

◆ *Whitemarsh* **Local firm marks 15 years of innovation**

**Provides engineering,
project management
for the drug industry**

By CARL ROTENBERG
Staff Writer

WHITEMARSH — An engineering firm that specializes in designing and building pharmaceutical facilities celebrated its 15th anniversary in June.

Andrew A. Signore and Joseph A. Blanchard started Integrated Projects Services in a small Malvern office with \$30,000 for office rent, furniture and start-up capital.

The central idea of the new business was to provide engineering and project management of complicated pharmaceutical buildings from one company, Signore said.

"We're engineers who build," Signore said. "We wanted to be a full-service provider to pharmaceutical companies. We thought we could do it faster and at less cost."

The two co-founders met when they worked together 19 years ago at Smith Kline Beecham in Upper Merion. Signore was the director of engineering there and Blanchard worked for him as the manager of pharmaceutical engineering support.

In their first year in business, they attracted seven corporate clients and \$2 million in sales. Some of their early clients were Smith Kline Beecham (now GlaxoSmithKline), Pharmaceuticals in Fort Washington and Merck & Co. Inc. in Upper Gwynedd.

Their first assignment was to design and install a tablet coater at McNeil Pharmaceutical's plant in Dorado, Puerto Rico.

"We're considered an alternative service to the national engineering companies," he said. "We're smaller, more cost effective and very service oriented."

Although IPS works for many of the largest pharmaceutical companies on the East Coast, company officials are reluctant to talk about the details of many of their projects, Signore said.

Their client list includes Wyeth, Dupont Pharmaceuticals, Scherer,

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Andrew A. Signore
Integrated Projects
Services



Marnie Levengood/Staff Photographer
Integrated Projects Services co-founder Andrew A. Signore, at the company's Lafayette Hill offices Wednesday, says the company is more cost effective for its clients than larger, national engineering firms. The company marked 15 years in business in June. It now has offices in eight states and Puerto Rico.

Bristol-Myers Squibb, Centocor, Eli Lilly and Johnson & Johnson.

The company had gross sales of more than \$103 million last year with half of the revenue coming from consulting and engineering work and half from construction and design work.

This summer IPS completed a \$15 million design/build project at the Philadelphia Naval Yard for AppTec Laboratory Services of St. Paul, Minn. The 75,000-square-foot, single-story facility was built quickly

because Liberty Property Trust had already built a shell building on the site. Twenty engineers and project managers from IPS worked on the construction project for one year.

IPS is working on the construction of a one-story, 100,000-square-foot packaging and warehouse building in the Allentown area for Sharp, a contract pharmaceutical packager. Construction will be completed in December.

IPS has grown to more than 300 employees with offices in Whitemarsh, New Jersey, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Maryland, Florida, Indiana, California and Puerto Rico. The corporate office at 2001 Joshua Road accommodates 150 workers.

During its growth period, the company moved to a Conshohocken office from 1991 to 1995.

Blanchard grew up in Philadelphia and earned a mechanical engineering degree at Penn State University in 1972. Signore grew up in New York City and earned a chemical engineering degree at Manhattan College in 1973.

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