

Delaware Small Business Persons of the Year

Marian Young & Mark Lannan BrightFields, Inc. Wilmington, DE

Marian Young, President & Co-owner

Mark Lannan, Principal & Co-owner

801 Industrial Street, Suite 1

Wilmington, DE 19801

(302) 656-9600

Fax (302) 656-9700

myoung@brightfieldsinc.com

mlannan@brightfieldsinc.com

www.brightfieldsinc.com

Marian Young and Mark Lannan know it is good being green. In the past five years, their company, BrightFields, a full-service environmental consulting and remediation services firm, has expanded from 14 to 32 employees and increased its annual revenue eight-fold.

Formed in 2003 after purchasing the assets of WIK Associates from Young and Lannan's former employer, the company provides a wide range of environmental services, including assessments, investigations and remediation. BrightFields is best known for its work in the environmental restoration of old industrial properties along Wilmington's waterfront.

BrightFields walks the walk when it comes to the environment. The company demonstrated its personal commitment to urban renewal by constructing its new office building on a brownfield property, a former city landfill in Wilmington. A second office in Milford, Del., was recently opened to better serve its Delmarva Peninsula customers.

BrightFields applies a customer and results-focused cross-disciplinary team to complex brownfield redevelopment projects. In the redevelopment of Wilmington's riverfront, Young and Lannan helped to form a public and private partnership, including federal, state and local regulatory agencies, redevelopment and economic development agencies, developers and construction companies to integrate environmental remediation into the redevelopment construction process. This innovative approach serves as a model as BrightFields expands its services throughout the Delaware Valley, with Wilmington as a strategic location for BrightFields' continued growth.

Overcoming Adversity

When the wife and husband team purchased the company from their employer, they worked closely with SCORE and WSFS Bank to develop and implement a detailed financial plan. As the only program managers at the beginning, Young focused on

business and staff development and Lannan focused on implementing financial controls, managing cash flow and increasing profitability.

Transitioning existing clients from a well-known company and introducing the new BrightFields company name were major challenges. The transition focused on a marketing strategy entitled, “A New Environmental Company with the Faces You Know and Trust,” along with the slogan “Turning Brownfields into BrightFields.” The approach was developed in-house by the entire BrightFields team.

BrightFields also had its share of disruptions due to employee illnesses, requiring a shifting of duties and interim team coverage. Several weeks after their 2005 office move, Young underwent emergency surgery for a serious illness, which ultimately required hospitalizations and an extensive recovery period. The company also faced setbacks when its financial manager became ill in 2004 and only recently returned to work part-time.

Thanks to prior investments in employee leadership training, the BrightFields team stepped in to fill the void. Despite the heavy workload during this period, the team of scientists, engineers and support staff continued to meet clients’ deadlines and hired and integrated additional staff to fulfill project demands. The experiences strengthened the employees’ working relationships and brought them closer as a team.

Giving Back to the Community

Despite the heavy workload of growing a successful business, Young and Lannan are very active in the community. Young is the immediate past president of Main Street Delaware City and serves on the board of the Committee of 100, a business organization focused on economic stability and quality of life issues. She also participates in Delaware’s annual Teacher Externship Program, hosting high school math and science teachers who take their work experiences from BrightFields back to the classroom.

Young previously served on two Governors’ task forces, the Citizens’ Work Group on Recycling and the Solid Waste Management Technical Working Group. She is also active in the Society of Women Environmental Professionals, where she mentors young colleagues.

Lannan is active in Main Street Delaware City and the Wilmington Maritime Society. He also serves on the board of the Delaware Alumni Chapter of West Virginia University, where he actively participates in its student recruiting program.

Young and Lannan credit the hard work and dedication of their employees, the encouragement of their friends and advisors, and the continuing support of their clients for contributing to BrightFields’ success.

Thanks to their vision and success, the entire Delaware Valley is learning it is good being green.

