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equipmentworld.com | April 2019

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# Minnesota contractor's hard-scrabble start with little shut-eye pays off



Nicole Reshetar, 39, works side by side with her husband, Brett Reshetar, 46, in their commercial contracting business, Reshetar Systems, in Anoka, Minnesota. The company has steadily grown since he started it in 2001.

**F**or a young guy trying to figure out his future, the best career advice doesn't always come from a guidance counselor or a recruiter. Sometimes, it's simply your dad wielding a drill, or your buddy's uncle standing with a hammer in his hand during a remodeling project.

And so it was for a young Brett Reshetar of Minnesota, who found his circuitous route into the trades by way of the hospitality industry, where he'd quickly risen to being a Dairy Queen manager. He left that vocation almost as fast as his rise – but only because he'd found more gratifying work to do with his hands than serve ice cream.

His company, Reshetar Systems, is now a full-service contractor em-

ploying about 70 people on commercial projects, including demolition, construction, carpentry and snow removal. Reshetar started with little more than a snowplow, carpentry tools and his youthful ambition. After years of working with mentors, Brett founded Reshetar Systems in

Brett Reshetar, Reshetar Systems	
<b>City, State:</b>	Anoka, Minnesota
<b>Year Started:</b>	2001
<b>Number of employees:</b>	70
<b>Annual revenue:</b>	\$5 million to \$7 million
<b>Markets served:</b>	Commercial construction, demolition, carpentry, snow removal

2001 in Anoka, a suburb 22 miles northwest of Minneapolis. His wife, Nicole, works full time in the office.

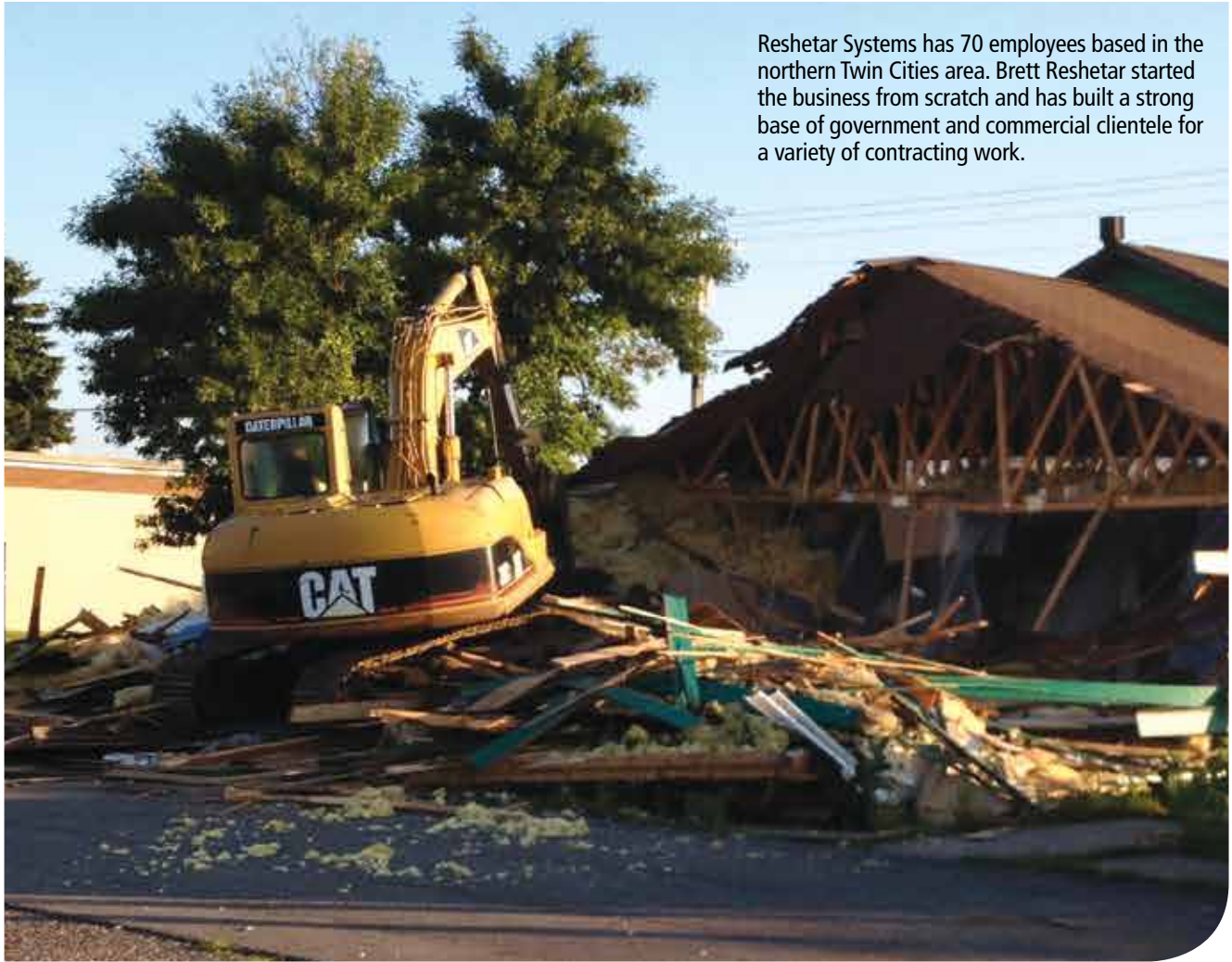
The company is doing \$5 million to \$7 million in business annually, and its prospects for 2019 are on the uptick.

"I knew I could succeed if I continued to work hard and never give up," says Brett, now 46.

"I have been blessed with the greatest support structure anyone could ever ask for," he continues. "I am proud of our team here at Reshetar Systems and all they have accomplished. They are the true backbone of who we are."

## Seeing big potential

In high school, Brett began working at a busy downtown Minneapolis



Reshetar Systems has 70 employees based in the northern Twin Cities area. Brett Reshetar started the business from scratch and has built a strong base of government and commercial clientele for a variety of contracting work.

Dairy Queen, happy to get paid for serving double-dip cones over the sounds of heavy traffic. He took the bus to and from work. His industrious nature quickly became obvious to the shop owner, and soon Brett was named manager.

He also helped his dad fix up distressed apartment buildings. And he learned carpentry in residential construction while working for a friend's uncle.

After high school, Brett became a union carpenter, and after two years in the field, he began estimating. It was then he saw the big potential for a brighter future.

At 28, he came home and told his wife of one month that he was quitting his job to strike out on his own. She took it in stride. He would often work around the clock, sometimes

going three days with no sleep. He would come in at 5 a.m., brush Nicole's cheek with a kiss and tell her he was going back out.

It was a brutal schedule, doing all the estimates, bid work and material delivery himself. After two years, he hired an operations manager, Josh Holmstrom, which took a huge burden off Brett. He continued to grow his business, and they would do whatever jobs paid the bills.

### Helping out

Brett's reputation strengthened, including for his ethics and good works.

"Brett is well known through his and our industry," says Dan Scheller, who works for an equipment dealership in Anoka that serves Reshetar Systems.

"Not only does Brett seem to be

involved in the community, but he also seems to take care of any cost that may occur ... without ever batting an eye. Reshetar's equipment is well taken care of. If it isn't him or his team working on the equipment, he brings it into our shop to make sure everything is in tiptop shape."

Reshetar also seems to always have time to help out the next contractor and his industry, as well as the community.

Scheller recalls the time Reshetar Systems rented an excavator, estimating they'd need it for two or three days.

"I had called them to get an update on when they were going to finish up because another contractor was in need of that machine," Scheller recounts. "They worked extra late to finish up that day so the other



Brett Reshetar calls his employees the backbone of his business, while they express gratitude for working for a company that makes them feel part of a family.



contractor – most likely a competitor – could use the machine when they needed it. This is only one example of Brett going the distance to help others also be successful.”

In Minnesota, Collin Kingston is territory manager for Ziegler Cat. He’s liked working with Reshetar Systems over the last four years because they’re always well prepared for any job they’ve lined up, Kingston says. To him, the crews seem to live by this Scout-like motto: “Be prepared for anything and everything at a jobsite. Plan ahead.”

### Repeat customers say it all

Many of Reshetar’s clients are repeat customers, and the company’s equipment suppliers have built valued relationships with the firm.

“For as long as I’ve known them, they’ve been good to work with,” Kingston says. “They put their trust in me to get them the right equipment, on time, and for that I am grateful. I do feel they are worthy of recognition in our industry, in particular because they are good people – not just a contractor.”

Brett, Nicole and their two young

daughters are lifelong residents of the Anoka area.

Among his contributions to the community are helping with ice removal and drilling for fishing contests and fundraisers, such as Special Olympics. He does this Minnesota-style, dedicated to using his equipment to remove huge squares of ice from frozen lake surfaces for the “Polar Plunges.”

He’s been known to jump in that icy water, as well as out of an airplane at more than 14,000 feet, or to zipline across the Mississippi River. Along with being adventurous and generous, Reshetar is also seen as highly dependable, his counterparts say.

As a senior engineering technician for the City of Ramsey in Anoka County, Mike McDowall has often turned to Reshetar over the past decade.

“Whether the project is big or small, per the contract, they do what it takes,” says McDowall. And if construction plans have to change, the Reshetar employees “step up and are honest with prices for any extra work that has to be

done beyond the contract,” McDowall says.

The company is also readily available to fix the problems that irritate residents, such as cracked sidewalks or washed-out culverts.

“Reshetar Systems is one of my main companies that I can ask to take care of problems, spur of the moment, just to please a small handful of residents,” he says. “They will make room for my project regardless of their workload, which makes them a great asset for the city.”

As the spring of 2019 arrives, business is picking up for Reshetar. In late January, the company hired Mike Engelmann as an estimator to join Brett and Chad Wanka in estimating and managing commercial projects.

Several other employees also give kudos to their boss, and their workplace collegiality shows in the local community, observes Scheller:

“All of the Reshetar team seems to be happy and upbeat about working for Brett. His team he has pulled together is a great group of guys.” **EW**



At his business by a busy thoroughfare in Anoka, Minnesota, Reshetar gets ready to start another day. From demolition to carpentry, his company helps government and commercial clients with a wide range of needs.