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28 Years of Service with Christa Batton

Christa Batton has achieved 28 years and 10 months of service at Americhem working her way up from Accounts Receivable Clerk to Corporate Benefits Manager to her current role as Senior Human Resources Manager for North America. Christa was hired on October 21, 1992 with her Bachelor's Degree in HR. At the time, she was looking for any open position at Americhem just to get into the company that her father had proudly worked at for many years. Americhem was Christa's dream job after watching her dad become the first engineer for the company and design so many of the production lines that are still in operation today. She quickly found out that Accounting wasn't for her and moved into an HR role as soon as the Corporate Benefits Manager position opened.

To celebrate Americhem's 80 year anniversary, Christa was kind enough to be interviewed as one of Americhem's longest tenured employees. The dialogue was as follows:

What was the field of plastics like when you first started?

When I first started in Accounting, there was a lot of manual entry and the little technology that we did have was so antiquated compared to today. Major system changes have dramatically improved workflow compared to my ledger sized binders back in the day.

What were some of the biggest challenges back then?

The biggest challenges were and are maintaining our family values while still growing exponentially. It has been a tricky balance, but I think we have kept true to our core. I have had the pleasure of knowing both Dick and Rick Juve and I try every day in my HR role to carry out their wishes of maintaining Americhem's family values. There are many times that I'm helping employees and I can't share since it is personal, but I still know that I am living out those original values of helping others.

What changes have you seen in plastics?

I've been lucky in my career to have witnessed many perspectives from different departments, which has allowed me to see both our customers and suppliers. Over the years, watching all of these companies go through changes and then always seeing Americhem on top has been remarkable.



Picture 1: Christa Batton, 2021.

What have been the greatest developments in the field of plastics over the last 28 years?

It's really exciting to talk about the end applications that our products go into today. There are so many items that people don't realize are made from plastic such as the clothes you're wearing or your deck in your backyard. Sharing that niche with people has always been very exciting to me.

From your perspective, what would you say are Americhem's greatest accomplishments?

The growth of our employees. I started out as an Accounting Clerk and look at where I am now. Look at the opportunities I have been given. Now it is our turn to lead and pass that torch down to the next generation.

In your opinion, is there anything that Americhem should have done differently?

We have been profitable for over 80 years; so to answer your question- no. Our decisions have served us well.

What are some of your fondest Americhem memories?

Some of my fondest memories were from when we used to do Corporate Challenge in Akron, Ohio and I was on the swim team. Corporate Challenge was this company that would put on Olympic-like events for local organizations to do team building. It really built comradery since the teams were cross-functional.

What are the key issues that you see Americhem addressing in the future?

Attraction and retention will always be a challenge. Making sure that we are capturing the knowledge of the people that are retiring within the next 5-10 years and transferring that knowledge to the new hires will be key in maintaining a healthy cycle of employees.

Please share one memory of a funny situation that you encountered at Americhem.

Many years ago, Rick Mathew and Chris Bamford used to always try to scare each other. One time, Chris was on a phone call and I saw Rick slinking across the floor in front of my office and going towards Chris's office. Rick had an 8ft long tube with him so I knew he was up to something. Rick got to Chris's doorway, jumped up, and screamed through the tube pointed right at Chris. We all were in tears from laughing so hard; even Chris.



Picture 2: Christa (back middle) with Americhem colleagues on Halloween.

Describe what Americhem means to you.

When my dad worked for Americhem, I saw the contributions he was making and how he really made a difference. I also saw how important the company was to him and how well respected he was. I witnessed the values of Americhem before even becoming an employee here. They put food on my table growing up and now I've put food on my kids' table because of Americhem. All I have and will ever want to do is carry on the core values of this company. I always hope that I am making Mr. Juve proud. He made such an impact on me when he would walk through the plants and not only shake everyone's hand, but also know them by name. I just hope that I represent a small piece of him in the work that I do.

Thank you Christa for your endless commitment to Americhem and your timeless friendship to many of us. We wish you continued success in your long standing career and look forward to your ongoing positivity you spread across the company.