

# Willits Weekly

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Above: The METALfx sign at the North Lenore Avenue turnoff on East Commercial. Below: Two METALfx associates in the machine shop position a large sheet metal part for counter sinks in the manual mill.



## METALfx looks to hire and grow

METALfx of Willits has new owners, and the company's president, Henry Moss, wants to let Willits – and potential employees – know about it. "We are growing, and we are looking to the community of Willits to find more great employees," Moss said.

Ninety percent of METALfx's current workers, about 145 people, live in Willits or the surrounding areas, with a few commuting from out of town. The company is "the largest private employer in Willits," Moss said. When asked what kind of education or training the company is looking for in the approximately 50 new workers they're hoping to hire in the next 12 to 18 months, Moss said the company is happy to provide training to any suitable applicants 18 or older.

"Anytime we can hire skilled employees, we'll jump on it," Moss said. "But we have many who were not skilled employees when they joined us, but they are skilled today."

"We have 15 people who've been with us 30-plus years," said B.J. Gutierrez, Human Resources manager, "and another 30 to 35 who

have been with us at least 20 years. Several of these are employees who came in fresh from high school, started on the floor, and worked their way up to management."

The ownership change was announced April 19, via a joint press release from METALfx and new owners Montage Partners, a private equity firm based in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Moss has been working in Willits for two years now; Gordon Short, who served as president at METALfx for 19 years, will remain a shareholder of the company and a member of the board of directors going forward.

"We're thrilled to be partnering with Henry Moss, Gordon Short and the long-standing management team at METALfx, and to support the company as it makes additional investments in people, technology and equipment to better serve its customers," said Rob Wolfman, co-managing partner at Montage.

A smooth transition between ownerships in the companies it invests in is a point of pride for Montage Partners. At METALfx, a transition has also been in the works during the two years since Moss came on board. He came from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a manufacturing background that included "significant growth" in companies he was managing.

"The transition from Gordon to me has been very deliberate," Moss said. "We wanted the employees and customers to feel comfortable.



Above, from left: Brent Madison, laser operator, loads parts into the Bystronic laser cutting machine for a secondary operation. Stacks of radiant floor heating panels are processed and ready for shipment. Evelyn Gonzalez removes a silk screened part from the conveyor oven

