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## **Randolph H.S. alumni grow multi-million-dollar business Morris natives in their 20s to keep supply company's HQ here**

By Matt Manochio

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RANDOLPH -- It might not look it at first, but housed along Canfield Avenue is a multi-million dollar business run by three township natives not even 10 years out of high school.

Brighton Cromwell, LLC, a supply chain integrator, launched in 2002 and is owned by brothers Rob and Glenn Van Etten, 28 and 27, respectively, and Don Youker, 27.

Entrepreneur magazine listed the firm as the 21st fastest-growing entrepreneurial company in America, and Rob Van Etten was profiled on Inc.com as one of the country's top entrepreneurs under 30. He was number 15 in the list of 30.

"The first year was good and bad," Rob Van Etten said during a Monday phone interview. His father, Bill Van Etten, helped found the company with Rob's uncle, John Van Etten.

"The good news was we did \$1.4 million," Van Etten said. "The bad news was ... both my father and uncle passed away roughly within the first year. ... From that kind of standpoint it was a bittersweet year."

Van Etten said growing the business consisted of 16-hour workdays and constantly working weekends.

"So rather than give up we worked extra hard," Rob Van Etten. "We grew the business 100 percent to \$2.8 million. ... Then to \$4.5 million, then to \$8.8 million. This year is probably going to be about \$16 million."

The company started in a 2,500-square-foot office and now occupies a 14,000-square-foot building on Canfield Avenue -- the firm's third building in four years. He said the company had about four or five workers in the beginning and now has close to 30.

Don Youker, Rob's friend who graduated Randolph High School with him in 1999, was involved in the business on the first day, while Glenn Van Etten became more involved in the second year.

Brighton Cromwell essentially works with the Defense Department, Lockheed Martin and other huge firms tackling huge orders. He's quoted on Inc.com saying, "Rather than going to hundreds of different companies for 180 parts, why not go to one company?"

Brighton Cromwell is the company that reaches out to various suppliers to fill an order for a particular client. Rob Van Etten, a 2003 finance and marketing major from the University of Delaware, said orders can consist of filters, fabricated metal parts "to anything you can think of."

Brighton Cromwell's automated system helps the company competitively source and manage supplies and orders.

Rob Van Etten said he drew inspiration and motivation from his high school track coach Ted Loeffler, who now is vice principal and athletic director.

"He was always an outgoing kid," Loeffler said Monday. He said Van Etten wasn't a top runner "but he worked very hard. He was very congenial, got along well with other members of the team. He was a good, hard worker, a Steady Eddie."

Van Etten now lives in Ledgewood and enjoys his short commute to work. He said all of the company's work, including receiving supplies, packaging and sending are all done in Morris County.

"I've lived in Morris County for a long time," he said.

"I would hope that at least the corporate headquarters would always be in Morris County, and I think we can achieve that," he said of the possibility of the company growing even larger. And while he's pleased with the company's success at a young age, he's not content.

"It's nice, but there's still a lot more I want to do," he said. "So you can never really be satisfied, you always want to do better, you always want to continue to strive for something greater."

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