



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Concept Metals Group Acquires Freedom Manufacturing** *Transaction Expands Capabilities, Customer Base for Veteran-Owned Company*

**Spring Lake, Michigan, July 9, 2019** – In a move to expand its capabilities and customer base, Concept Metals Group has acquired Comstock Park-based Freedom Manufacturing Inc.

The transaction will add 46 employees and one location to the veteran-owned Spring Lake-based integrated metals group, which provides custom-formed and finished metal components for the automotive, office furniture, appliance and other industries. The addition of Freedom Manufacturing gives CMG advanced precision machining capabilities in addition to enhancing its engineering services, which will allow the combined company to provide product-complete offerings to customers.

Founded in 1985 as a one-man machining operation, Freedom Manufacturing now serves clients in the medical and medical devices, material handling and office furniture industries, as well as tool and die, aerospace, utility and heavy equipment repair. Company founder and President Robert Baker will remain with the company as president to transition his 40-plus years of knowledge and experience to the new leadership team.

Day-to-day operations of Freedom will be led by Rick Williams, who brings 30 years of manufacturing experience to his new role as general manager. Terms of the transaction are not being disclosed.

“The acquisition will strengthen our core competencies and provide more diverse and complete solutions to our current client base, which giving us an entry into new markets,” said CMG CEO John Walton. “Concept Metals Group and Freedom Manufacturing share a like-minded focus on providing quality products delivered on time, value-added engineering solutions and exceptional customer service.

“We are very pleased to welcome Bob and the team at Freedom Manufacturing to the CMG team. Working together, we will deliver a better value proposition for our customers by offering complementary products and services that allow us to be a single-source supplier.”

Freedom Manufacturing provides CNC machining, single and multi-spindle machining, assembly, kitting and packaging, and welding services to clients who need precision-machined components from aluminum, steels, brass and plastics. From a 400 square-foot rented space in downtown Grand Rapids, Freedom has expanded to a 25,500 square-foot facility in Comstock Park with more engineers per capita than its competitors.

Led by Baker, Freedom's team is skilled at knocking costs out of products through valued-based engineering that delivers greater accuracy in pricing, exceptional quality, zero defects and greater predictability to customers throughout the United States. Baker has earned a reputation in the industry as being the go-to machine shop for difficult-to-engineer products and solutions.

"I had been looking for an opportunity to transition for several years, but never found the right fit – until John," Baker explained. "He has the same belief in people in his people that I do. We have the same core values. While it will be hard to step away, I feel confident in the future of Freedom Manufacturing with John and his team at the helm."

Concept Metals Group was founded in 1983 and has since expanded to 70 employees and three locations in Spring Lake and one in Holland. The company started in rollforming as Concept Engineering, but later expanded its services due to customer demand and now operates four facilities, including:

- Concept Metal Products, which focuses on rollforming, stamping, welding, stretch bending and other services for steels, brass, aluminum, coated materials and high-strength materials
- Concept Metal Fabrication, which provides light gauge sheet metal fabrication, laser cutting, turret punching, welding, secondary operations and prototyping
- Integricoat, which delivers powder coating for carbon steels, aluminum, die cast and brass surfaces, with a special focus on high-end, class A visual surface coating

Walton has a 30-year career of success in office furniture and automotive manufacturing in West Michigan. He moved to Grand Rapids in 1990 to lead Davidson Plyforms, which makes the iconic Eames lounge chair for Herman Miller, as well as other compression molded, curved plywood and recycled plastics furniture.

In 1996, he purchased the company with a partner and led its growth, including the launch of Genesis Seating, which is a product-complete supplier in the furniture marketplace. Today, Davidson and Genesis are divisions of Leggett & Platt Work Furniture and employ more than 300 employees in two locations in Grand Rapids. He served on the board of the Grand Rapids Manufacturers Council, and as a member of BIFMA and the Employers' Association.

Walton purchased CMG in 2009 with the goal of providing product complete for customers.

### **About Concept Metals Group**

Concept Metals Group is a veteran-owned automotive, office furniture, appliance, medical device and point of purchase manufacturer based in Spring Lake, Michigan. Established in 1983, Concept Metals Group has grown by providing a unique combination of quality, service and value that is unmatched in the industry. Today, the company has expanded to nearly 120 employees in five West Michigan locations. For more information, visit <http://conceptmetalsgroup.com>.

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