



Dynamic Duo

THIRTY YEARS AGO, TWO CASE GRADUATE STUDENTS TOOK THEIR RESEARCH OUT OF THE CLASSROOM TO CREATE GRL ENGINEERS.

By Claire Marron

"Perseverance is why we're still here," says co-Founder Frank Rausche.

And that determination is what helped GRL Engineers Inc. become the growing business that it is in the Cleveland community and the country for the past 30 years and counting.

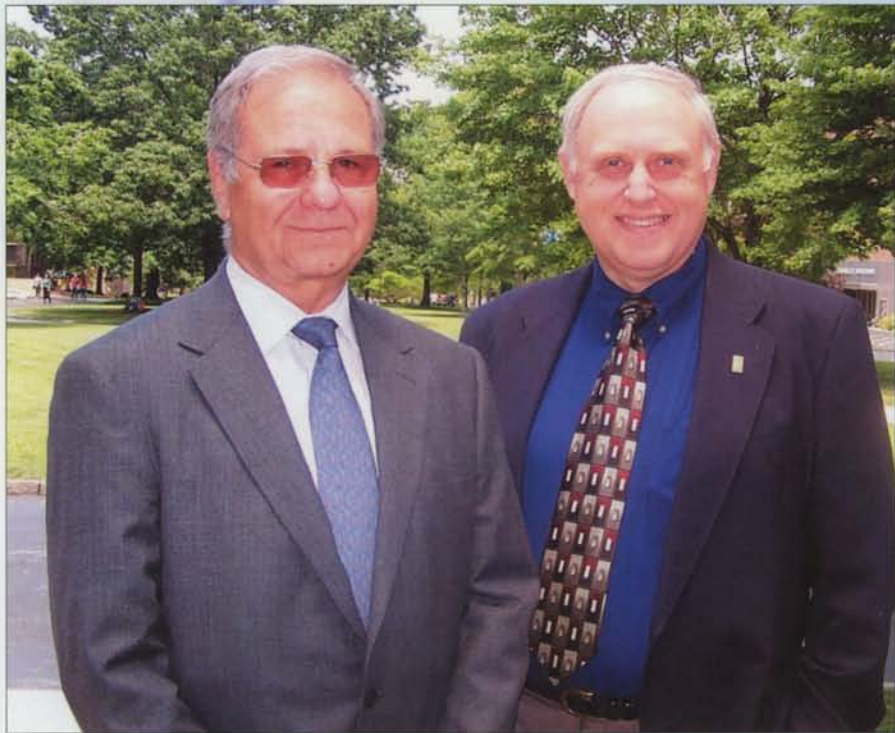
It all started in the research labs of Case Western Reserve University.

"There was an idea, there was potential, but no clear picture of what could come later," says Rausche.

In 1976, GRL Engineers was launched based on Case research that focused on an electronic device that would display, for each hammer blow, the strength of a pile in a building foundation. The Ohio Department of Transportation was interested in new technologies of pile testing and, therefore, funded the effort. "Dynamic Load Testing," or what's now called "High Strain Dynamic Testing according to the Case Method," was seen as a better alternative to previous strength testing.

But as with any business, the founders, Rausche and a fellow Case grad student, Garland Likins, built it from the ground up.

"We didn't even have a market because it was a totally new product," Rausche says. "We had to tell people how to use our product and why they



Frank Rausche and Garland Likins of GRL Engineers Inc.

should use it; they weren't ready for us yet."

But their strategy has always been to take care of the customer. And it worked. Thirty years later, GRL Engineers Inc. is still standing strong. They got through the days of having to haul their own equipment to client sites and the time-consuming process of gathering test data before computers.

"We are there when they need us and do our job as well as possible," says Rausche.

Today, GRL has expanded to six branches around the country and enjoys a small portion of offshore projects. The company has grown to encompass its sister firm, Pile Dynamics, which benefits from the experience that GRL has gained over the past three decades.

But just because GRL is celebrating its 30-year anniversary does not mean it is time to sit back and relax. The company is still moving forward.


"The goal is to improve what we are doing," says Rausche. "We are

still involved in research and development."

The duo has kept the company in Northeast Ohio despite numerous opportunities to move elsewhere.

"Cleveland is a good location for this type of business," says Rausche. "It has a university nearby; it has a good source of engineers; it has the facilities; everything we needed was nearby. And our families and support is here and it's not expensive like other cities."

They got to where they are by being conservative and taking care of the customer and that is the advice Rausche continues to give today, along with the old adage of good old-fashioned hard work.

"We are proud of what we have accomplished and thankful for all the people that we have here, and that we are able to provide a first-class service," says Rausche. 

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