

diversity in

science | tech | engineering | arts | math

STEAM

M A G

N E

WINTER/SPRING 2016

#ILOOGLIKEANENGINEER

MIMICKING
SEAHORSE TAILS
COULD LEAD
TO BETTER
ROBOTS

STEAM
SHINES IN
STAR
WARS

will.i.am

Changing Communities
from Striving to Thriving

\$6.95US



0 74470 56917 6



TALKING WITH BRUCE GEIER

of Technology
Integration Group



Company founder gives advice on building your business

Bruce Geier is the founder, President and CEO of Technology Integration Group (TIG), a leading supplier of value-added computing solutions.

After founding the company in 1981, Geier incorporated the business as PC Specialists, Inc. in 1983, and later adopted the dba of Technology Integration Group. His leadership focus mirrors the company's mission – to earn a place as a trusted partner to clients, providing only the highest level of service, value and advanced technology to power their strategic business goals.

Geier spoke in October at the 2015 NMSDC Conference and Business Opportunity Exchange, and *Diversity in STEAM Magazine* spoke with Geier at that conference.

DISM: *Did you always want to own your own business?*

BG: Owning a business has always been in my life plans. I was the kid with the Kool-Aid stand. In college, I had an Indian jewelry store. I saw the prospects of computing very early on and made a risky move that changed my life and career. Right out of college, after receiving a BS in Computer Science (Cum Laude) and Master in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Utah, I entered the workforce hoping that someday I would be my own boss. I led the computer automation group of Ernst and Whinney (now recognized as Ernst and Young, one of the Big 4 accounting firms) in San Diego, California. At that time, software options were scarce, so we developed computer programs for clients. This was early on in computer history, when it was all just emerging and the PC took the market by storm. It was a time of clunky, very large monochrome computers that have all but vanished today. When my request for a color monitor was denied, I decided to go out on my own and launch what is now become TIG.

DISM: *Did you have a mentor? How important is having a mentor to you?*

BG: I had many mentors throughout my life. My mentors were people who had a major impact on some key business decisions. Several mentors influenced and pushed me to not only think outside of the box but also expand it and always keep an eye on the big picture. Strategic to it all were many of my own employees, with their expertise that helped to foster the business person I am today. You should always surround yourself with knowledgeable

people you admire and respect.

DISM: *What help was most valuable to you as you started your company?*

BG: Understanding finances! For any company in growth mode, finance is a major concern. You can never underestimate the power of your banker. Your banker becomes your friend and ally. Not understanding or having access to funds can limit your growth. Diversifying our portfolio was also extremely valuable. I never put all of our business offerings and technologies in one basket.

DISM: *Have you found any particular advantages or challenges to being a minority business owner?*

BG: The advantage of being a minority business owner is having access to procurement opportunities provided by supplier diversity professionals and advocates from

boxes, instead of just one. Ultimately, it's the ability to step outside the box and view it from your customer's perspective. Always be prepared for what's coming down the road.

DISM: *What do you think are the most important cultural attributes a company must have?*

BG: First and foremost, having a "limitless winning" team attitude. We want our employees empowered and inspired to bring the best of themselves to work every day. Secondly, we keep an eye on innovation and commitment to collaboration. And lastly, you must stand for something beyond simply increasing profits. Services or serving causes that clearly add value in the world, making it possible for teams to derive a sense of meaning from their work, and to feel good about the company they work for.

NMSDC and their affiliates can open doors for opportunities to develop relationships that can grow your business.

larger corporations and government agencies. NMSDC and their affiliates can open doors for opportunities to develop relationships that can grow your business. A major challenge is the misconception that MBE's are only small. TIG is a global company and can compete with the largest public competitors. Today, TIG has 23 locations in the United States and 3 international offices and access to a global delivery partner network covering five continents. We support fortune 500 companies in every major vertical.

DISM: *What is the most beneficial in being a member?*

BG: Being a member, we have the opportunity to participate in various programs including networking sessions. We have seen tremendous success in our global expansion efforts because of the relationships we were able to forge through NMSDC.

DISM: *How important do you believe it is today for companies to "think outside the box"?*

BG: It is important to be agile and flexible. It's not about reinventing the wheel, but more about your differentiators. Think about how to expand the box, or create multiple

DISM: *What advice would you give future business owners as they get started?*

BG: Know your business and know your audience – stay informed and whatever line of business you are in, understand what the future of that business is, and how the market is going to evolve. Make sure that you have your finances together and a good credit line. As mentioned before, never underestimate your banker.

DISM: *How do you hope to see your company growing over the next decade?*

BG: I foresee continued focus to increase our market share in the area of software defined data center solutions and global expansion into more emerging markets. TIG is moving towards software in a big way. Everyone in business should keep an eye on software, how your company is involved and adapting to this new era model.

TIG has been a National Corporate Plus® member of NMSDC since September 2007.

About TIG

TIG is a premier ISO 9001:2008 certified, full-service IT systems integrator with 33 years of experience providing end-to-end technology solutions.