in finding just the right location for their expansion. “CAN DO’s staff was very supportive in getting the space ready,” Peterson said.

With the new location, Peterson said the company has room to grow. “The benefit will be putting people to work,” Peterson said. “Our relationship with CAN DO is important because it gives us more flexibility in what we can commit to in the future.”

CTC Manufacturing, Inc., was launched in 1970 by a group of concerned parents who wanted to make sure there would be job opportunities for their disabled children when they grow up.

(Continued on page 2)
Benefits of Humboldt Industrial Park prompted real estate consultant to recommend site to company

It's only been a year since Florida-based Tech Packaging, Inc. launched a contract packaging operation in Humboldt Industrial Park, Hazle Township, and the company is already nearing 100 percent capacity, said Bob Janes, the company's founder and president.

Tech Packaging was looking for the correct geography when selecting a site for its new facility. They wanted a site that was within a 50-mile radius from their existing facility in Berwick, PA. With this in mind, Tech Packaging's national real estate consultant, Cresa, searched different areas of Pennsylvania and New York, ultimately recommending Humboldt Industrial Park.

Matthew Marshall, senior vice president of Cresa's Philadelphia office, said Humboldt Industrial Park was chosen for several reasons. Taking into consideration all the sites that were an option, Cresa and Tech Packaging were most specifically looking for a site that would meet Tech Packaging's building specifications, employment demands and delivery date.

Tech Packaging chose a site developed by Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services and had them construct a 22,000 square feet building. Janes said the site has room to expand the building up to 382,000 square feet. This fact made the location more desirable. The site is also approved for Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) tax credits. It maintains its KOZ status until 2017, Marshall said the KOZ status played a key role in their decision to choose Humboldt Industrial Park. CAN DO was very helpful in serving as a liaison between the Governor’s Action Team, Cresa and Tech Packaging, Marshall said.

Speaking about working with CAN DO on the project, Marshall said, “CAN DO is one of the most professional and organized economic development organizations in the United States. They are very thorough.” Marshall is optimistic about the outlook of the region. He said, “Northeastern Pennsylvania, especially Luzerne County, has become very well positioned to capture a lot of manufacturing and distribution related projects and jobs.”

CAN DO assists Bimbo Bakeries through land purchase

CAN DO is continually looking to assist the food processing industries located in Greater Hazleton in any way possible. Recently, CAN DO assisted in a less traditional way when an opportunity arose for the organization to help a Greater Hazleton food processing company maintain its trailer parking location, which is a vital component of their business.

Bimbo Bakeries, which manufactures and distributes freshly made bread products from its Valmont Industrial Park facility, had been leasing additional land from a private developer, but wanted long-term assurance that the property would remain available for its trailer parking.

To assist Bimbo Bakeries, CAN DO purchased the 11-acre tract from the private owner and, in turn, leased the land directly to Bimbo, further stabilizing their operations.

CAN DO is always working to attract and retain food processing companies in the area. Greater Hazleton has benefited from the increase in food processing companies and the companies have benefited from support, not only from CAN DO, but also from all other economic development partners which provide the infrastructure for a business to succeed.

The centralized location of Greater Hazleton continues to be a draw as well. “Our location here is ideal for our industry, especially considering the interstate highway system and the ease of reaching our customer base in high-population areas. We can distribute our products quickly to Philadelphia, New York, New Jersey and other large areas, an important factor because we make fresh products,” Bimbo plant manager Dave Cole said.

Transportation isn’t the only thing keeping Bimbo Bakeries in Greater Hazleton. “The people in this area have a great work ethic. In particular, the people who work for us are very conscientious and care about what they do, which is critical in an operation that makes food,” Cole said.

CAN DO increases its leasing portfolio

Keeping in line with its mission and the strategic goal of attracting and retaining jobs in Greater Hazleton, CAN DO, Inc. recently purchased a 25,000-square-foot building in Humboldt Industrial Park West from a private corporation. The ownership was leasing it to a food processing-related company and decided they wanted to sell the building.

Knowing the tenant wanted to remain in the property for the remaining term of the lease, and with the hope of retaining the company long term, CAN DO stepped in and purchased the facility to ensure the tenant would be able to continue its operations.

The tenant, Tosca, which moved into the leased building in 2002, was originally founded in 1960 to service reusable containers for cheese producers. Today, with more than five decades of expertise, Tosca collaborates with growers, suppliers and retailers to deliver customized reusable packaging and supply chain solutions across North America.

Tosca serves a diverse range of markets in the food processing industry, including produce, protein, poultry, dairy and beer. The company chose Greater Hazleton in part because of its access to major highways.

“Transportation was a major concern and the highway access here is ideal for business,” said Jeff Bishop, regional operations manager for Tosca. The company ships product as far south as Texas and as far north as Canada.

Equilibrium (Continued from page 1)

Greater Hazleton’s location has many advantages to potential buyers, Morris said, citing the quality of labor, affordable operating costs and a comprehensive interstate system as three major positive factors.

“The cost to get into and operate an industrial building in Greater Hazleton is advantageous for companies looking to locate here,” he said.

“Furthermore, this area has excellent access to interstates, availability of developable ground and the KOZ tax incentives. There has been tremendous growth in Greater Hazleton and we are happy to be a part of that growth,” he said.

Morris said CAN DO is a valuable partner in economic development. “CAN DO has been great throughout our partnership. They have done everything they said they would do.” Equilibrium Equity is based in Blue Bell, PA. They are a private equity investment company that constructs and renovates industrial properties. The company focuses its reach on Northeastern Pennsylvania, Central Pennsylvania and the Southern Tier of New York.
In business, there are secrets. One of them is where to locate. We’ve interviewed leaders of the most successful food processing facilities in our industrial parks and told their stories in one convenient place... our new blog, www.wecandofood.com.