



## HOW A POSITIVE MINDSET PRODUCED POSITIVE BUSINESS RESULTS FOR E-M METAL FABRICATORS

Located in Elk Grove Village, E-M Metal Fabricators is a small local company that specializes in end-to-end sheet metal design, fabrication, finishing, and assembly. As stated on their website, E-M prides itself in crafting high-quality products—100% made in the USA—that cannot be matched from imported products. So, it may come as a surprise that the owners of E-M are immigrants themselves.

E-M Metal Fabricators is immigrant-owned, minority-owned, and women-owned. And despite their immigrant origins, the backstory of this company is about as American as it gets.

After immigrating to America, Milton R. Moscoso opened E-M in 2004 under the belief that “Made in the USA” was a seal of quality that you cannot find anywhere else in the world. Following his passing in 2008, Gladys Moscoso—his daughter and U.S. Navy veteran—began running the business alongside her mother. For Gladys, this presented a significant challenge. She had to build her understanding of the business from scratch—in an industry mostly managed and run by men. She also had to do it all during the onset of the Great Recession. This was a hard time for E-M, but working through these challenges helped galvanize her love and respect for the company as well as the overall process of fabricating sheet metal components for her innovative clientele.

At the time, many of their customers were filing for bankruptcy, and they were losing business as a result. Meanwhile, Gladys had to learn how to operate the machinery, gain an understanding of the language of the industry, and recruit experts to help her run the company as seamlessly as her father had done. After years of hard work and perseverance, she had the company back on its feet and running healthily again.

Then, in January of 2020, she began working with Next Level Northwest (NLNW) to help take her business even further.

**DESIGNED & DEVELOPED  
PROPRIETARY NEW HAND  
SANITIZING STATION**

**ADDED  
1 PART-TIME  
STAFF MEMBER**

**MAINTAINED STABLE INCOME  
THROUGH THE PANDEMIC**

**100% EMPLOYEE RETENTION  
DURING THE PANDEMIC**

**100%  
MADE IN  
THE USA**

**IMMIGRANT OWNED  
MINORITY OWNED  
WOMAN OWNED  
VETERAN OWNED**

## A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Working with a business development representative in Elk Grove Village, Gladys was first introduced to NLNW in 2019. After applying online and getting accepted into the program, Gladys was connected to John Dallas, her one-on-one coach who would be working directly with her for 90 days.

“Next Level Northwest gave me the chance to learn even more about my business. They gave me the chance to grow as an individual and learn how to thoroughly think things through before making important business decisions. And they made me aware of the fact that I am not alone—there are people beside me and in front of me who can support me.”

The NLNW coaches offer a deep level of expertise across all areas of business, but for Gladys, the most impactful takeaways from working with John were the confidence and business mindset he instilled in her.

“John gave me confidence. Confidence to see and grab opportunities around me and create a channel to reach them. He assisted in developing a strong voice as a business owner. And he improved my ability to think about how I can create a better working environment for my employees and form better relationships with my customers.”

## TAKING BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

However, the full impact of her partnership with John and NLNW also took the form of a brand-new, in-house product that ended up creating unexpected revenue for the company.

“We had been working on an idea for a hand-sanitizing station. We had a prototype, but we didn’t know if it was the right time to bring it to market. John simply said, “Why not? It’s a good idea,” and he even gave us additional thoughts on how to improve our initial design. But most importantly, he gave me confidence that this product would fly.”

Gladys went on to explain that the vast majority of hand sanitizing stations are specifically designed for a particular brand. So, she thought, “why not design a station that is versatile enough to carry 90% of the products out there?”

And that’s what they did.

They developed this product with the effects on the working environment in mind. It was carefully designed to assist the medical staff, keep the most essential PPE within reach, and help minimize the spread of the virus.

Today, E-M Metal Fabricator’s proprietary hand sanitizer station has been integrated into various medical facilities and restaurants. It features a simple, compact design that fits in almost any space. And it even comes with a special mask dispenser—an idea originated by their NLNW coach, John.

“Mr. Laurance Lewis from Microsoft took time to visit us, and we presented the Hand Sanitizer station we had developed as a result of the assistance provided by Next Level Northwest. He immediately took pictures and shared them with CBRE (a commercial real estate service company that works for Microsoft) to see if they may be interested in our hand sanitizer units as well. And as it turns out, Microsoft is interested in the success of the small business enterprise—they believe in our product and they will be buying some for a few of their locations.”

## WHAT’S NEXT FOR E-M?

After working with NLNW, Gladys discovered newfound confidence as a business owner. Her overall outlook became more curious, more thoughtful, and more thankful. And this translated into the way she engages with her customers and supports her employees.

“Going forward, we’re always looking into more innovation. We’re looking into collaboration. We’re looking into being creative. And we’re always taking a positive approach.”

## A RIPPLE EFFECT

As our conversation with Gladys was coming to an end, she requested to leave our readers with this closing message about the positive collaboration she experienced with Next Level Northwest:

“Please let everyone know that I do believe in humanity. I do believe that God created us to help each other. The key is collaboration. We need to look after each other, and I believe Next Level Northwest is trying to do that.

They’re helping small businesses become successful, and that creates a ripple effect. Now, we can do a bit more work in our shop, which can get more people hired, which can enable someone to feed their family, which can help their kid go to school... and then, that kid will grow up with a positive, caring attitude.

And I think that creates better communities.”

## ABOUT NEXT LEVEL NORTHWEST

Next Level Northwest is a not-for-profit business accelerator program that supports existing local businesses. The program was founded by five Northwest Chicagoland municipalities—Elk Grove Village, Hanover Park, Hoffman Estates, Rolling Meadows, and Schaumburg—as a public-private partnership to support regional and local businesses through collaborative and innovative initiatives to help grow local economies. To learn more about Next Level Northwest or to submit an application for your company to join the next class of companies in the business accelerator program, visit [www.nextlevelnorthwest.org](http://www.nextlevelnorthwest.org).

## THE PATH TO SUCCESS STARTS HERE



To get started, visit [NextLevelNorthwest.org](http://NextLevelNorthwest.org) and/or contact your local Economic Development Director for more information.

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