

20+ Questions with NADCA's 30+ Years Club

Spotlight on: Cascade Die Casting Group, Inc.



Location: Headquarters is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with die casting plants in Grand Rapids; High Point, North Carolina; Sparta, Michigan

Year established: 1978 – nearly 50 years ago

Number of employees: 400

Alloys: Aluminum - 380, 360, 413. Zinc Z3, ZA8

Die Casting Machines: 35

Products/services: Complex custom aluminum and zinc die castings, CNC machining, assembly, vibratory debur, shot blasting and finishing

Markets Served: automotive, appliance, consumer electronics, medical, power storage, heavy truck and off-road sport industries

Company website: www.cascade-cdc.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/cascade-die-casting-group-inc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CDCG7441

Year your company became a NADCA member?

1989

Was it a member of American Die Casting Institute (ADCI) or Society of Die Casting Engineers (SDCE)?

Both

Why are you a member of NADCA? What value does it bring to your organization?

Through participation on committees such as Research & Development, Cascade stays informed about the latest technical advancements and process innovations shaping the future of die casting. NADCA also plays a critical role for Cascade in government affairs, advocating on behalf of the industry and providing timely updates on legislation and regulatory developments in Washington, D.C., that may impact operations. Cascade benefits from access to a broad network of peers across the industry, creating opportunities to benchmark progress, share best practices, and collaborate on common challenges. In addition, NADCA's conferences and events offer outstanding opportunities for us in continued education, business insight, and meaningful networking that help drive long-term success.

What other (if any) associations is your company a member of?

Right Place of West Michigan, Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturers Council of West Michigan, The Employers Association, National Association for Business Resources.



Recipient of "The Best and Brightest Companies to Work For" –

- West Michigan Region - 2022, 2023 and 2024 and 2025
- Charlotte, North Carolina Region - 2023 and 2024 and 2025
- National - 2023 and 2024 and 2025

Inside the Membership with...



Pat Greene, CEO

How long have you been involved in the die casting industry?

Since 1992

What is your favorite part your company has ever cast, and why?

We produced a removable Ford F150 pickup tie down cleat using zinc Zamak 3. After production started Ford determined that the tie down cleat needed to be locked with a lock and key into the pickup truck bed as it could also be removed from the pickup and used in a street fight as a brass knuckle.



What is the most niche market part your company has ever developed?

Aluminum (and zinc) mirror bases with difficult features, thin walls, tight tolerances and high volume requiring multiple robots in the die cast cell.

What market(s) have served your company the most consistently over the years?

Automotive and Appliances. Automotive is our fastest growing market, and we have served that market since the company started nearly 50 years ago. Through the years we have helped customers convert automotive parts from zinc to aluminum for light weighting. In appliances, zinc plays a key role as it is better for decorative finishes and plating, as well as castability.

What was the most challenging part your company has ever had to produce and how did you navigate the challenge?

Convertible top header bow. We needed to engineer the impact of aluminum shrinkage to get a part that consistently meets customer specifications and closely monitor quench tank temperature to meet straightness characteristics. The part has Class A surface finish requirements, tight porosity specifications, textured powder coat paint and is over 45 inches long.

Another challenging part was converting engine supports from a squeeze casting produced off-shore to a high pressure die casting. In this project we performed over 120 MagmaSoft simulations to eliminate porosity and improve efficiency.

Are you or other employees at your company involved in NADCA committees? If so, which ones, and why have you invested time in that?

- Government Affairs committee – allows us to understand what is going on in Washington, DC and how it impacts our industry. We participate in the annual “Fly In” where we meet with our congressmen and promote die casting and manufacturing.
- R&D committee – We stay current on technical developments in the industry and are able to help drive technical improvements through our input.
- Die Materials committee – Tooling is key to our success, and the materials and coatings used in tooling has seen significant advancement through the last several years. We are able to participate in discussions impacting this important area of our business.
- Finance committee – Our involvement allows us to participate in determining how we invest in the future of die casting for the benefit of all NADCA members.
- Board of Governors – allows us to understand and influence the direction of the industry, while working beside our peers to improve the future of die casting.

Have you or individuals at your company ever used NADCA education? What types if so?

We host the NADCA Chapter 3 education classes at our Great Lakes facility in Sparta, Michigan throughout the year and send participants to attend these classes.

Has your company been involved with any NADCA R&D projects, or implemented any research results?

Yes, several. Jeremy DeHoff, our Corporate Tooling Manager, is currently working on projects involving Failure Analysis of Additive Manufacturing Inserts as well as the Surface Engineering Task Force.

What NADCA product/service has provided the highest value for your company?

Benchmarking and plant assessments – these have allowed us to measure ourselves against our peers. We use this feedback to drive continuous improvements for areas needing advancement and recognize our people for those areas where we excel.

What changes or advancements in the industry have you been the most surprised by?

The aggressive pursuit of U.S. customer business by the Chinese since Covid has intensified competitive pressures on U.S. die casters. While tariffs offer short-term relief, the long-term solution lies in pro-manufacturing government policies that create a fair, level playing field for U.S. manufacturers. Die casting is a high-tech, engineering-driven industry. With our skilled trades, engineering innovation, and commitment to quality, we believe the U.S. manufacturing sector has a bright future — one that offers fulfilling and sustainable careers for American workers.

What does the future look like in your markets?

Die castings will continue to get more difficult, requiring us to continuously improve every day. Automotive use of aluminum castings is expected to grow, specifically in the machine tonnages we serve. We are pursuing new markets for aluminum castings to utilize our technical expertise. Zinc has great advantages when the many benefits of zinc offset the higher weight characteristics.

How have you been worldly competitive?

We stay competitive on a global scale through a combination of advanced technology, innovative engineering, and an exceptional team. First, we've invested heavily in **automation**—every one of our die cast cells and many of our machining cells are equipped with multiple robots to ensure consistent quality and efficiency. Second, our **engineering team leverages cutting-edge tools**, including flow simulation and precision multi cavity tool design, to optimize productivity and reduce cycle times. Most

importantly, we have an **outstanding team of employees** who live our Cascade values every day. They're hardworking, accountable, passionate, safety-focused, and true team players. With their involvement we have developed a strong **culture** that is key to our success. It's this combination of technology, innovation, people and culture that drives our global competitiveness.

NADCA is grateful for the support of all its members from students to 30+ year Corporate Members! NADCA Corporate Members are listed in nearly every issue of DCE magazine and online in the corporate member directory. For more information on Corporate Membership visit www.diecasting.org/membership or contact membership@diecasting.org.