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Mayor's message: LJ Cos. are a perfect fit for Warwick

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Several weeks ago, I had the pleasure of joining representatives from The LJ Companies - LJ Crane & Rigging, LJ Heavy Hauling, and LJ Specialized Logistics - for a tour of their Jefferson Blvd. facility. Billed as a rising leader in the crane industry in the United States, LJ's services include crane rental and crane service (with or without operators), specialized logistics, warehousing, heavy hauling and North American transportation services, as well as rigging, millwrighting, industrial plant deconstruction and selective tailored demolition.

Pat and Stacey Izzo began the company ten years ago, headquartered in the basement of their Cranston home. Still family owned and operated, their emphasis remains flexible, personalized, around-the clock attention tailored to each customer's needs. In 2008 LJ marked its third consecutive time as an Inc. 500 listed company and saw annual sales revenues surpass the \$25 million mark, nearly six times its sales volume of just four years ago. LJ is consistently ranked in Providence Business News' annual Book of Lists as one of the fastest growing Rhode Island companies.

Last year, Pat Izzo and Paul Fioravanti, vice president & COO, were in the process of developing the company's future location, a portion of a 54-acre site in Smithfield when Paul learned of the availability of the former Penske Logistics site in Warwick, from commercial real estate broker Larry Steingold. Larry was a bit skeptical about the suitability of the site for LJ's operations, knowing that the company was planning to relocate to Smithfield. After seeing the facility, Izzo and Fioravanti had a vision for what it could be transformed into, with less time and aggravation than building from scratch. After extensive renovation, LJ consolidated and centralized its operations to the 3.5 acre parcel at 522 Jefferson Blvd. in July, 2008. Located in the Warwick Train Station District, the site is a block away from T.F. Green Airport and the under-construction Warwick Intermodal Station, and just minutes from I-95 and 295.

A 14,500 s/f, block and steel building sits in the center of the property and underwent extensive renovations, with new walls, ceilings, lighting, carpeting, plumbing and bathrooms, HVAC systems and controls, landscaping, and full paint, cabinetry, woodwork, trim and tile/granite counters and floors. New executive offices, a conference room and administrative, sales and general support offices and a fully remodeled kitchen/cafeteria are housed in one section of the facility.

The property, and the city of Warwick, said Izzo and Fioravanti, are "the perfect fit" for their company.

Other areas of the building include a new parts storage area and storage loft, a fully enclosed pressure wash bay with a water maze oil water separator system, a 20,000 gallon, double-walled diesel fuel tank with metering and pumping system, Veeder-Root leak detection system, and four epoxy-coated floor servicing bays, including an undervehicle servicing pit.

The facility has also been fully rewired for electrical, CAT6 data cable, security surveillance and has

energy efficient lighting installed.

According to Fioravanti, "Warwick is extremely business savvy - we had very positive and professional interaction with a range of departments, from economic development to the building and zoning/planning areas, public safety, and other regulatory areas from which we received clear and professional guidance through the licensing and compliance processes. Additionally, we were very impressed with mayor Avedisian's desire to learn about our business firsthand and to assist us with some of the issues involved with relocation to the City. We are pleased to be here and look forward to being a good neighbor and thriving enterprise."

Those of us in city government are pleased to welcome the LJ Companies to Warwick, and look forward to celebrating their continued growth and success.

To learn more about The LJ Companies, log onto www.ljcrane.com.

For more information on past One-on-One tours, visit the city's economic development website at www.movetowarwickri.com.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick.

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