



Diversity and teamwork go hand-in-hand at Mentor Technical Group

BY B.G. DOYLE

In 2000, Luis D. Soto, Julian Rodriguez, and Felix Bernard set out to bring a revolutionary concept to the local pharmaceutical industry. They had the idea of forming teams with complementary and overlapping skills. This approach was meant to cover all aspects of the utilities management industry. Thus, Mentor Technical Group was born.

"We had all worked in the pharmaceutical industry," said Rodriguez, vice president of regulatory compliance and validation. "We noticed there was no interaction between companies providing different services. So we decided to fill that gap with a multidisciplinary approach."

Mentor combined utilities operation, validation, calibration, and mechanical services. The result was a suite of solutions designed to save clients' money and ensure projects were completed on time. Mentor currently offers solutions in the areas of computerized maintenance management, regulatory compliance, project management, and utilities outsourcing.

"The traditional approach is becoming obsolete,"



From left: Felix Bernard, vice president of operations; Luis Soto, president; Julian Rodriguez, vice president of regulatory compliance and validations

said Bernard, vice president of operations. "By taking advantage of our cost-effective engineering solutions, our clients are more able to focus on core business while we take care of the rest."

The local pharmaceutical industry has quickly caught on to the benefits of this approach. Therefore, Mentor has grown quickly in the past two and a half years. "Most companies are dedicated to one area," said Soto, company president.

"Having all disciplines working together is what sets us apart." Soto also said balancing people, regulatory compliance, and technology has helped his firm serve as an engineering support partner.

Much of Mentor's success is based on being able to perform multiple tasks while functioning as a team. Mentor's staff of 130 people includes experts in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical devices industries. For Soto, people are Mentor's greatest asset. "Our people are very important," said Soto. "About 80% of our personnel have worked in pharmaceutical operations."

Company policy includes making employees' professional and personal goals part of its business strategy. "We are proud to say our employees are dedicated individuals," said Rodriguez.

"That is why it's important for us to create a productive atmosphere and provide them with challenging opportunities."

Mentor also provides services in California, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and New York, and will soon open in New Jersey. The company also plans to become a world-class service provider to markets in Latin America and Europe. n

Centennial stays focused on premium service

BY B.G. DOYLE

In the highly competitive telecommunications industry, customer service makes all the difference. Centennial has focused on this area since it established local operations in 1996. "We pride ourselves in offering our customers the ultimate service experience," said John de Armas, president of Centennial's Caribbean operations. "Because we are committed to fostering life-long clients, we are continuously setting customer service and technology standards."

According to De Armas, people make all the difference. "Our associates are our most important resources," he said. "We believe it's important to have the best employees and foster a comfortable working environment. Our people are committed to customer service. They are also very knowledgeable." Centennial has the best network of company-owned and company-managed stores and kiosks. These are strategically located throughout the island.

Centennial also focuses on offering customers a broader array of services. "The telecommunications industry is constantly evolving, and so



John de Armas, president of Centennial's Caribbean operations

are we," said De Armas. "We are constantly anticipating trends. We recently invested millions

to upgrade our network and introduce new wireless data services." These include short-message services, wireless PC Internet connections, and wireless application protocols.

The company also installed several new cell sites. These offer better coverage for 22 geographic zones throughout the island. They also give a significant boost to Centennial's signal. "We will continue setting the industry standard in terms of customer service and technology," said De Armas. "We will also continue to be the premier wireless and wireline telecommunications provider in Puerto Rico."

Centennial's focus prompted it to be the first company in the world to commercially deploy Code-Division Multiple Access technology. This has allowed Centennial to provide faster, more dependable high-quality communications. The company also prides itself on its world-class data center.

Centennial is the only telecommunications provider in Puerto Rico with a 100% fiber-optic network. In addition, the company has collaborated in a number of groundbreaking initiatives, including the Jose Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, the Arecibo Observatory, and Internet 2. n