

# Rosie the Riveter's spirit lives on

LI woman is 4th generation leader of plating shop

## SMALL BUSINESS Q&A

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Special to Newsday

Nassau Chromium Plating has been a family-owned business for 95 years and Kaycee Martimucci, the great-granddaughter of founder Frank Miltner, is the fourth generation to lead it.

When Miltner opened the plating shop in Mineola, his wife, son and daughter helped by wiring parts at the kitchen table at night. According to Martimucci, Miltner eventually sent his daughter Shirley to work at Grumman "to get some business experience under her belt."

In 1945, he gave her his business along with a solid customer base and \$3,000 in the company account. Shirley, by then married to Dave Waring, was just 22.

"When my grandmother got the business it was very difficult because at that time you really couldn't have a woman in power in that position, especially in defense and aerospace work. A lot of men just hung up the phone on her," said Martimucci. "She got around it by saying that my grandfather owned a portion of the business. He worked with her, but she ran it. She was a pillar in this sector."

Her daughter Danya Martimucci worked there until health issues interfered, along with her husband, Pat Martimucci, who has been at the company since 1984. Waring continued to be involved until shortly before she died at age 96 in 2020. She left the company to her granddaughter.

Kaycee Martimucci began working with her grandmother when she was 11. But she didn't plan to take over. In fact, she majored in criminal justice and sociology in college. Waring asked her to give the company a chance one year after graduation to see if she'd change her mind — and she's been continuing the family tradition ever since. Her co-workers include her father and her husband,



Kaycee Martimucci, president of Nassau Chromium Plating, at her Mineola facility.

## AT A GLANCE

**Nassau Chromium Plating, Mineola**

**What it does:** Provides finishing services (anodizing, electroplating, powder coating and painting) for all industries including aerospace, military, automotive restoration, high-end architectural and ornamental metals.

**Leadership:** President Kaycee Martimucci  
**Annual Sales:** \$3-5 million  
**Employees:** 30  
**Founded:** 1929

Mark Mack.

"I grew up in this business," said Martimucci, who is 39. "This place is like a second home for all of us."

### Who are your customers?

We have over 1,000 customers, some who have been with us for over 40 years. Our commercial business includes small and medium-sized machine shops on the Island and government contractors like Honeywell, Northrop Grumman and Sikorsky. We also do private sector work, like restoring classic car parts, tea sets and fixtures.

### How has the business changed?

We've always had competition who are also our friends. There's enough business to go around. We're always looking out for our competitors as well. If there's a job that we can't do or they can do better, we always throw it their way and vice versa. There's really no rea-

son to not be that way.

### Why have you been at the same location all these years?

As a leader in electroplating, we have nearly 50 tanks, and at this point it's really hard to move them. My great-grandfather liked it here.

### How are you expanding?

We're acquiring a new facility in Westbury. We're incorporating a state-of-the-art powder coating and painting line. And we're bringing on some more testing capabilities and being able to run larger parts for aerospace. It's something that I wanted to do for so long but my grandmother was happy with the way it was. And because this is an older building, keeping up with the infrastruc-

ture is a bit difficult.

### What are the biggest challenges you have right now?

We're a manufacturing shop, so we do manual labor. And kids today don't really understand that, nor do they want to be a part of that. We do a lot of on-the-job training. I have an amazing crew, some who have worked with us since 1985. But as they retire, it's very difficult because you feel like you're replacing one person with two people to do the position.

### Are there other industry challenges?

Yes, the limited number of women who are in manufacturing positions, like engineering, lab technicians and managers. I don't think women tend to look at our industry as a viable option. And that's such a shame because all the women I've ever worked with here who have run departments have paid stellar attention to detail. I'm an active member in ADDAPT, a trade organization that advances aerospace and defense manufacturing on Long Island, so I can help get the word out.

### How many hours a day do you work?

I can work 8 to 10 hours. When I first started it was nonstop, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. And my kids are 7 and 4 so it's a balancing act.

### How has your family managed to keep working together?

We're brutally honest with each other. You have to be to work with family, to be able to agree to disagree and move past it and then still be able to enjoy each other's company.

### How have you kept up with times?

We work with the National Grid and PSEG to reduce the power on our grid. We were recently awarded a National Grid Economic Development Grant for industry certifications for cybersecurity and equipment compliance. Our military is really important right now with everything going on in this world and being a part of that is huge. I'm also a big advocate for keeping manufacturing on Long Island, so anything that I can do to be a voice for that is important.

NEWSDAY / J. CONRAD WILLIAMS JR.