



Family, friends and employees celebrate the ground-breaking recently for Aristo-Cast's new advanced technology center in Almont.

Almont's Aristo Cast offering cutting-edge products, service

Local business earns praise of trade mags for casting process

By Catherine Minolli

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Almont - An ancient process is propelling growth and notoriety for a local company.

Aristo Cast, located on Research Drive in the industrial park, just broke ground on a 13,000-square-foot advanced technology center. The new building will supplement the company's existing 26,000-square-foot facility, where 30 employees churn out state-of-the-art investment castings.

Although the process - called lost-wax - can be traced back to 4000 B.C., Larry Blum, Aristo Cast's chief engineer, said it's been developed to allow designers and engineers to transform an idea into a prototype in short order. "We have the capability of giving the customer the material for form, fit and function prior to finalizing the design and investing in expensive dies," he said.

By blending the old with the new, Blum said, the company has carved out a niche market of specialized customers, particularly since they're one of just a handful of investment casting companies making magnesium prototypes. That's important, Blum says, because magnesium is strong, lightweight metal. He predicts it will become more widely used in the manufacture of just about everything from automobiles to airplanes.

"Manufacturers are under constant pressure to improve efficiency and economy," Blum said. "For each pound of weight you reduce in an automobile, you could go further on less fuel. It's the same for each ounce on an airplane."

The company's work in magnesium castings recently garnered the attention of InCast and Engineered Cast Solutions, trade magazines that highlight innovations in the field.

Aristo Cast produced an award-winning casting of a telescopic trailer tow mirror mount for a pickup truck. The prototype, Blum said, allowed the designer to test the material, its form, fit and function prior to finalizing the design. "You could almost say we provide a service more than a product," he explained. "The customers can actually test their design before investing in the tooling for expensive, die cast molds."

Aristo Cast relocated from Romeo to Almont in 1999. Blum said the company is pleased with its location, and with the community. "We're a family oriented business with many local employees," he said. "Almont's been a great location for us, and we're excited about expanding here."