

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:04] DC: It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcast From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that creates stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:31] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcast From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. I am always honored when I have the ability to do a podcast with an educator and I have an educator plus on the podcast today. I'm speaking with Professor Gary Walton. He is the Professor Emeritus at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College and the founder of the Cincinnati Type and Print Museum.

Hello, Gary. First of all, thank you for your service to the world and welcome to the podcast.

[0:01:09] GW: Oh, you're more than welcome. This is my calling. My brother was called to be a missionary in Cambodia, and I was called to serve the printing industry. So, I'm doing what I love.

[0:01:20] DC: Okay. Well, maybe we should call you Father Gary. Okay, so first of all, according to your LinkedIn profile, which I always stalk, you have been at Cincinnati State, and Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, almost 48 years in those roles, as well, the founder of the Cincinnati Type and Print Museum for 12 years and two months. Happy anniversary.

[0:01:50] GW: Thank you. Yes. So, I started in the printing field in 19 – really started all goes back to 1968. In 1968, I was at Schwab Middle School, and it was required that every male take a shop class. I'm sorry, you ladies were not allowed in 1968s. You had to take home ec. But every male had to take a shop class. So, I took the woodshop class and I was working on something called a planer. I don't know what I did. But the next thing I knew, the piece of wood took off and hit the wall, and put a hole in the wall, and I got kicked out that class. Then they put

me in small engines. I don't know if you realize enough, but some screws do not turn left to right. They go right to left. But if you force them, you can make them fit. So, I scribble-engineered it and got kicked out.

[0:02:31] DC: Wait. Isn't there a rule, righty-tighty, lefty-loosey?

[0:02:34] GW: That's right. They go the other way. So, I went to the print shop class and nothing went wrong and I had a good time. So, in the ninth grade, so now we're moving up to 1969. I went to my counselor and said, "Can I just take printing from my one-hour requirement?" He goes, "I don't know about that. That's kind of weird." I said, "Let's try it." So, he talked to the instructor, Mr. [inaudible 0:02:54], who I'll never forget and he loved the idea because he had a TA. He had someone helping in the class.

So, for the whole ninth grade, I took printing as my requirement for my shop class. I loved it. I printed everything from the school, from prom tickets, to dance tickets, to programs, just a little bit of everything. I actually got to play with black and white photography and that was a blast. And my greatest achievement today, is I'm 71 years old and still working in the printing industry. My greatest achievement was in 1969. I was the printer of the year for Schwab Middle School. I wish I still had that little piece of paper, because as I look back, that's how I got started.

But I did recently find a picture of Mr. [inaudible 0:03:32]. That's kind of cool. I've kept that in my pile of collections. But he really encouraged me to go on to print and I was crazy and said, "No, I want to be a lawyer." I actually convinced enough people, so that when I attended the University of Cincinnati in '72, I actually got to take a fifth-year law class and that was really cool. I really enjoyed it. Problem though, every time I picked up the book to read it, I fall asleep. It didn't matter what time of day it was. I fall asleep.

So, I realized God was saying, "You're not going to be a lawyer." Well now, what do I do with my life? Then, I remembered all these great teachers that I had. They're like pillars coming to me and my vision. And then I thought, "Teaching. That's what I could do. I can be a great teacher." What do I teach? And I thought phys ed, because I love football. Then, I thought, math, because I love math. Then, I remembered Mr. [inaudible 0:04:15] class. A light clicked on and that's what I want to do. I was in the College of Arts and Science. So, I had to change to the College of

Education. Being young and dumb, ran to the dean's office of the College of Education, and said, "Listen, I need to see the dean." His secretary says, "You just can't walk in and see the dean. He's got 4,000 students." "I'm going to change my career. I need to see him."

The whole time, I remember this is the early seventies. There's a gentleman in the back. He's long hair. He looks like he's a homeless guy. He stands up. He says, "Mary, I'll give this guy five minutes." Me being dumb. I said, "Hey, buddy, I appreciate that. But I want to see the dean." He goes, "I am the dean." So, the next 20 minutes, he and I talked, and he said, "When you graduate and '76, there'll be 12 vocational schools in Cincinnati. Everyone will need a printing instructor. There will be 12 printing programs." This was part of Richard Nixon's program to make high skilled technicians for the United States. When he resigned, however, that all went to the wayside.

But he was right. When I graduated, there were 12 high schools and I had gone to Cincinnati State and learned my printing skills there and they offered me a full-time position. I had the joy of working there for 35 years. Never worked a day in my life, just played with the printing all day long. When I retired, my dean said to me, "Hey, there's a group of people down Lower Price Hill. They're thinking about starting this museum. Would you be interested?" One thing led to another. From 2011 to 2016, we gathered equipment, we raised funds, and then we actually opened the museum in November 22nd of 2016. We've been going strong ever since.

[0:05:50] DC: One of the things I noticed on your LinkedIn profile is that you actually went to two colleges at the same time. You went to the University of Cincinnati, from 1972 to 1976, and Cincinnati's Technical and Community College from 1973 to 1975. Now, I don't know if you watch the Harry Potter movies, but in *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, Hermione Granger has this thing called a time-turner. So, she could be in two places at once. Is that how you pull that off?

[0:06:22] GW: Not really. The two schools are less than a mile apart, and the University of Cincinnati realized if I was going to be a professor of print, they did not have the courses to be able to do that. So, under their guidance, I went down to Cincinnati State. So, actually, when I was taking a class at Cincinnati State, they were counting it as a class at the University of Cincinnati towards my bachelor's degree. It worked out really well. I got to meet the great people down there and fell in love with that school.

I'll never forget, I told somebody that the school was easier than the University of Cincinnati. My wife at that time said, "No, it's not." She said, "You just love what you're doing. You're not working anymore." The more I thought about it, she was absolutely right. I was even working harder at Cincinnati State than the UC. But I was just loving it so much. I didn't realize I was working. I get home till five o'clock. I'd be in the lab playing. The instructors all loved me. So, they would keep me afterward and we did color theory with cameras, all kinds of cool stuff. It was just a really neat experience to be able to like I say, be going to two universities at the same time. It's was a lot of fun.

[0:07:19] DC: You shared with us what drew you to teaching as a profession. This is something I want to do and also something that there was a need for, and you were lucky that that dean had the insight to let you know that there was actually a big opportunity out there, and you would be the perfect person to take grab of that. I also think it's interesting that even in 1969, when you said you wanted to be in the printing program, someone looked at you and said, "Really? You want to be in the printing program for the whole time? That's weird."

So, in some ways, maybe things haven't changed that much when it comes to the perception of print as a career, although, we're going to talk about that in a moment. But what I really want to ask you is you have been around young people and students for so long. What are some of the most valuable lessons you have learned regarding communicating with them?

[0:08:14] GW: Right. Let's go back a little bit to the seventies. So, realizing the seventies, here in Cincinnati, we had 50 high schools that were teaching printing. Fifty high schools were teaching printing.

[0:08:24] DC: What?

[0:08:24] GW: Yes. So, getting students to come to Cincinnati State was easy, because it was just an overflow. Probably, we're close to maybe 3,000 individuals being taught printing in the high school level. And of that 3,000, 100 come to Cincinnati State. We just had this flood of people. Then, the nineties rolled around and the Mac computer became a reality. The Bureau of Labor sent surveys to all the printers and said to them, "How many linotype operators do you need? How many liners? How are you going to post them?" Then, printers all, but none, none,

none. They didn't know it. But what they should have said was, "However, I need four color press operators. I need Mac operators. I need pre-press people." All these other positions, they need it. But they didn't say that. They just said, "I don't need this. I don't need this. I don't this."

So, the Bureau of Labor gets this information and goes, "Printing is dead." Then, they go in 1990. They go to the National High School Principals Association meeting and they put up on the screen, "Printing is dead" which was a total lie. But they put it up on the screen and principals come back, especially those from Cincinnati, and those 50 programs all literally closed within a two-year period. Teachers are calling me up complaining about closing the program. I said, "Do you not have the students? Listen, I got 25 students plus another 25." "Well, why are they closing your program?" They said, "Printing is dead." I go, "Printing is not dead."

I'll never forget taking two principals to a company called, which is now Quad Graphics. Okay. But they bought on [inaudible 0:09:53] which was down here. And 300 people working in the magazine industry just working, working, working. This building was really cool. On the one side of the building was offices, and then your wall on the left side was all glass. So, from your office, you can look into the production area and just see hundreds of people producing work. We have this meeting and we're showing this to this principal. He looked at it and he goes, "This is all fake, right? The printing industry is dead." I go, "No, it's that dead." Today, that's our big challenge. Young people don't even consider this to be a career choice.

So, one of the cool things at the museum as we get close to a thousand people, our goal is 1,000 people. We were at 800 people last year, came to the museum. And these were all young people, or middle-aged people where printing was not a choice that they thought for a career. But when they left, they realized that it was a very good place for a career. We talked about the printing industry. We talked about the future of printing, and we talked about printing electronics. This is how you get young people excited. You show them something like printing electronics.

So, we have a calculator that we showed them, and we actually use it. Then, we open it up, and they see it's just a piece of paper that we print the ink on. We have piano keys that you can play, and we print those piano keys. Then, our goal is this summer, to actually print solar panels. Imagine a piece of plastic, and I print –

[0:11:14] DC: Amazing.

[0:11:14] GW: – the conductor on top of that. Then, I print something called a solar ink, which I don't know what's in that ink. But I know it's more environmentally friendly than traditional solar panels. Put a piece of plastic on that and you've just now made a flexible solar panel for \$20 versus \$375. This is going to change everything.

Also, printing electronics is going to change everything. So, in the near future, every electronic device starts on a printing press. So, when you talk this type of information to young people, they get excited and they think about coming into the industry. Here's the museum, since we've actually started functioning from 2016 to now, which we just celebrated our seventh anniversary, moving into our eighth. We've placed 31 women in the printing industry, 19 men, and this year, we've trained over 45 youth, and hopefully place them come springtime into the printing industry.

So, when dealing with young people, you got to talk about the future and get them excited about that. Especially, when we start printing solar panels and we start making a difference in climate change, now we're a cool technology, and they're going to come flocking to us, I believe.

[0:12:17] DC: It's so crazy that not asking the right questions or not understanding the shift in skills needed, or the way that technology replaces other technology, and moves those people to other positions, doesn't necessarily displace them from their jobs that they can get repurposed on other things. But that is such a crazy story that you just shared with everybody.

Also, this might be a little out of the scope of our discussion. But when you mentioned all those high schools in Ohio that had those programs, and the first thing I think of, is the high concentration per capita of printers in those regions. I'm wondering if that doesn't correlate with why is the Midwest right there, the center of all of these printers? Do think that that's why that all of the trade schools were popping up there or they just stayed?

[0:13:22] GW: Well, I'm happy to say that if you go back to 1930 and 1940 in downtown Cincinnati, we actually had a high school dedicated to printing. So, imagine going to high school. I mean, you take math. You're learning about the pike and the point. You're learning

about how to buy paper. When you take chemistry, you're learning about inks and paper. This school was dedicated to the printing industry. So, we actually have a picture of it. In the front it says, "The Graphic Arts High School of Greater Cincinnati." Oh, I'm sorry, "of Cincinnati." So, all the students who went there all day long, because there were so many jobs in the printing industry here in Cincinnati. There still is. We meld over 300 printing companies in the Greater Cincinnati. According to the last statistic, we are the ninth-largest printing center.

Now, 120 years ago, we realized we were the second-largest printing center. New York was first and then we were second. We slipped a little bit, but ninth is still good. That's very good.

[0:14:16] DC: Is that by dollars or by number of printers? Because it seems like there's a lot more printers in Ohio than there are.

[0:14:23] GW: The government used to do it by dollars or by companies. Then when COVID hit, they stopped gathering that data. But the data they're still gathering is the number of press operators in a city. Based on the number of press operators, we are the ninth-largest printing center. If you got all these press operators, they got to be producing product. So yes, we're a very strong printing center.

[MESSAGE]

[0:10:09] DC: Print Media Centr provides printspiration and resources to our vast network of print and marketing professionals. Whether you are an industry supplier, print service provider, print customer, or consultant, we have you covered, by providing resources and strategies that enable business marketing and creative success, reporting from global events, these podcasts, Project Peacock TV, and an array of community lifting initiatives. We also work with OEMs, suppliers, industry organizations, and event producers, helping you connect and engage with our vast audience, and achieve success with your sales, marketing, and conference endeavors. Visit Print Media Centr and connect with the Printerverse. Links in the show notes. Print long and prosper.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:15:40] DC: I want to shift focus now to the museum. Now, again, according to your LinkedIn, it says it was founded 12 years ago, but about two months ago, you had posted in my LinkedIn group that they have is the seventh anniversary of the museum. What is that all about? What is the origin of the museum? You touched upon it a little before, but I'm sure there's a bigger story.

[0:16:05] GW: So, in 2011. I retired. I had to retire because I had 35 years in. At that time, that's when my dean approached me, at my retirement dinner, and told me about this group of people that were in Lower Price Hill, who were thinking about starting a museum. So, went down there, talked to him, fell in love with the idea. But it took a while to raise money, raise equipment. We had to work with the city and getting them to renovate. The building we're in, it's 120 years old, and they gave us a quarter million dollars to renovate the building, and they made it beautiful, really beautiful. Kept a lot of the old structures, still there. It's what people see. But then, all brand-new bathrooms and so forth.

They love what we're doing. They love the training. They gave us another quarter of a million to build the second building. We needed that really for all the equipment that we have. Matter of fact, we're in the process of now, the city is buying for us four pieces of property that surround the museum for parking lots, and also for further expansion. So, our goal, we actually have plans for building a building three and building four. Then, the final one would be building five. When that happens, we become truly a big communication museum.

My thinking is, this is a carrot. A museum is a carrot. To get people to come to the Museum, hear about the printing in Cincinnati, hear about the strength in the printing industry, not just in Cincinnati, but all over the United States, and get him to think about becoming a part of the industry. If I'm working with senior citizens, I say to them, "You have a strong influence on your grandkids. You need to talk to them about careers in print. Nobody's going into print. A lot of people are going to careers that are not going to find jobs in. But this is a place to have the job, this is a place to grow. Print will always be with us in some form. Now, it will be changing, but it will always be with us in some form."

So, it wasn't until 2016 that everything was in place. I had the equipment. I had everything in place. I'm happy to say that I don't take a salary. So, that's one of the reasons why the museum is doing so well. I listen to a guy named Dave Ramsey, so I'm financially stable. The industry

here is fantastic, and all of our papers are donated. All of our ink is donated. All the equipment is donated. So, we have a very low budget.

But that being said, we still need to raise funds to keep this going. And also, this time next year, I hope to actually put together sort of a pilot program where this can be duplicated, what we're doing can be duplicated in other cities. Because I really believe this is one of the best ways to get young people or middle-aged people into the printing industry because they're not going to hear about it in the education systems out there today. They're just not. Again, we do not show up on the radar screen.

When you talk about what you want to do for a living, if they say printing, it's because their dad owns a printing company. But they will not say it if they don't have a relative that's involved in the printing industry. I hate to say this, but even those of us in the printing industry, we need to promote it. When you go to family gatherings, you should be talking about the printing industry and how great it is, and how to think about that as a career choice. So, I actually came up with a book called *26 Things You Can Do to Promote the Printing Industry* and be happy to give that as a PDF free to anybody who wants to have that. You can give them our email address later on at the end for that.

But that's how this whole thing got started and it just keeps growing and growing. I say, my goal is, I would love to have this – the next place to be in Columbus, Ohio, and then Cleveland, Ohio, then Toledo, Ohio, and that'd be the five print areas in Ohio.

[0:19:26] DC: I just want to say that by the time this comes out, if you look in the show notes, I'll have a link where you can download the PDF that Gary just mentioned.

Gary, I just want to stay here for one moment because I mean, when people think printing type and print magazine, if they have any knowledge about the printing industry, they're probably thinking old-timey stuff. They're thinking letterpresses. I mean, you and I are on video right now. I can see behind you. It's not with all due respect. It looks like a museum. It doesn't look like modern printing facility, right?

[0:20:01] GW: Right.

[0:20:01] DC: So, is the purpose of the museum to get people interested, and then send them off to the modern technology? Or will some of these other buildings be more hands-on technical workshops on the newer equipment? Or how are you bridging that?

[0:20:20] GW: So, I remember when I was probably in my 20s, I went down to Cape Canaveral. You're going through all this space stuff. It's really cool. But then the very last room you went into was, how the space program has made your life better. It talked about the microwave and so forth. So, I went and did that same kind of thing. You're going through all this historical stuff and so forth. When you get to the –

[0:20:40] DC: We have the microwave because of the space program?

[0:20:42] GW: Yes. Something new. I was playing around. He had a candy bar in his pocket and it melted and that was the microwave. I can't remember, there's all kinds of inventions that we now have that all came out of the space program. So, we're going through that same thing, when you when you come in. For example, one of the things we have on display here is the calculator, which actually functions and they open it up, we have the piano keys that they can play that we actually printed those keys. Then, we have a cell phone. The Apple cell phone, the 14, 13 and 14, 18% of that was printed on a press. So, we showed this picture of 50 phones up on the press sheet going on the press, 50,000 copies an hour. When you show them that picture, and they see the phones, the lights click on and they realize, "Wait a minute, this is not a dying industry. This is an industry that's going to change the world."

So, definitely we have, and we start the program by a little lecture and so forth. At the end of the lecture, we then show them this new technology. Then we actually put aprons on them. They go to the shop and they actually print stuff. The whole time we're talking about new technology because they're putting on the one little press. I said, "I realized today, we have an offset press that goes something ridiculous of 20,000 copies an hour." Down the road, I actually hope to have some TVs up, and then actually would see that on the screens and so forth.

One of the cool things we're actually working on is –and this is going to be great for everybody in the United States. We want to put together a TV program. So, a lot of people are familiar with a show called *The Great British Bake Off*. So, imagine that being called *The Great Printers*

Contest. You would have people who start out printing a business card, and then maybe a greeting card, and then they get kicked off. But then we get to the very top, they're doing some kind of five-card thing with a full step and so forth.

If we could do that, that would just bring our industry all over the United States area and would drastically help in getting new people to come into the industry. So, I'm working with our local public broadcasting system here right now, and we'll see if we can pull this off. But I think that'd be fantastic.

[0:22:42] DC: That's really cool. I'm sure you're familiar with SkillsUSA. It sounds like what they do, like filming that would almost be like, look, it's that. Except it has a little reality show in it so that you invest in the teams, you invest in the people. I love that idea. I'm all about that. We have to work on the name Gary, because –

[0:23:02] GW: Need something catchy.

[0:23:04] DC: Come back to me. I'm good at naming things.

[MESSAGE]

[0:23:08] DC: Calling of fierce, fabulous females. Girls Who Print is waiting for you, and our global mission to help empower and connect the women of print is stronger than ever. Join our 10,000-member growing women-only LinkedIn group, connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Celebrate Girls Who Print Day and find out who wins our Annual Girly Award. Join our ongoing initiatives, online events, in-person conferences, and global mentoring program. Visit Girls Who Print for information on how to get involved and get empowered. Links in the show notes.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:23:48] DC: Okay. So, besides being a historian of print, and an advocate of the industry, the museum is also fostering workforce development into the industry. It seems that if I'm correct, what you're saying is, first, the purpose of the museum is to create a connection. Create

engagement with people. Then, once they're doing things, and they see the future, you're talking to them about the future. You're showing them the cell phones printed, then it sparks an interest in them to pursue it as an area of study, pursue it as a career, if they're old enough to go right into the workforce.

Can you share – you mentioned some numbers before, but let's dive a little deeper into that. What are some of the successes you can share? The reason I'm asking is because I want everyone to know that it's not just a museum that you go to have some fun. If you just want to do that, that's fine. But there is also a strategic purpose behind it. I want people to understand that the strategy is working.

[0:24:59] GW: Right. So, in my last 15 years of college, it was difficult to get young people to consider print as a career. All want to be graphic designers. So, I realized I was looking at all kinds of ways of recruiting people. It wasn't till I started the museum that I realized, also, just had hundreds and hundreds of people come into the museum when, “This is it. This is how you communicate the printing industry.” So, we started a museum, but because of my background, because my teacher, it wasn't just going to be a museum. I wanted it to be a training facility. So, our goal is to teach the basic fundamentals. Our program is only four weeks long, only four weeks long. But in that four weeks, they learn about paper, they learn about ink, they learn about pressure, they learn about dot sizes, and what are dots. All the basic fundamentals, so they can actually go work for a printer, and not be totally green. Know a little bit a few things. Then every printer, which I found over the years, kind of does things their own way, so they can learn their system very quickly.

What I'm providing for them is a person who has made the decision to go into printing, who has been with me for four weeks, that are very likely going to – our chances to be successful. The company is much, much higher now. Okay. I think this is the way to the future, to be able to get the labors that you need, and everybody's going to be competing for these labors. That's a thing we have to wake up to. Everybody's competing for these small group of people. So, we've got to be doing things like the museum, to be able to get them to come in and think about us and get them to come into this industry.

We've placed 31 women, 90 men, and I'd say, "Hopefully, this spring, placing a lot of youth from the different programs." The youth that we're training, are those who have decided to not go on to college, and want to definitely just get into a really good career and make their living that way. That's what we're all about, and I believe the reason we're getting funding that we do get is because of the third thing that we're doing, which is the training. We want to, one, preserve the history of printing in Cincinnati, because this was a big printing town. Two, be a place for artists to come and play. So, everything here the museum works.

But again, that's the carrot, to get him in here, we talked about printing. We talked about career opportunities, and then get them to apply for a job in the printing industry. And then third, the actual train the second chance people. We do training for anybody, but we're focusing right now a lot on second-chance people to go into the industry.

[0:27:15] DC: Three months ago, you posted a question to the members of my LinkedIn group, Print Production Professionals. It was, "If you could pick one thing or subjects that would make the biggest impact in teaching the fundamentals of print, what would that be?" It had 43 comments on that post, and people had some ideas. I think, I chimed in first with something a little unrelated. But equally as important. Of all of those responses did any stand out to you?

[0:27:48] GW: So, I was getting ready to start this new class, and that's when I posted it. I'm thinking like, "What should I teach?" And like you say, I was blown away with the comments. I also get like something like 12,000 likes or something like that. So, it was really good. It's interesting, everybody shared what they thought.

[0:28:04] DC: You mean, impressions. Not likes? If you had 12,000 likes, I would fall off my chair right now. I've never gotten 1,200 likes.

[0:28:11] GW: Okay, impressions. Yes. Something like 150. It was a lot of likes.

[0:28:16] DC: We'll take the 12,000 impressions, by the way.

[0:28:18] GW: So, if you are a pre-press person, you were saying they shouldn't pre-press. If you're a press person, they were saying, you shouldn't press. A lot of people say [inaudible]

0:28:26]. In all of those, I'm thinking I've only got four weeks. But then, at least about eight different people said, "The most important thing is that they have the right attitude", and that I truly believe is the key thing.

So, when they're in my four-week program, we are talking about printing. But we're talking also a lot about what makes a good employee? We're talking about things like, you got to be on time. You got to have the right attitude. You got to be able to work with your fellow colleagues. I tell lots of humorous stories about different events that happened in my life, to be an example like, don't do that. Or if you do this, this is going to result. Half of the program is motivational, and making them to be good, but I call Print Media Professionals, because that's what they want to be good print media professionals. We talk a lot what does it take to be a professional. In the class, I actually call it my "Twelve Habits of being a Professional." Twelve things that you have to work on habits that you have to develop to be that outstanding employee. If you do that, then you will arrive within the company in your financial status will get better and better as time goes on. By the way, if anybody wants my 12 steps, I'll send that to them too.

[0:29:35] DC: Okay. We'll put a link for that as well in the show notes.

[MESSAGE]

[0:36:21] DC: Like what you hear? Leave us a comment. Click a few stars, share this episode, and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being the guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcasts are trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit printmediacentr.com, click on podcasts, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:30:13] DC: Yes. I had actually chimed in that I think that soft skills are the most important thing when it comes to anyone entering the industry. I think that there's a stereotype and there's also a human experience that people have with the Gen Zers, especially that they're not very talkative. They might prefer to communicate electronically, or when they want to communicate

and all those things. But that means that your writing and your grammar and your ability to be concise or to have reading comprehension, all of those other things if you're in a role of communicating. If your job is to make sure the print looks the best it can be, you might not need to focus on those other things, and color management might come into play. I do agree with you. There's a lot of color management comments there, which makes me wonder what is going on in the print shops that they're so concerned about, and no one understands color management anymore.

Although, I would almost say, based on my experience that they turn that around as if designers were going to your school, and they were really more focused on the file creation, not the actual output of work, at least that's what I got, which we all know is, always probably going to be a problem, right? Because design is just design. Leave them alone.

But it's so important to have well-rounded individuals and certainly having the, what I would call, is like apprenticeship late, or apprenticeship 1.0, is what's going on at the Cincinnati Type and Print Museum. Then, from there, you go into a print shop. Or from there, you choose a program that you can continue learning. Do you have specific relationships with printers in your area that you're like, "Hey, Joe, or Jane, I've got a great kid to come see you."

[0:32:14] GW: Yes. Going back to when I was at Cincinnati State, I didn't just hang out in the Ivory Towers. I got involved in the industry. So, I served on a lot of local state, and national committees. I actually was on one for Bill Clinton. For some reason, he wanted to standardize the process colors. So, we wasted \$2 million of your taxpayer's money to come up with a book that we should have just given to in salting group for 25,000 and can create it. But it was a great book about how to standardize colors. Most of the printing industry looked down through the trash can. But still, the key thing is I got involved in the industry.

So, the printers in the Cincinnati area, if you're a profit leader, I know who you are, and they know who I am. I've trained over 3,500 people, so they're all throughout the city. I'm kind of allowed to walk into printing companies without card or anything and just to talk to them and so forth. Many are calling me looking for people. So, placing people is the easiest thing to do. Pretty much that's the same statement to be anywhere in the country. Placing people in graphic art is the easiest thing to do.

One of the things going back in the seventies, we had these 50 high schools. One of the things I'm working on now is actually trying to build printing programs in high schools, and not the old-school type. But coming in with large format, inkjet printers, coming in with color copiers, and teaching the basics of printing in a high school program, one-hour program. So, like the way it wasn't '68 and '69 for me in the schools. I think that is going to be very productive. Working with a school that's got something called half credits, where they allow the students during the break periods to take a course in half credits. Well guess what, we're going to offer a course in printing, and we're going to have them come to a modern printing company. Let them see all the things that are there. Job opportunities. Give them a list of the salaries that can be made. I'm pretty positive, some of them are going to take about a career in print when they leave, especially if they have – many high school kids have really no idea what they want to do. The junior, we went to – I don't know. So, we can plant those seeds at that spot, we've got a much, much better chance of having a good working force and the printing industry.

[0:34:13] DC: You mentioned that, I guess the government of Cincinnati is supporting the mission of the museum, and they are helping to expand it because they realize this is a skills training program, and part of STEAM now with the, A, edit for arts. So, I'm sure that that plays into it. But you also mentioned that you still are looking for some support, and most of the people listening to this podcast would – let's put them in the small-dollar donation category. Right? So, I'm assuming that there is a method for, is there a set donation? Can somebody you go to the museum and donate 20 bucks if they haven't. Let everybody know how they can support the museum and most important, why they should.

[0:35:04] GW: Okay. Once again, I want to emphasize the fact, I don't think of salary, because that just shows that every dollar you give will go towards really helping the industry. But feel free to get on our webpage. Go to Cincinnati Type and Print Museum and there is a donation button there that you can hit and you can give us a small amount of USD 25. Or if you really want to be supportive of our organization, you can give up to USD 5,000, or USD 10,000, and we have several printers that are doing that now. Most of them are in that USD 100 or less range. But I hope that will change as we grow and as we become more of a vendor, you might say, to the industry and provide them with good quality people that they don't normally have.

Again, this is also a program. I want to emphasize, again, that I want this to spread throughout the United States. I truly believe this is the way you're going to get good willing workers, is by having museums like this to make people aware of the careers and print and so forth. So, yes. By way, when you do join, you get our newsletter, you find out what's going on. I'm happy to say that of those 800 visitors that came to the museum last year, 100 of them were from all parts of the United States. So, the word is out that we are there. We had printers from Maine, from Michigan. I mean, all over. All over the South and Midwest and California, coming to see what we're doing. Then, I'm hoping to try reproduce that in their own cities.

[0:36:25] DC: Gary, just thank you so much for your time and for your service to the industry and to the world. Everything you need to connect with Gary, the museum, make a donation, is in the show notes. Until next time, everybody. Print long and prosper.

[OUTRO]

[0:36:43] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com. We'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

Mentioned in This Episode:

Gary Walton on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gary-walton-151b7413/>

The Cincinnati Type & Print Museum: <https://www.cincinnatiypeprintmuseum.org/>

Cincinnati State Technical and Community College: <https://www.cincinnatiastate.edu/>

University of Cincinnati: <https://www.uc.edu/>

26 Things You Can Do to Promote the Printing Industry: <https://podcasts.printmediacentr.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Awakening-Booklet-2023.pdf>

SkillsUSA: <https://www.skillsusa.org/>

Twelve Habits of Being a Professional: <https://podcasts.printmediacentr.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Wise-Habits-of-Young-Print-Media-Professionals.pdf>

Deborah Corn on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>

Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com>

Partner with Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com/partnerships/>

Subscribe to News From The Printerverse: <https://printmediacentr.com/subscribe-2>

Project Peacock: <https://ProjectPeacock.TV>

Girls Who Print: <https://girlswhoprint.net>

drupa: <https://www.drupa.com/>

drupa Next Age (drupa DNA): https://www.drupa.com/en/Program/Forums/drupa_next_age