

# Serving From the Inside Out

Northern California POU business' commitment to service extends beyond the office

By Williette Nyanue

**B**efore Casey Taylor become president of Waterlogic West, he worked for Taylor Made Water Systems, a family-run business in Northern California started by Taylor and his father and brother in 1998. In 2012, the Taylors sold the business to Waterlogic, a point-of-use (POU) water purification provider. That year, Taylor Made Water Systems also purchased AquaPurix in Hayward, Calif., and AquaPerfect in Sacramento, Calif., and in 2013, all three companies merged to form Waterlogic West, a subsidiary of Waterlogic Plc.

## Offering a Different Solution

Taylor's early years in the POU industry were difficult as he tried to establish himself within a segment that did not seem to be interested in his products. "There was very little POU business in Northern California and our market was dominated by regional bottled water companies," Taylor said. "Hardly anyone had heard of reverse osmosis, and very few would even consider a 'bottleless' cooler. When [consumers] set up their offices, they signed up for bottle deliveries and didn't necessarily want to think about it ever again."

As consumers have become more aware of the benefits of POU water systems, the industry has matured and Waterlogic West has grown. "The market has changed so much. There is a lot of education about water in general, and now there is a lot of backlash against bottled water because of environmental factors," Taylor said. "Now a lot of people have been exposed to POU, whether at work, at home or through



Waterlogic West prides itself on creating a positive work atmosphere for employees.

[products] seen at Target and Home Depot."

In addition to consumer education, Taylor said persistence also spurred growth. "In the beginning it was mostly persistence, believing in what we were doing and beating the streets to get in front of people," he said.

## Happy Employees, Happy Customers

One feature that stands out at Waterlogic West is its focus on employees. "At Taylor Made, we created six corporate values—hard work, fun, teamwork, integrity, innovation and community. That culture has carried on to Waterlogic," Taylor said. "We recognize that we all need to work hard and put in a quality effort, but we also need to consider that we spend more waking hours with our coworkers than we do with our families. If we're not having fun at work, that will be reflected in our attitudes and work product."

Whether it is working on good communication and relationships, or planned activities like team building events, monthly birthday celebrations and ugly sweater

contests, Waterlogic West keeps the work environment fun. Taylor said that giving employees the opportunity to enjoy one another's company and see each other as human beings makes everyone's job more enjoyable. "Then they're happier at work and provide better customer service, and our customers are happy," he said.

### Serving Beyond the Office

Another value that Waterlogic West stands by is a commitment to service outside the office. Before Waterlogic bought Taylor Made Water Systems, Taylor said his father always made service a part of the business. In 1990, Taylor's father created the Taylor Family Foundation. According to the organization's website, its mission is to "preserve the wellness and enhance the quality of life for children in Northern California living with life-threatening and chronic illnesses, developmental disabilities and at-risk youth, through unique therapeutic experiences

and support."

The organization hosts an annual fundraiser to help send these children to a one-week summer camp, where, according to Taylor, "they can spend time with children who are just like them." Although the foundation is not officially affiliated with Waterlogic, the company has provided support. Outside of employee attendance, Waterlogic mans a booth at the fundraisers and provides financial support, and some of the company's corporate officers visit the camp.

In addition to its support of the Taylor Family Foundation, Waterlogic has partnered with WaterAid, a nonprofit organization that provides water, sanitation and hygiene education in developing countries. The company has committed to a \$225,000 donation between 2012 and 2014.

### Quality Focused

Taylor sees tremendous potential within the industry for future growth. "There is still a huge potential market for POU devices as we look to

expand our offerings throughout the western U.S.," he said. "Technology has made huge leaps over the last several years and we're now able to provide our customers with POU solutions that can address just about any need they may have."

Despite Waterlogic West's aggressive growth plans, its focus will continue to be on those companies that prefer quality to price. "It's my belief that nobody can make money by selling cheap coolers, and, in the long run, cheap coolers are not good for our customers," Taylor said. "It's best for us and the customer if the product works, it works all the time, provides them with clean, safe water, and always gives them what they are paying for." **WQP**

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