

# DRIVEN BY OUR LEGACY

**99 years.** This incredible number sums up the years of dedication and service from the Burdine Family, three generations of O'Neal Steel legacies. The story begins with Eddie Burdine, who began his O'Neal Steel journey in 1940 when the company was still known as Southern Steel Works. In those early days, Eddie was a Blueprint Helper and Payroll Clerk, laying the groundwork for what would evolve into a multi-generational family legacy.



Eddie spent an incredible 46 years at O'Neal Steel holding a variety of roles, retiring as Controller, and witnessing many pivotal milestones for the business. Some of the milestones included the change from Southern Steel Works to O'Neal Steel, the implementation of the first computer system, which he helped install into the districts at the time, and the growth from one district to multiple. A couple of significant personal milestones included meeting his wife at O'Neal Steel, who was a receptionist here for a brief period, and witnessing his son, Randy, forge the second generation of Burdines at O'Neal Steel.

Randy Burdine carried the family legacy forward with a 24-year tenure at the Birmingham District. Starting as a Warehouseman in 1989, Randy worked his way up the ladder, becoming skilled in many areas of the business and retiring as a Supervisor. It was during his time as a Quality Manager that Randy had a unique view from his office window overlooking one of the warehouse bays. From there, he watched the next legacy unfold with his son, Ryan, the third generation of Burdines at O'Neal Steel.

Ryan Burdine officially joined O'Neal Steel in 1994, but his ties to the company were woven long before that, shaped by stories of opportunities, hard work, and values that echoed through his granddad and dad's time. For Ryan, pursuing a career at O'Neal Steel was the obvious choice. Ryan's 29 years of service at O'Neal Steel are made up of diverse roles, ranging from the warehouse



Left to right: Eddie, Randy, and Ryan Burdine

to operations and sales. His current position as Director of Operations is the culmination of a career marked by hard work and continuous learning.

From an early age, Ryan's dad taught him the importance of saying yes to opportunities. And that's exactly what Ryan has done. "The opportunities we have here come from us taking care of each other, looking after each other, and working hard," Ryan said.

# THE BURDINE FAMILY LEGACY

One of Ryan's favorite parts of working at O'Neal Steel is that it's a family-owned company with a leadership team who values your voice and encourages opportunities to keep growing. He believes people mimic their leaders, and each generation of leadership has fostered the same genuine and caring culture, making it a very fun and enjoyable place to work. He also finds joy in mentoring others and contributing to their career development, as others have done for him along the way.

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As Ryan reflected on all the years his family has been at O'Neal Steel, he expressed how his granddad would be amazed at how far the technology has advanced and the expansion of O'Neal Steel to 18 districts. Yet, amidst all the growth and advancements, there are constants that have remained exactly the same, such as keeping people at the forefront and the significance of relationships within O'Neal Steel.

One story that Ryan recalled his granddad telling him while they were looking through Eddie's retirement box was a representation of just that. Eddie spoke of a time when he had been told by doctors that he had melanoma, and would need to resign from his job and start the treatment process. As Eddie retold the story to Ryan, he pulled out a letter from his retirement box from Mr. Kirkman O'Neal encouraging him as he battled cancer. In addition to that, Mr. Kirkman paid him multiple hospital visits. Eddie referred to him as a friend. Thankfully, the cancer was a misdiagnosis. Eddie continued working at O'Neal Steel and lived a long, happy life. His fond memories of the genuine friendships and care that he found at O'Neal Steel stuck with him and has carried on through generations.

"You can see that carry on through the business - our relationships here, how important they are, and how much people care about each other. It started way back then, and you can still see it as you go through," said Ryan.

The Burdine family narrative continues to unfold, and we are so grateful for the lasting impact each of these individuals have made throughout their years at O'Neal Steel. To Eddie, Randy, and Ryan, thank you for your 99 years (and counting) of service and dedication.

Driven by our Legacy. Measured by our Mettle.

