



## Colson Group Invests in Enhancing Manufacturing Capabilities

### Equipment Upgrades Come Online at Three Main Locations

**A**s part of our ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation, Colson Group is executing several significant advancements at our US manufacturing facilities. These enhancements are designed to bolster our production efficiency, increase capacity, and ensure the highest quality for our customers.

#### New 5-Axis CNC Mill at Albion Campus

Our Albion campus has seen the installation of a new 5-axis CNC mill. This sophisticated piece of equipment allows us to perform complex machining operations in a single setup, reducing cycle times and improving product consistency. Cal DeVries, our Heavy Duty Operations Director, highlights the significance of this upgrade: "The new 5-axis CNC mill eliminates multiple setup steps,



Mike Titizian  
Retires after  
27 Years

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Colson China  
at CMEF

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Anniversary

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State-of-the-art laser now fully operational at Albion, significantly increasing productivity and precision, and positioning Colson to meet growing demands.

reducing variation and ensuring higher quality. It's a huge benefit for our manufacturing process and demonstrates our commitment to maintaining a competitive edge with domestically produced goods."

## New High-Speed Laser Installed at Albion Campus

Our new Albion, Michigan campus has been equipped with a state-of-the-art laser that is now fully installed and operational. This advanced laser technology allows us to cut steel for caster rigs with unprecedented speed and precision, significantly enhancing our production throughput. This upgrade not only increases our capacity but also positions us to better meet the growing demands of our customers by reducing lead times and ensuring consistent product quality.

Joe Bigelow, VP of Operations, shares his excitement about the new capabilities: "The new laser is a game-changer for us. It allows us to streamline our production process and improve efficiency, ultimately delivering better products to our customers faster."

## Powerful New 276-Ton Progressive Stamping Press at Jonesboro

At our Jonesboro, Arkansas facility, we have just taken delivery of a 276-ton progressive stamping press. This new press supports high-volume production, particularly for our one-inch product line. Its quick changeover capabilities and high-speed operation will enable us to boost overall stamping volume and improve manufacturing efficiency. This

enhancement will allow us to react more swiftly to market needs and bring more volume into our production pipeline once it is fully operational.

## Automation Advancements Added at Monette

Our Monette, Arkansas wheel manufacturing facility has recently welcomed two new robots, which are currently being integrated into our operations. These robots will increase our operational efficiency, enabling us to manufacture over one million additional wheels annually. By automating key processes, we achieve consistent cycle times and reduce the risk of damaged parts, ensuring our products meet the highest standards of quality. This investment underscores our commitment to leveraging technology to enhance production capabilities while maintaining a strong workforce focused on high-value tasks.

## Commitment to "Made in USA" and Investing in Our Workforce

At Colson Group, we believe that "Made in USA" stands for something significant. Our leadership's commitment to investing in our facilities and workforce is a evidence of this belief. Over the past 14 months, we have made substantial investments in new equipment and technology, including a brand new lathe, laser, mill, and automated equipment.

Cal DeVries emphasizes the impact of these investments: "Our leadership's decision to enhance capabilities with the latest technology shows their belief in American manufacturing and our workforce. This investment not only improves



Automated manufacturing additions at Monette to produce one million additional wheels per year.



276-Ton Stamping Press installed at Jonesboro

our production efficiency and quality but also reinforces our commitment to producing domestically. It's inspiring for our team to know that the company believes in us and is willing to provide the resources we need to succeed."

These strategic upgrades across our US facilities are the result of Colson Group's dedication to innovation and excellence. By enhancing our manufacturing capabilities, we

continue to support American jobs, offer stable pricing, and ensure faster lead times for our customers. We are proud to be a US manufacturer committed to delivering quality and reliability in every product we make.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to invest in and improve our operations to better serve our customers and support the growth of American manufacturing. ■

# CEO Corner

1/2" HOLLOW AXLE  
(TO GREASY WHEELS)

**Rich Kobor**, Colson Group CEO



## Investing in Our Success

This quarter, we've witnessed significant anniversaries, celebrated the retirement of a long-term leader, and made substantial equipment upgrades across many of our US manufacturing facilities.

Production enhancements help boost efficiency and product quality, ensuring we continue to meet and exceed our customers' expectations. These investments are evidence of our unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation. By embracing cutting-edge technology, we not only enhance our operational capabilities but also strengthen our position as industry leaders.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work. Together, we are paving the way for a bright and successful future for Colson Group. Let's continue to strive for greatness in everything we do.

# A JOURNEY THROUGH INNOVATION

## An Interview with Mike Titizian



**A**fter more than 26 years with the company, Mike Titizian, President of Colson Canada, retired this spring. Recently our Corporate Director of Marketing, Todd Ohme, sat down and interviewed Mike about his career with Colson Group and his thoughts on the industry.

**Todd Ohme:** Mike, can you tell us about your journey with Colson Group? How did it all begin?

**Mike Titizian:** Well, I joined Colson Group on June 16, 1997. Initially, I had my doubts about the future of casters, but I quickly realized how significant and extensive this industry is. My first trip to China in 1999 was eye-opening, and it wasn't long before I saw the potential in pneumatic and semi-pneumatic products.

**What were some of the early challenges you faced in your role?**

**Mike Titizian:** One of the challenges was filling gaps in our product line. For instance, during a hospital visit, I noticed a need for medical-specific products. That's when the idea for MedCaster came to me. It's amazing to see how it has grown over the years. Another early challenge was dealing with maintenance issues related to directional locks on carts. This led me to design a foot-operated directional lock, which made operations smoother and is still used today.

**How did the idea for MedCaster evolve, and what impact did it have?**

**Mike Titizian:** The idea for MedCaster came during my visits to hospitals where I noticed a gap in our offerings. We didn't have specific products for the medical industry, while European companies had specialized products like nylon and stainless steel casters. On a flight back from the West Coast, I doodled the concept of MedCaster and later worked with our legal team to trademark it. We formed a dedicated sales team and quickly landed the Invacare account in the States, which was a major boost. MedCaster became a huge brand in the US, and its potential continues to grow.

**Can you share a significant innovation you introduced during your career?**

**Mike Titizian:** One significant innovation was the further development of the Performa Wheel, which by the way, was first created in Canada. We collaborated with Conestogo Plastics to create a cost-effective

solution by hollowing out the core of the wheel, reducing material costs by about 25-30%. This design not only saved costs but also maintained the wheel's performance. Additionally, the introduction of the blue elastic rubber wheel and integrated precision bearing wheels addressed specific customer needs and enhanced our product line.

### What's next for you as you move into retirement?

**Mike Titizian:** I plan to focus on personal projects and travel. I'll also continue supporting Colson Group with some ongoing projects. Plus, I'll stay involved in community and volunteer work, which I'm very passionate about.



### How has the caster industry evolved since you started, and what trends have you observed?

**Mike Titizian:** The industry has seen tremendous changes. We've moved from metal casters to advanced materials like nylon and maintenance-free casters. There's also been a push towards faster, quieter, and more durable products. Innovation and speed to market have become crucial. Customers now expect quick delivery, much like the Amazon model. This has pushed us to improve our speed to market, customer service, and delivery times, ensuring we meet these high expectations.

### Any final thoughts or advice for the team at Colson Group?

**Mike Titizian:** Innovation and problem-solving are key to our success. We must continue to think creatively and stay ahead of the competition. It's also important to remember that speed to market is crucial.

**Thank you, Mike, for sharing your incredible journey with us. Your contributions have left an indelible mark on Colson Group and the caster industry. We wish you all the best in your retirement. ■**

## Introducing the Next Generation Hi-Tech Wheels: Revolutionizing Durability and Ergonomics

**C**olson Group is proud to announce the launch of our Next Generation Moldon Polyurethane Hi-Tech Wheels, setting a new standard in caster wheel performance. Building on over 40 years of innovation, these wheels have been meticulously engineered to offer superior capacity, extended life, and enhanced ergonomic performance.

Designed with a solid, reinforced hub, these Hi-Tech Wheels boast a 20% increase in load capacity, ensuring they can handle heavier loads with ease. This improvement is paired with a streamlined core design that not only prevents debris buildup but also makes the wheels easier to clean.

Our commitment to quality and safety is evident in every detail. These wheels offer up to four times longer life expectancy compared to previous

models, reducing the frequency of replacements and lowering long-term costs. The improved ergonomic design facilitates easier initial roll start and swivel, significantly reducing the risk of injuries and making operations smoother and more efficient. ■



## Colson China on Display at CMEF Exhibition Innovative Casters Propel the Medical Industry Forward



In April 2024, the 89th China International Medical Equipment Fair (CMEF) opened in Shanghai, attracting numerous top enterprises and innovative products from the global medical device industry. As an expert medical caster solution provider, Colson China made an impressive appearance with multiple new products, becoming one of the spotlights of the exhibition with their advanced technology.

### Looking to the Future

During the exhibition, Colson China showed several high-performance casters which were specifically designed for medical equipment such as ward beds, ultrasound equipment, and anesthesia machines, providing reliable performance for mobile equipment.

Colson China is steadily realizing its grand vision of “Casters Driving the Future of Healthcare” with its excellent products and professional services. ■



## US Sales Team Positioned to Provide Top-Tier Service

This year marks a momentous milestone. In response to our ongoing growth and commitment to exceptional customer service, we have reorganized our sales team to provide the best level of support. Each customer now has a dedicated Regional Sales Manager, Inside Sales Representative, and Customer Service Representative. This streamlined approach ensures we can administer personalized and direct support, enhancing our agility and responsiveness.

These enhancements reinforce our dedication to being leaders in the industry, and providing the most responsive support to our customers. ■



## Colson Group Casters in Action at Paris 2024

### Supporting the Equipment that Supports the World's Elite Athletes



**A**t Colson Group, we take immense pride in knowing that our products play a crucial role in making the world move more efficiently. Our wheels and casters are integral to various industries, creating efficiencies that may often go unnoticed but are undeniably impactful. Today, we are thrilled to share an inspiring story about how our solutions are contributing to the success of the 2024 Olympics in Paris.

One of our esteemed customers, a leading producer of gymnastics equipment, has integrated our wheels and casters into their designs. From storage racks to mat-caddies, our products ensure that their equipment is easily movable, durable, and reliable. This partnership is a validation of the

quality and versatility of our wheels and casters, supporting the athletes' needs and the logistics of major global events.

The 2024 Olympics is a monumental event, showcasing the pinnacle of athletic performance and bringing together nations from around the world. The scale and impact of the Olympics are staggering, with billions of viewers tuning in globally. The 2021 Tokyo Olympics, for instance, attracted an estimated global viewership of 3.05 billion people. Such immense reach underscores the significance of every component that contributes to the event's success, including the unseen heroes like our wheels and casters. ■

## Colson Canada Celebrates 70-Year Anniversary



**T**his year marks a momentous milestone for Colson Group Canada as we proudly celebrate the 70th anniversary. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated employees, and supportive community who have been integral to Colson Canada's success.

In 1953, Robert A. Pritzker purchased Colson Casters, and later moved it to Jonesboro, Arkansas. In 1954, Colson Canada was started in the Toronto area. Later it moved

to Cambridge, Ontario, where has since been expanded into a 65,000 sq.ft. manufacturing and distribution facility. In November 2003, Colson acquired Can-Am Casters and Wheels. In 2013, Colson Canada was renamed Colson Group Canada, Inc., to better reflect its Canadian foundation of Colson Casters, Can-Am Casters and Wheels, and Faultless Caster, each family brand offering time tested products you know and trust. ■

# OWNERS IN ACTION

**JAMES & KEVIN**  
JONESBORO, ARKANSAS



## 25% Increase in Productivity, Plus Reduction in Repetitive Motion Strain

**J**ames and Kevin, Day Shift Plating Operators, proposed significant modifications to our plating line, using a \$10,000 budget, with the goal to redefine efficiency and improve the working conditions.

Frank Eastman stated, "When James and Kevin came to us with this opportunity for improvement in plating, we sat down with them and started talking through the pros and cons. We engaged our safety manager from an economic standpoint and the potential benefits we could bring to that team through this improvement."



The modifications resulted in a reduction in ergonomic hazards, a 25% increase in equipment productivity, and an overall enhancement in the quality of work life at our facility.

Beyond the numbers, their modifications also led to the elimination of 1,400 bend and reach movements per shift, reducing physical strain on our workforce. James explained, "Changing the hangers allowed us to cut down on bending over during a shift by making it easier to remove the rack." Kevin, also added, "the rack redesign, reducing weight and including a handle, has made loading and unloading the line a more ergonomic process."

The impact of their changes extends beyond efficiency; it has significantly reduced breakdowns and crashes on the line, creating a safer work environment. James and Kevin's modifications raised our operational standards and established a benchmark for collaborative ownership.

## HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

### Open Enrollment Upcoming in October

Be on the lookout for information in the coming weeks regarding benefits open enrollment.

### Coming Soon: New Wellness Program

Rolling into Wellness - Own your Health. The Human Resources team has been working on developing a new wellness program to help empower our team members to care for both their physical and mental health. Stay tuned for updates.



**New Wellness  
Program Logo**