



## Manufacturing Times

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### Dan Cunningham: Life-Long Learner

Just as a fish cannot stop swimming, Dan Cunningham, CEO of Long-Stanton, cannot stop learning. The old Eagle Scout is the true definition of a life-long learner.

Less than 30 days ago, Dan, who has an Electrical Engineering degree from Ohio Northern University, completed a 3 year OPM (Owners, Presidents, Managers) program at Harvard Business School, and served a year-long fellowship at Harvard, received his Masters in Public Administration (MPA) degree, again, from Harvard Kennedy School.

Almost 20 years ago, Dan enrolled in the Harvard OPM three year program which is designed for owners and presidents of companies. "It was a Eureka moment when I discovered that this program was offered to people like me who worked and had a family." Dan recalled. "That education helped me reinvent the company during one of the worst recessions manufacturing has ever faced."

Classes were held in January of each year with assignments given to groups to work on until the following January. One must remember there was essentially no viable internet, online courses or dependable email. The other members of his study group were from all over the world. They had to work with each other on the phone, by fax and snail mail or UPS/FedEx. Many of the successes of today's Long-Stanton can be tied directly to that education he received and the people he met.

In late 2012, Dan was named a 2013 Advanced Leadership Fellow at Harvard for the calendar year. He worked with the U.S. Competitiveness Project at the Harvard Business School. He also attended other classes at Harvard Business School, Harvard Law School, and Harvard Kennedy School during this year. At the same time, Dan's wife, Dr. Margaret G. Cunningham, herself a life-long learner and faculty member of the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship at Xavier University, attended classes at the Harvard Business School focusing on Supply Chain Management.



Left to right: Jessamyn Myers, Grady Daniel Nichols, Emily Nichols, Dan Cunningham, Marge Cunningham, and Marvin Cunningham



Grady is more impressed with his grandfather's hat, than he is in the ceremony

The MPA degree followed a different timeline. This time he stayed for one full year, summer 2015-summer 2016, by taking classes at both the Harvard Kennedy School and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). This also provided him the opportunity to attend some unrelated classes that would strengthen his background as he begins his next venture of returning Ohio to its leading position in the global manufacturing marketplace. "Our management team has grown to the point that I was not needed for the day to day operations. My son, Marvin Cunningham, is president, Tom Kachovec is our COO/VP, Tim Hershey is the Sr. VP/CFO and Michael Gallagher is our Marketing/Sales director." Dan added, "They are all very talented and experienced. It made sense to get out of the way and let them grow the business. My future contributions will be sharing what I learn from some of the finest business minds in the world."

Any more school in the near future? "No. I'm going to take a short break and work on some things to make Ohio and the Midwest prosper and be better places to do business."

Stay tuned.

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