

# Sparking A Company And A Career

By Chris Albanese

In April of 2003, while in my Senior year of high school, my father, John T. Albanese, decided to start his own company, Advanced Welding Supply Company (Greenfield, WI). As tempting as it was to join my father's newly formed business after high school, I found it necessary to evaluate my long term plans. I knew deep down that it was imperative to further my education to be successful.

I attended Carroll University where I played NCAA football and began my professional career path. Being part of the football team was invaluable—it taught me the discipline and perseverance required to thrive in this fast-paced, competitive business. After earning a BS in business management, I was offered a sales position with the the family business. After a few months of on the job training (or rather, baptism by fire), frustration began to creep in. I was encouraged by my father to do something about it, so I signed up for [welding](#) theory classes at Milwaukee Area Technical College. I learned everything from [MIG](#) and [TIG](#) to [flux-cored](#) and [stick welding](#). Learning the welding trade has been invaluable to my professional development, as it enables me to relate much more to our customer's requirements

Currently, I serve as vice president of sales and operations within the company, which operates from a new 2,000-sq.-ft. warehouse and services customers throughout Southeastern Wisconsin. I sell our entire range of products and technical services including industrial gases. My daily responsibilities include intimately managing 25 key accounts, finding growth areas, billing,

invoicing, delivering and whatever it takes to make our business succeed. In a family owned and operated business like ours, it's a total team effort do make sure that we always get the job done right!



My education allows me to bring a unique perspective to the company. I'm very adept with technology and that has allowed me to implement some cost-saving measures to our business. As an example, I initiated the change from paper invoices to e-mail-based delivery. Another advancement I initiated was the launch of our informative new website which represents our company very well.

While the business side of the business came relatively easy to me, the technical side was more of a struggle. There's so much to learn in this industry and I started on the ground floor. However, the knowledge and understanding that I've gained is going to serve as a catalyst as my father and I grow the business moving forward. Plans for the future include opening a retail storefront and increasing our staff. We have a great, loyal customer-base made up of companies that we consider as much friends as clients. We want to continue growing that base without ever sacrificing the kind of dedicated, responsive service that we're known for.

