



TRSA Will Benefit from the Diverse Skills of New Board Members

Three new directors include a textile VP, a national-company CEO and the head of a regional independent

By Jack Morgan

At TRSA's recent 111th Annual Conference, members elected three new directors who will help oversee the association. The TRSA Annual Business Meeting on Sept. 26, 2024, in Colorado Springs, CO, included the election of Rich Kramer, president/CEO of City Uniforms & Linen; Ed Orzetti, CEO of ImageFIRST; and Anwer Shakoor, vice president of Unitex International Inc. Brief profiles follow:



Rich Kramer
City Uniforms
& Linen
Findlay, OH

Rich Kramer is a third-generation president/COO of

City Uniforms & Linen. The company operates a mixed plant focused on healthcare, industrial uniforms and food and beverage (F&B) textiles. City Uniforms has experienced robust growth in recent years and is currently servicing customers in Indiana and Michigan, as well as Ohio. Its success reflects City's commitment to proactive service. One

example is an innovative partnership with an Italian supplier to provide scrub vending machines that are designed to prevent pilfering with the aid of RFID tags in garments (see pg. 24, November/December 2024 *Textile Services*). As for his focus on board leadership, Kramer says he looks forward to contributing ideas, as well as gaining insights from fellow board members. "TRSA is the industry leader in creating a comprehensive platform for leaders to have a real impact," he says. "My goal is to contribute to the movement already happening with TRSA and bring some fresh perspectives on changes being made with the industry."

Kramer, an 18-year industry veteran, recommends active participation in all TRSA leadership programs, from the board to any of a dozen committees and other volunteer opportunities. These activities offer a great way for managers at all levels to boost their companies' growth, while at the same time advancing their own career goals. "I would recommend for my industry colleagues

to get involved in TRSA because it provides great opportunities to build relationships with the leaders of our industry and learn about how the industry is evolving," he says. "It has an impact on the all of our businesses, our customers and our vendors."



Ed Orzetti
ImageFIRST
King of Prussia,
PA

While a relative newcomer to the linen, uniform

and facility services industry, Ed Orzetti has an extensive background in manufacturing. A graduate of West Point, Orzetti began his career as a helicopter pilot for the U.S. Army. Before joining ImageFIRST in 2023, Orzetti served as an operating partner with Calera Capital. In that post, he provided strategic leadership to the firm's portfolio of companies. In 2018, Orzetti played a significant role in Calera's acquisition of ImageFIRST. Since then, he has leveraged his executive expertise to guide its growth. Prior to Calera, he served as CEO of Transtar and Keystone Automotive Operations. He also held senior executive posts at General Electric, Textron and VWR International. As CEO of ImageFIRST, Orzetti is dedicated to making a positive impact on the company's associates, community, customers and their patients. Under his guidance, ImageFIRST continues to expand its presence in healthcare linen supply by delivering high-quality solutions that enhance patient care and satisfaction.

Orzetti looks forward to learning from and connecting with industry leaders as a member of TRSA's board. "I appreciate the chance to bring an outside, manufacturing perspective to the board," he says, noting that many ImageFIRST colleagues encouraged him to serve on the board because it could benefit both the company and the

industry. Orzetti concurs, noting that, "I believe in the power of trade associations to drive industry progress." He adds that "I find participation in trade associations is tremendously valuable in helping the overall visibility, perception and performance of the industry as a whole. That then creates wonderful opportunities for the individual members."

Orzetti encourages **TRSA** members at all levels of their companies to take advantage of the educational and leadership opportunities that the association offers. He recognizes that involvement strengthens the industry, while at the same time providing members with valuable opportunities for growth.



Anwer Shakoor
Unitex
International
Inc.
Duluth, GA

Anwer Shakoor was pursuing a degree in hospitality management in the late 1980s, when he joined with his brother and father to establish Unitex International in a "humble" 1,000-square-foot (92-square-meter) warehouse, in January 1990. Initially, they focused on selling hospitality linens to hotels and motels located near highway exits. Their business grew rapidly, and in a few years, Unitex had received approval to sell to Wyndham and Choice Hotels. By 1998, Unitex began supplying textiles and microfiber products to major retailers. That same year, the company began supplying textiles to linen, uniform and facility services companies. Since then, Unitex has established a strong presence in the industrial laundry sector.

In 2002, Shakoor moved to Karachi, Pakistan, to manage the company's textile plant there. He returned to the U.S. six years later to focus on expanding the company's trade with commercial laundries, particularly

industrial, healthcare and hospital-ity textile providers. Today, Shakoor oversees four Unitex distribution centers located across the continental U.S. Unitex offers a wide range of products, including textiles, trash can liners and hangers. He also is overseeing the company's efforts to develop eco-friendly alternatives to various common textile products.

Shakoor says he looks forward to serving as a supplier partner representative on the board because, "I am passionate about building lasting partnerships with our customers, regardless of the size of their business." He adds that, "I believe that transparent communication is the foundation of success, especially in today's post-COVID environment.

One area of expertise that Shakoor brings to the board is supply-chain management. "Ocean freight delays

require proactive management," he says, noting that Unitex maintains 25% more stock than projected demand requires as a backup in case of supply-chain disruptions.

TRSA provides an outstanding forum for managers at both supplier companies and laundries to discuss strategic developments related to issues, ranging from staff recruitment/retention to automation and more. "**TRSA** members—both suppliers and operators—can learn much from each other by participating in programs like the Healthcare Conference, as well as committees that deal with issues ranging from hospitality laundering to environmental compliance and more." **TS**



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