Tri Tech USA receives warm welcome

Rep. Gresham Barrett, others greet owners of new Pickens County industry

By GREG OLIVER
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LIBERTY — Alliance Pickens Executive Director Ray Farley said he could tell from the moment he first spoke to Tri Tech USA Inc. owners Joe and Linda Bacigalupo about moving their Vermont industry to Pickens County that they indeed were special people.

"You can tell the tire kickers from the real 'By Gollys,' and it was evident we had some real 'By Gollys'," Farley said. "We're so blessed to have them come into our community and do what they're doing here."

Farley and other officials were on hand Friday morning at the site of Tri Tech USA Inc.'s future home, located in the Pickens County Commerce Park, to officially welcome the couple and their industry to the county and take part in a beam signing ceremony immediately afterward. Last December, Tri Tech USA announced plans to relocate its operations from South Burlington, Vt., to Pickens County.

Following the completion of its 41,000-square-foot facility in October, Tri Tech will employ at least 40 people and invest at least $4 million in two different lines of business — custom manufacturing and advanced metalworking for commercial industrial applications and the production of commercial grade mobile kitchens and other products for the U.S. military.

Farley said Tri Tech USAInc. will bring its manufacturing operations, administrative operations and research

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and development to Pickens County. Although a portion of the workforce will relocate from Vermont, the majority of employees of the Liberty plant will encompass a wide demographic section of the county — from clerical to administrative to finance and accounting to skilled trades that include metal, welding and electrical work.

"We're grateful for that," Farley said.

Ed Parris, chairman of the Alliance Pickens Board, said Tri Tech USA's decision to join the Commerce Park family is what the board envisioned a decade ago.

"We wanted to develop a park, not just to bring jobs to Pickens County but one which could attract world class manufacturing," Parris said.

U.S. Rep. Gresham Barrett, of Westminster, welcomed the Bacigalupos to South Carolina.

"You guys may have been from Vermont, but you're in South Carolina now and you are part of our family," Barrett said.

Barrett added that there are 82,000 small businesses in South Carolina that make up 97 percent of the overall businesses.

Linda Bacigalupo admitted these are challenging times for many businesses, but added "challenging times create many opportunities."

"We saw this as a chance to grow and build upon what we have done for the past 24 years," she added.

Joe Bacigalupo said Pickens County couldn't have made his family feel more at home.

"With all the problems and stress of moving a business, everyone has been very welcoming, and we thank you," Joe Bacigalupo said.

The Tri Tech USA, Inc. building is the fifth building to be constructed in the Pickens County Commerce Park since the park opened five-and-a-half years ago.