

Ladies first

OKLAHOMA CITY COMPANY THAT PROVIDES STAFFING SOLUTIONS TO MEET CLIENTS' ACCOUNTING, FINANCIAL NEEDS MAKES HISTORICAL TRANSITION

BY MALLERY NAGLE

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Dec. 1 marked a new phase in Accel Financial Staffing's history. Company owner and co-founder Meg Salyer purchased John Favell's interest in the firm, her longtime partner, making it a woman-owned business.

"It had always been managed and run by women," she said. "It's significant that it is now a woman-owned business and can be certified as such."

This status allows the company to qualify for a number of state and federal initiatives and major corporate mandates, which Salyer hopes will help her growing company flourish even further.

Accel provides staffing solutions to meet clients' accounting and financial needs, including traditional temporary personnel, temp-to-hire arrangements and direct placement services.

In early 1995, Salyer and husband Chris had just sold a business, which led her on a search for new opportunities. Tulsa friend Favell, who had experience in the staffing and accounting arenas, was seeking additional business ventures as well.

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MEG SALYER

"It seemed like a perfect fit," she said.

Favell ran the Tulsa office, and the Oklahoma City branch was set to open May 1, 1995, in the Magnolia Petroleum Building at 7th Street and Broadway Avenue downtown.

Those plans were put on hold due to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing. The inauspicious launch date, however, did not keep the company down long. Accel was able to open in mid-July that year.

Today the company has 10 employees and more than 100 clients.

"We serve clients of all shapes and sizes," she said. "We have single proprietors all the way up to the city's major employers."

Accel no longer owns the Tulsa office. Salyer said Favell had been in the business for more than 30 years and now is exploring different opportunities.

Salyer attributes her company's success to the knowledge and experience of her employees.

"It's our greatest competitive advantage," she said.

She noted she has been working with sales manager Diana Wall for 20 years and with staffing consultant Carla Driskill for 10 years, and they have been able to forge "deep and long-term relationships" in the community.

What makes Accel different, Salyer says, is all of the staff consultants are professional accountants and three are CPAs.

And although she declined to discuss company finances, Salyer called 2005 "an outstanding year."

"It was a record year," she said. And, she says, she has the city to thank. "Clearly, Oklahoma City is on a roll. This is an exciting and dynamic place in its history."

She says she has seen corporations begin to hire and use temporary help.

"Companies have been running lean in recent years," she said. "They have realized that they can't just keep dividing duties among remaining staff. Companies are growing." She noted energy companies and medical services are among the fastest-growing segments.

For the moment, Salyer is working on getting her new business development "under the belt."

Looking forward, she said there is a possibility of growing organically and opening other offices. She also said with all the "fantastic talent" the company possesses, there may be an opportunity for franchises.

"The next step is to focus on the kinds of opportunities available (to woman-owned businesses) that weren't there before," she said. "It will add to the business mix in a big way." ♦



From left: Rene'e Kissler, Debbie Gardner, Meg Salyer, Diana Wall, Carla Driskill. PHOTO/SHANNON CORNMAN

GROWTH STRATEGIES