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CHICAGO HOSPITAL NEWS

Article

American Nursing Services Batting 1,000 In Connecting Hospitals and Nurses

By John Fries

It was an interesting summer at Wrigley Field. Sammy Sosa is still the man. A few great players came our way this past season; most notably, Kenny Lofton, Randall Simon and Aramis Ramirez from the Pirates. The Cubs made the playoffs. And let's not forget Ozzy Osbourne trying valiantly to fill Harry Caray's shoes one memorable evening during the seventh inning stretch. The video of him singing something that sounded vaguely like "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" snagged him the heaviest airplay he's gotten in years.

While Cubs fans reminisce about the season gone by and look forward to what next spring holds in store--just a few short blocks from Wrigley, Sam and Fred Dardick are consistently batting a thousand, hitting grand slams, and building their own fan base. The brothers, Evanston natives and avid Cubs fans, are owners of American Nursing Services, a permanent placement nurse staffing company that provides full-time nursing personnel for hospitals, home health care companies, nursing homes and other businesses.

Since starting the company two years ago, they've built an impressive client list, placing scores of nurses into new work environments. It's a win-win-win situation for the company, the clients and the nurses, something President Sam Dardick attributes to his company's focus on meeting, even exceeding, customer expectations.

"Customer satisfaction is key," he said, "We recruit the best nurses available, primarily through word-of-mouth, and ask them what kind of work they want they want to do and how much they want to be paid. Before the client even sees a nurse's resume, we ensure the nurse's credibility and employability by doing thorough background, criminal and reference checks. We only provide good, qualified people."

Once Dardick matches a nurse to a health care facility, the facility isn't billed until after the first thirty days of employment. This to make sure that the facility and the nurse are satisfied. Then, he goes a major step forward by providing the facility with something that's virtually unprecedented in the recruitment field: a six-month guarantee.

"We tell our clients that if a nurse leaves at any time before his or her first six months are up, we'll replace that nurse at no charge. Most recruiters provide a three-month guarantee. We double that, because we want to build long-term, mutually satisfying relationships with the clients we serve."

For a hospital or nursing home that relies heavily on a pool of temporary nurses, a relationship with American Nursing Services can result in substantial cost savings. Some hospitals spend millions of dollars annually to hire temp nurses, when they could save \$60,000 to \$70,000 per nurse by hiring permanent nurses through Dardick's company.

Dardick mentioned one recent situation in which he recruited a nurse with excellent credentials, placed her in a better paying position at a Chicago hospital than the job she'd held previously, got her a generous signing bonus—and, at the same time, saved the hospital over \$70,000 in temporary nursing costs.

American Nursing Services provides nursing personnel at all levels of staffing, including vice presidents, directors, managers and patient floor nurses. They currently contract with many local healthcare organizations, and receive a significant amount of repeat business. After recently placing three operating room nurses at one local hospital they were subsequently asked by the facility to recruit PACU and endoscopy nurses.

The Dardick brothers bring a diverse and eclectic background to their roles. Sam, who holds a Bachelor's degree from Columbia College and a Master's degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology, has a solid background in marketing, business development, product management and consulting. Previously, he held consulting positions at Ernst & Young and KPMG, and also worked for a time at SBC. His passion is problem solving, something he does for his clients on a daily basis.

Fred Dardick is a Stanford-educated molecular biologist who worked in hospitals--including Northwestern University and the University of Chicago--for several years, and saw firsthand a large degree of nursing turnover and the need for a better staffing organization. This led the Dardicks to launch American Nursing Services in February 2001.

Sam serves as the company's client liaison and Fred recruits the nurses. Together, they bring a tremendous amount of innovation to the local nurse recruitment arena. They have enjoyed a great deal of success, along with the opportunity to consider expansion into other geographic markets that could easily benefit from the services they provide. That may eventually happen someday, said Sam, but right now, their goal is to continue expanding locally.

"We want to become the premier nurse staffing company in Chicago," said Sam Dardick.