

Proud To Be A Part Of Niles For 100 Years!



When you've been around for a century, you learn a thing or two. Most importantly, that our customers' overall productivity relies on the wire innovations we create. We solve problems and deliver solutions, to make things easier on your end.

WE'RE SOLID WIRE EXPERTS, WITH A JOB TO DO.



A **HEICO** WIRE GROUP COMPANY

The History of the National Standard Company- the first hundred years

Little History -

National Standard got its start in 1906 when a group of men who owned a small company, National Wire Cloth Company, located in Niles, Michigan, were convinced they could produce a lightning conductor far superior to anything currently on the market. In March of 1907, a new company, National Cable and Manufacturing Company (National), was incorporated for the express purpose of manufacturing and selling scientific lightning protection. The product was a round cable of pure copper. In 1909, National developed a flat woven cable as a lightning conductor to replace the round cable of pure copper. In 1910, as tire companies were making a switch from solid rubber tires for automobiles to the balloon style tire, and due to National's experience in producing the flat copper cable, they were asked to manufacture a steel flat braid for tire beads. National was eventually successful at this venture, and as the automobile industry grew, so too did National's manufacturing.

In 1913, National purchased Cook Standard Tool Company, which manufactured tools for the railroad and automotive industries. Some of the items manufactured were: hydraulic garage jacks, auto jacks, wrecking cranes, portable tool grinders, railroad track drills, garage creepers, and towing dollies. From this acquisition, a new corporate name emerged, National Standard Company.

Over the next several years, National Standard continued to develop tire

bead designs. By 1935, virtually 95% of the tire manufacturers throughout the world were using National

Standard bead material. In 1919, to serve the needs of tire manufacturers in Canada, National Standard, Ltd. was established in Guelph, Ontario. In 1922, another facility was opened in Akron, Ohio.

National Standard expanded their products to include ornamental wirecraft products, lamps, vases, tire covers, waste baskets, and fire screens. Between 1934 and 1937, three more companies were added to the National Standard family: Worcester Wire Works in Worcester, MA (specialty wires including brush wire), Wagner Litho Machinery, Hoboken, NJ (equipment for lithographing metal for cans, etc.), and Athenia Steel Company in Clifton, NJ (strip steel).

Over the years, through expansions and acquisitions, National Standard has manufactured tubular wire braid for pressure hose reinforcement, wire curing belts, music wire, bobby pin wire, hose wire, and fine wire rope and strand for various uses ranging from fishing tackle and surgical sutures to V-belt reinforcement.

In 1942, National Standard developed a stainless steel wire for magnetic sound recording, which led

them to becoming the nation's major producer of recording wire.



In 1963, the company

produced its first gas-cleaned stainless steel weld wire. Soon after that, a copper-coated carbon steel weld wire was also being produced. At this same time, National Standard embarked into a rather unique form of distributing their welding products yet to be duplicated.

Other innovations introduced by National Standard to the welding industry were Satin-Glide® stainless steel wire, the 45-lb. weld wire spool, and Tru-Trac™ technology for bulk packaging.

By 1980, National Standard was operating 19 plants in the United States and Canada, plus three warehouse distribution centers and one research facility. International plants included three in the United Kingdom, one in South Africa, and an affiliate in India.

At one point in time, there was a little bit of National Standard product used in almost everything. The following is just a small list.

(above) 1907 illustration of National Standard

Aviation – Automotive – Farm Machinery:

Components for radial engines
Carburetor and fuel pump screens
Brake lining reinforcement
Flat springs
Round wire springs
Piston rings
Safety lock wire
Wire rope
Tractor half-tacks
Springs and stainless wire for shock mounts
Stranded stainless ignition cable core

Armed forces – Electronics – Instruments and recording devices:

Parachute harness springs
Radar antennae
Wire braid cable armor
De-icers for props and wings
Wire reinforced oxygen cylinders
Armature banding wire
Gun sights
Jet engine components
Screen rooms for electronic testing

Office equipment – Home equipment:

Clothes dryer lint screens
Kitchen strainers
Telephone push button springs
Vacuum cleaner hose wire
Pressure dispenser springs
Mouse trap springs
Bathroom scale springs
Dishwasher utensil trays
Staplers and staples
Flyswatters
Fireplace screens
Wire cloth heater grilles

Food – Chemicals – Rubber – Plastics:

Braid reinforced metal hose
Rubber coated wire cloth sheeting
Wire cloth conveyor belts
Line strainers
Food conveyor belts
Tire bead wire
High pressure steam hose
Wire reinforced tire carcass
Tire bead winding machines

Mining – Petroleum:

Hydraulic oil well packers
Wire-rope-reinforced conveyor belt-ing
Wire rope
Wire-reinforced V-belts
Oil suction and discharge hose
Air filter screens for stationary engines
Rotary drilling hose
Wire cloth processing strainers

Their strength is their people

by Katherine Hempel

Companies that survive the tough times or come back from the brink of disaster, tend to have one thing in common. The most important factor in whether a company makes it or not is the same: their people. National Standard is no exception.

Jim Harbaugh has been part of National Standard for 41 years. He has seen the good times and the bad. "In 1966 this was a publicly held company with the highest credit rating. Employees had profit sharing in stock that ran as high as \$64 a share," he said remembering the early years. "As competition became more aggressive and the life cycle of automotive was on the downside, off-shore manufacturing increased the pressure. There was an evolution you could see."

Poor management decisions and an unwillingness to change with the times led to rumors that National Standard would soon close. Now Harbaugh is excited about what he refers to as the resurrection of National Standard. The company veteran, who started out on the shop floor and has now been asked by the new company management if he would stay on "to help right the ship," believes that the new management is on the right track with Toyota-styled lean manufacturing practices and its team approach.

"It takes a bit of both experience and fresh eyes," he says. "You've got to care about people. For a while no one felt they were listened to. At one time this company did 30-34 million pounds of business annually. Can it be brought back to that level again? Yes it can."

Michael Heisley, the owner of The Heico Companies, who purchased National Standard from the brink of disaster in 2001 and built Heico into a group of 40 companies that by 2004 had \$1.5 billion in annual sales, would agree. In an article that first appeared in Smart Business Chicago in January 2004, he was quoted as saying that what kills a company is management that insists "this has worked for us in the past, this is the way we do it." When asked how he

knows how to turn a company around, he replied, "I just ask the people in the company, they know. It isn't a secret. It's just that nobody has the will to do it."

David Freeze works as a wire drawer at the Lake Street facility and has been employed by National Standard for 38 years. "It's good that we're getting back on track," he says. "We're getting the orders back."

Asked what he thinks has made the difference, Freeze barely pauses before answering, "Kevin Walsh (National Standard's new Vice President and General Manager). He has goals and a focus and he listens to what's going on, on the floor."

High praise indeed from a man who admits he hates change. While he doesn't like the hard hat and ear plugs that are mandatory with the new safety standards, Freeze knows that this company is on the "grow" again.

Purchasing Manager Bill Juhasz has been part of National Standard for 33 years. For several years he had worked for the only other plant (at one time National Standard had 17 plants worldwide) still operating, in Stillwater, Oklahoma. He returned to Niles in 1990 to assume the position of Senior Technical Buyer and ten years later as Heico took ownership he became Purchasing Manager.

"One of the biggest changes over the years is the development of the e-commerce marketplace. I can now go online and purchase material from Michigan or Taiwan. With the world market I have seen parts that sell for \$544 here in the U.S. available for \$49 from China."

Juhasz remembers that National Standard stock was \$24 a share when he began working for the company. By the time of the Heico purchase, he sold his shares to the new company for a dollar each. He remembers there was always a bonus after Thanksgiving. He remembers when the management style of the company changed and the resulting multi-million dollar losses.

Now he sees some of the attitudes that led to the original company being "the" place to work, returning once more. He too credits Walsh with bringing back a team philosophy, with concern for people and safety; their welfare and well-being and how the corporation fits into the community.

John Morris has been with National Standard for 40 years and currently works as a packer wrapper. He has worked at all three plant locations that were once in Niles and despite the setbacks always thought they could turn it around. "I just made the best of the situation and it hurt for awhile. It takes time to rebuild. We still need more technology but we are moving in the right direction."

He credits the new energy he sees in the sales team with making a big difference. The weld wire business is going well and he sees a galvanizing line as one that will create even more growth.

With five sons Morris says if any of them were interested in working for National Standard today, he would tell them to try it. "You've got to be positive."

The number one man on the seniority list is positive that the company he has worked for over 43 years is on the upswing. "This used to be the number one employer in the entire area. Lots of times we thought it wasn't going to make it," says William (Bill) Nichols.

He recalls meeting Mr. Heisley at a Notre Dame vs USC football game and found him very down to earth and likeable. "We talked about the highs and lows of National Standard. A few weeks later I got a letter from him saying how nice it



Jim Harbaugh has a 43 year history with National Standard and credits the return to basics and a team model for the continuing turnaround.

was to meet me."

Nichols' answer to why the company will again be successful echoes that of his fellow workers. "Mr. Kevin Walsh. He has introduced new products and is looking forward. He considers what his workers say. It's nice to have management that wants to know what we know."

Nichols will be 65 in June. Juhasz said his retirement was 702 days away at the time of the interview. Harbaugh plans to retire on July 11, although he would still like to do some training to keep his fingers on the pulse of the company he credits with "giving me lots of room to grow."

Harbaugh's two principles of success to remember are: 1) change is the only constant 2) surround yourself with people who lead by example and remove the road blocks. Under the new leadership he is confident in National Standard having much to celebrate in this its 100th year.

"My greatest mentor for 20+ years was a man by the name of Carlis Cassel who was a firm believer in leading and not managing. I genuinely believe—if I look on the horizon—it's not going to be easy, but what I see are opportunities that are boundless."



Most Seniority, Bill Nichols tops the seniority at National Standard with 43 years.



John Morris, Forty years of service means John Morris has seen both the ups and downs with his company now on the upswing.



David Freeze, After 38 years with the company, David Freeze is happy to see orders increasing.



Bill Juhasz, Purchasing Manager, has spent 33 years at National Standard.

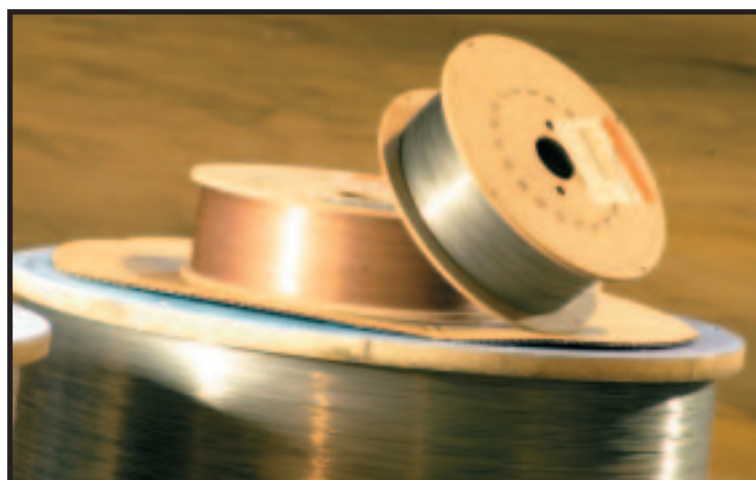
William H. Nichols III-43, James L. Harbaugh-40, John E. Morse-40, David I. Freeze-39, Gayle E. Hawkins-39, Michael Thomas O Connor-38, Larry Daniel Snodgrass-38, William T. Weber-38, Donald Deward Axline-37, William D. Havener Jr.-37, Tomasz Z. Klimczak-37, Ronald E. Lakes-37, Ronald Lee Carter-36, Karen Jean Schoff-36, Loyd Leon Bagwell-35, Tommy Franch Sr.-35, Michael Joseph Gregor-35, Scott A. Lundberg-35, James William Ottmann-35, Ralph Steven Smith-35, Jack Gary Stevenson-35, Jerry Wayne Syson-35, James Arthur Jespersen-34, James Allen Purucker-34, John Ted True-34, William J. Juhasz-33, Daryl Allen Matthews-33, Jimmie Ray Jackson-30, David E. Schutze-30, William D. Small-30, Timothy W. Springsteen-30, Roger Dale Noecker-29, Frederick A. Van Dyke-29, Kevin D. Asmus-28, Douglas Jarman-28, Lorene M. Lundy-26, Mary L. Miswick-24, Paula J. Marston-21, Charles Richard Gordon-19, David C. Ciesiolka-16, Ronald Lee Akey-13, Charles B. Fox-13, Johnny W. Frantz-13, Brent Patrick Hemphill-13, Kent M. Lemna-13, David Willis McClenahan-13, Ricky Dale Morse-13, Jeffrey S. Swank-13, Todd C. Vella-13, Randy S. Billiard-12, Andrew P. Bonne-12r, David L. Cowe-12, Stevie Joe Farrow-12, Vernon W. Herter-12, Mary K. Lambertson, David J. Matthews, Patrick Allen Murphy, Trent Duane Nichols-12, Christopher Pellow-12, Geary L. Shaw-12, Robert J. Wagner-12, Richard Lee Warner-12, Michael Alan Zeigert-12, Joseph John Coveyou-11, Larry Gaines Allums-10, James E. Bella-10, John W. Brittin Jr.-10, Tarran Burns-10, Everette B. Daniels-10, Terry Lee Dodd-10, Louis John Fear-10, Lester L. Fortune-10, Arnold S. Garrelts-10, Shannon E. Knight-10, Billy G. Maynard-10, Bobby La-Jan Mitchell-10, David Allen Nicely Sr.-10, Jeffrey G. Secor-10, Jerry L. Waters-10, Pamela Hatcher-9, Robert W. Unger-9, Michael W. Welborn-9, Michael J. Wieger-9, Aaron L. Brekke-8, Rod A. Hatch-8, Adam L. Stevenson-8, Clarence W. Taylor-8, Ty E. Carter-7, Joshua A. Hively-7, Matthew S. Kumfer-7, Gary M. Reid-7, Demarko L. Smith-7, Ted V. Turner-7, Frederick Ciampi-6, Sarah Mikel-6, Richard Newcomer-6, Robert Blake-5, James Brackett-5, Nathan Crosby-5, Dayne Heimburg-5, James W. Holt-5, Shawn Isabel-5, Raymond Knight-5, Joshua D. Matthews-5, Bobby Mitchell-5, Eugene Onken-5, Steven Pearson-5, John Pulling-5, Dwight Roberts-5,



Arman Shahidi-5, Pamela Kay Smith-5, Jason Steven-5, Jay Sweet-5, Timothy Winters-5, Chad Effinger-4, Hugo Hernandez-4, Timothy Matthews-4, Claude Lee Morgan-4, Todd Ryan-4, Jason Stevenson-4, Dustyn D. Arney-3, Jason Barnes-3, Jevon D. Bomer-3, Michael W. Buckendorf-3, Robert Coburn-3, Paul W. Corum-3, Robert L. Epps-3, Eric J. Hock-3, Charles C. Jackson Jr.-3, David C. Knapp-3, Jeremy L. Martin-3, Marvin Martin-3, Isidro T. Morales-3, Lowell Murphy III-3, Ken A. Nally-3, Kenneth W. Przybylinski-3, Frederick J. Roberts-3, Nathan L. Roberts-3, Lakshmi Sharma-3, Keith Shaver-3, Scott D. Tarantino-3, Michael J. Vaughn-3, Cameron Webb-3, Matt A. Winningham-3, Arnold B. Byrd-2, John Cecco Jr.-2, Ronald W. Christensen-2, Karyn M. Dettling-2, Daniel F. Flora-2, David E. Fraser-2, Gift Gondwe-2, Ricky R. Grady-2, Adam W. Grice-2, Robert Hames III-2, Shelton L. Hardy-2, Christopher J. Herndon-2, Rosa Ann Hill-2, Roberta A. Hurt-2, Harley A. Jacobson-2, Kevin J. Lakes-2, Douglas V. Lang-2, Consecpcion Martinez-2, Allen S. Masomere-2, Douglas D. Miller-2, Patrick Newson-2, Jeremy A. Park-2, Glenn A. Pearson-2, Lowell D. Robison-2, Jason T. Sheldon-2, Kenneth J. Susedik-2, Keith P. Tibbs-2, Joseph Williams-2, Ricardo Aleman-1, Paul Armstrong-1, Donna J. Barrier-1, John W. Beers III-1, Jeremy M. Belakovich-1, Megan Bennett-1, Kelly C. Biggs-1, Barry C. Clark-1, Andrew Cosey-1, Brooks L. Diamond-1, Tommy F. Franch Jr.-1, Andres J. Garcia-1, Peggy S. Good-1, Jose R. Granados Jr.-1, Dawson C. Griffin-1, Dawn M. Guggenheim-1, Ronald D. Hein-1, James E. Ingle-1, Daren A. Jeruzal-1, Pedro Juarez-1, Chester Kaminski-1, Laurence B. Karmel-1, Curtis D. Kelly-1, Aaron M. Komon-1, Lorraine J. Mackey-1, Marvin W. Martin Jr.-1, Joshua R. Matthews-1, Timothy D. Merrill-1, Lester E. Mervine-1, Terry Middleton-1, Thomas E. Moran-1, Matthew A. Morrow-1, Richard Neely-1, Laura M. Pennington-1, Richard Piwonka-1, Austin L. Race-1, Salvador Ramos-1, Floyd L. Smith-1, Stevi L. Smith-1, Philip A. Spraggins-1, Kevin P. Walsh-1, Kimberly R. Warfield-1, Thomas Welch-1, Charles A. White-1, Wayne L. Wilson-1, Todd L. Yahne-Vella-1, New Team Members: Ian T. Boyer, Herbert L. Brown, Robert E. Confer III, Bertrum L. Duncan, David B. Eckert, Kerry D. Gross, Miguel J. Hernandez, Larry E. Lalime, Wayne P. Marren, Westley N. Matthews, Justin C. Parker, Marisa R. Pitts, Daniel C. Ross, Donald S. Sachman, Joshua A. Smith, Levi J. Smith, and Raymond Wilks

Names listed by years of service

The products of National Standard



Weld Wire
 ° Carbon
 ° Stainless

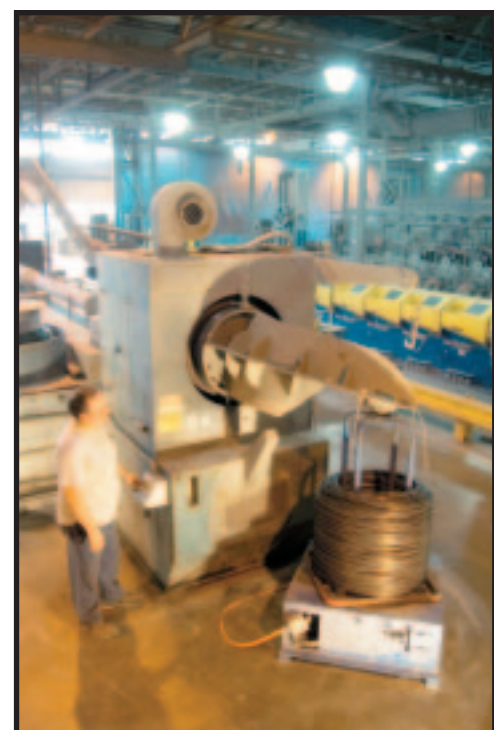
National Standard manufactures weld wire that is shipped all across the United States and Canada. Carbon wire is used for welding automobile frames, heavy equipment, and building structures.

Stainless weld wire is used in the food preparation industry as well as stainless exhaust systems.



Stainless Steel Specialty Products

National Standard manufactures stainless specialty wire that is distributed worldwide, and is used in government aircraft, nuclear power plants, foam cutting, and other specialty applications.



Industrial Wire
 ° Galvanized

Galvanized wire is used for chain link fencing, baling wire, ornamental fences, staples and much more.

° Bright

Bright wire is used for the manufacturing of shopping carts, springs, display racks just to name a few.

° HDMB (Spring Wire)

Spring wire is used for making springs in many items such as furniture, mattresses, and trampolines.



Aluminum Conductive Steel Reinforce Wire (ACSR)

ACSR is used for electrical power lines. National Standard is the leading manufacturer of ACSR in the country.

The turn around of National Standard

by Katherine Hempel

Ask the employees of National Standard who is responsible for turning the company around and they will tell you: Kevin Walsh. Ask Kevin Walsh, National Standard's new Vice President and General Manager, who is responsible for the company's turn around, and he will tell you; "our people".

A servant leadership philosophy and a man that respects his people is what employees will be able to expect from Kevin Walsh. What he expects back is a strong work ethic where people will give their best and can be counted on to "man the ship."

The metaphor comes from a book his leadership team is discussing in their latest meetings. The book is "It's Your Ship: Leadership Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy" by D. Michael Abrashoff in which the author says: "My organizing principle was simple: The key to being a successful skipper is to see the ship through the eyes of the crew. Only then can you find out what's really wrong and, in so doing, help the sailors empower themselves to fix it."

This new direction for the company and its leadership is not only being well accepted by its employees but is producing early results. Since taking his current position in August of 2005, Walsh has seen National Standard make a profit for 2005, double it in 2006 and hopes to double it again in its 100th year of operation; 2007.

Walsh has two goals for National Standard. He hopes to bring a new sense of leadership that is principle centered and to give the employees "more tools in their toolbox" with lots of education based on the Toyota Production System of lean manufacturing and the Six Sigma disciplined and data-driven concepts and methodologies for eliminating defects.

"I believe when a lot of people hear the term lean thinking, they worry about their jobs. If you look at Toyota, which is having a record year, lean thinking is the driving philosophy. It is a corporate culture where every employee looks to improve, to become re-motivated and an integral part of a great team."

Walsh says that any company going through tough times and a resulting change in ownership and management needs first a sense of stability. He understands he needs to let his people know he cares and that he wants to help them onboard.

One of the keys to success here is training. Not just by management but by suppliers and by having long-timers train newcomers. Walsh is looking to create a new company culture where everyone feels a sense of ownership in what they do and in the company itself. Company-wide monthly meetings inform all employees about the financial condition, how they are doing and now include a report from one of the new "lean teams" who share the projects on which they are working.

"At first you expect there will be some who will listen to the new ideas but who after so many changes in management say 'that's all well and good, but let's see how long you last.' My challenge to them is not to just sit back with their arms crossed, waiting on the fence but to jump in and try it out." Walsh knows he is succeeding when employees come to his office to share their thoughts, ideas and frustrations with him.

His goals for the next twelve months are to continue to build this winning team as well as the financial stability of the company. Past that his goals are: zero accidents, zero defects and zero waste. Safety is on the agenda at the beginning of each meeting. The company is refocusing on their safety record and aiming for zero accidents. To improve the quality of their products and reduce defects to that same zero report will require a change of philosophy following another of Walsh's mentors, author Jim Collins.

In his book, "Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make The Leap And Others Don't," Collins suggests that good is the enemy of great because if things are good, people tend to settle and abdicate the rise to great. He says, "Few people attain great lives, in large part because it is just so easy to settle for a good life. The vast majority of companies never become great, precisely because the vast majority become quite good—and that is their main problem."

In order to achieve the final zero on Walsh's list, he plans to improve production to the point of having no waste, by strengthening communications and determining the root causes of any waste. He knows that the only way to get to zero waste is to listen to his people.

Past the production improvements on Walsh's turnaround timetable, is an intensive marketing effort to increase sales and thereby the bottom line. The new Heico Wire Group (the parent umbrella of National Standard) website launched on February 1 and a new advertising campaign has been released. The company is looking to hire a number of new district sales managers to further increase their sales.

In this its 100th Anniversary Year, National Standard families will celebrate with a company picnic and revive a long history of community involvement by continuing to add to their United Way efforts and their Christmas giving tree. Walsh was overwhelmed by the response of his employees to the holiday event this past Christmas. "We gave our employees gift certificates for Christmas and in addition to a giving tree program and filling barrels with canned goods, some even donated their own certificates back to those they consider less fortunate than themselves"

This ship is definitely headed on the right course.



Not big on titles or accolades, Kevin Walsh, sees the turnaround of National Standard as the positive result of good and inclusive management strategies that build a team atmosphere.

Turnaround Specialist, Kevin Patrick Walsh

Kevin Patrick Walsh was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Northern Virginia the second-eldest of 7 children. An Eagle Scout, Walsh showed his potential for business early on as he ran his own company, helping to put himself through college. He received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University in International Business and Finance. After college he went to work for the Heico Companies, a privately held acquisition company. Walsh's career with Heico began at Davis Wire as a shift supervisor, scheduler and financial analyst. He continued as an operations analyst at many different Heico plants and was eventually given an opportunity to get his MBA. Graduating from Notre Dame's one year program in 1997, Walsh next moved within Heico to Pettibone (a heavy equipment manufacturing company) where he became President and completed a very successful turn-around of that company. It was then Heico asked Walsh to help fix a steel wire mill in Niles — National Standard. He is currently the Vice President and General Manager of National Standard which is in the early stages of a turn-around.



NATIONAL STANDARD

A **HEICO** WIRE GROUP COMPANY



Join Our Team

National Standard wire delivers power, provides security, improves performance and stabilizes structures across North America. You can sleep on it, bounce on it, carry it, climb on it and drive in it.

Through values, trust and integrity, our mission is to be the premier wire mill in the industry.

We are continually seeking others to become part of our team by contributing their skills, experience and attitude towards enhancing our set of core values.

*Celebrating our 100th year and
proud to be part of the Niles community.*