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Women in the Industry

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Fully Automated IG Facility to Open in Dallas

The 145,000-square-foot facility located in Dallas features automated jumbo glass cutting, tempering and insulating, transport and fabrication, all without human interaction.

A new fabrication facility in Dallas is the first of its kind in the U.S., according to its owner Blue Star Glass. The 145,000-square-foot facility features automated jumbo glass cutting, tempering and insulating, transport and fabrication, all without human interaction. President Alex Oanono says that the shift to automation will allow the company to focus more on quality than production. *(Turn to page 48 to read more about Alex Oanono in our Women in the Glass Industry special section.)*

“In our Texas facility, we work with a minimal yet sophisticated staff in comparison to traditional IGU lines which require heavy coordination between operators and stations – this often leads to a focus on production output instead of quality,” she says. “Operating a fully automated factory enables our staff to reinforce their focus on quality, planning and logistics coordination, which results in Blue Star being a more reliable partner.”

Blue Star’s new location was originally the home of Velocity Glass, part of Apogee Enterprises, which closed after 18 months. The closure came as Apogee announced major changes to its business structure in the summer of 2021.

Blue Star vice president Dylan Oanono says that the move to Texas is imperative for the company to meet its goals of providing quality products with shorter lead times.

“The opportunity in Texas empowered us to quickly accomplish our long-term goals of integrating a high-speed IGU line that provides unmatched quality to our growing and loyal customer base,” says Dylan, adding that as a private business, it’s important to stay ahead of the curve as more glass fabricators consolidate under private equity and corporate umbrellas.

“We believe that being a family-run operation provides our customers and partners the highest level of service,” he says.

The shift to Dallas will benefit Blue Star’s headquarters in New Jersey, says company founder and principal Ronnie Oanono. The additional insulated glass capacity in Texas will allow the company to shift high-volume and project work from New Jersey to Dallas. It will also let Blue Star allocate more capacity to other product lines that are offered in New Jersey, such as heavy tempered glass, shower doors, complicated CNC work, laminated and tempered laminated glass and its all-glass entrance department.

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