

## **Macomb company recognized as one of Michigan's "50 Companies to Watch"**

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K & F Electronics, a Fraser manufacturer of printed circuit boards, was recently named to the prestigious list of "50 Companies to Watch." This unique awards program, created and managed by the Edward Lowe Foundation, recognizes high-performing, second-stage companies throughout the state. Each is selected for their performance in the marketplace, innovative products, unique processes or philanthropic actions.

K & F Electronics was founded in 1972. It manufactures printed circuit boards – a critical component of any powered device. K & F excels at producing boards to meet the exacting specifications of clients and is an industry leader in prototype and scheduled production. They can manufacturer as few as one circuit board and as many as tens of thousands.

The company was recognized in 1997 as one of the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center's "Best Small Businesses of the Year" and the company was on the fast track to mega growth. Led by Richard Kincaid, President and second-generation owner, K & F began acquiring customers and equipment of its former competitors. However, changes in market demand following the terrorist attacks in the United States had a negative impact on business. According to Rick, "After the fall of the Twin Towers, our orders plummeted. I thought we were going to have to close our doors."

Fortunately for K & F, Kincaid was able to secure a Great Lakes Trade Adjustment Assistance grant that helped to put the company back on level ground. The funding enabled the company to become more competitive, acquire ISO 9001-2000 certification and to develop a global marketing strategy. The development of a Web site, [www.circuitboards.com](http://www.circuitboards.com) increased the company's exposure of its products and capabilities.

Through the years, Kincaid has worked closely with the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development and its Small Business & Technology Development Center. The department was able to offer assistance in refining his business plan. Don Morandini, Director of Macomb's SBTDC offers, "K & F Electronics demonstrates how a company can diversify their markets and, in doing so, improve their bottom line."

A member of Automation Alley, Kincaid deeply values the networking opportunities that membership affords. Says Kincaid, "Every time I attend a meeting, I make a new connection that leads to work." As the company continues to mature, Kincaid is also proud to bring son Sean, 21, in to the fold. "He is currently attending a special business program offered jointly by Walsh Business School and Macomb Community College."

Kincaid has also co-chaired the Business Development Committee of Focus Macomb, volunteered for business panels as part of Leadership Macomb, Automation Alley and the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development.

According to the Lowe Foundation, “This awards program is not about the "top 50" or "best" companies — the 50 companies selected each year demonstrate the diversity that makes up Michigan's economic landscape. Each is recognized for the astounding impact they have had on the state's economy through the generation of thousands of jobs and investment of millions of dollars.”

K & F Electronics will be honored on April 24 in Lansing at the “Michigan Celebrates Small Business” awards ceremony hosted by the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, Edward Lowe Foundation, U.S. Small Business Administration, Small Business Association of Michigan and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.