

ImageFirst is not a photography studio, nor is it a graphic design company.

Founded in 1967, ImageFIRST is the largest national healthcare laundry service specializing in the outpatient medical market. They have 36 locations serving more than 11,000 medical facilities across the country, including a location in Cape Coral.

Once you get to know the associates of ImageFIRST, you soon realize the company name genuinely reflects the caring culture inside the Cape Coral healthcare laundry business.

It starts when associates walk in the door and gather for the morning huddle to go over the day's activities. A large banner spells out how the company encourages associates to act by 'Leading the Way'.

"Each of our 27 associates learn that Leading the Way means they work in an environment where they can be respectful, be remarkable, be safe and be honest," explains Heddy Collazo, ImageFIRST Human Resources Administrator.

Living those values starts with their coworkers. They work around large machines to clean, dry and decontaminate a variety of linens, towels, garments and rugs for healthcare offices. A bin of pink gowns sits waiting for the next available washing machine. Production Associates carefully go through a bin of garments and occasionally may find needles to safely dispose of in a sharps container. Exposure to chemical cleaners and biohazard fluids requires they wear personal protective equipment and have each other's back while working in the plant.

That caring attitude extends to the community, whether to the medical teams and patients they serve or the broader Southwest Florida community. ImageFIRST CEO Jeff Berstein is the driving force behind the company's philanthropic work ethic.

"It starts at the top," says Sergio Hernandez, General Manager for the Southwest Florida territory. "As a privately-owned company, we can design how we want to live those values."

In one example, that meant bringing the entire ImageFIRST crew to Goodwill's Opportunity Center to paint classrooms in the Pathways to Opportunity program space. On another day, they bought lunch for the program participants and then the management team stayed to serve it to participants, all while in costume for Super Hero Day.

A bulletin board in the ImageFIRST lobby is filled with thank you letters from organizations who have benefitted from their volunteer efforts. St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, school back pack distribution, food collections, and the list goes on.

"We have a Community Giving Committee of associates who meet to decide what motivates us. They are the voices of our operating principles," says Collazo.



The committee's goal was to develop quarterly events each calendar year, which led the way to now monthly philanthropic activities.

For more about ImageFIRST, log onto www.imagefirst.com/Our-Community-Support.

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Breakthrough Philanthropist

ImageFirst