Howard Industries Begins New Chapter, Building on Nearly a Century of Manufacturing Excellence in Erie, Pa.

Longtime leadership team remains in place as new ownership commits to preserving the company's legacy, supporting its employees and investing in long-term growth

ERIE, Pa. October 26, 2026 — Howard Industries, a trusted leader in wholesale sign manufacturing, today announced a new chapter following a transition in ownership to Pittsburgh-based Two Step Ventures led by Dan Kelly, who will serve as Howard Industries' new chief executive officer.

Howard Industries will continue operating from its longtime home in Erie, Pennsylvania, with Pat Sutton continuing to serve as President and the existing leadership team remaining in place. The transition brings a long-term commitment to strengthening the business while preserving the quality, reliability and exceptional service that customers and industry partners have trusted for generations.

Founded in 1928 by Howard Schneider and subsequently led by his son, longtime owner Gary Schneider, Howard Industries has built an outstanding reputation throughout the sign manufacturing industry. The company is particularly known for its industry-leading turnaround times, including its trademarked Next-Day ADA program, which delivers ADA-compliant signage within 24 hours.

That commitment to quality, speed and customer service will remain at the heart of the business. Howard Industries will maintain its current operations and experienced workforce, with no significant organizational changes planned as part of the ownership transition. Customers, suppliers and industry partners can continue to count on the same trusted team, high-quality products and dependable service.

"For nearly a century, Howard Industries has succeeded because of the dedication of our people, the trust of our customers and the values my father established when he founded the company, in 1972, my brother Larry and I built it from there. " said Gary Schneider. "As I considered the future of the business, it was important to find someone who respected that history and shared our commitment to keeping Howard Industries strong. I believe Dan is the right person to carry that legacy forward, and I'm excited about what the future holds for the company."

Kelly, managing partner of Two Step Ventures, brings extensive business leadership experience and a long-term perspective to his new role as CEO. His immediate priorities include working closely with Sutton and the leadership team, strengthening the company's existing capabilities, supporting its workforce and identifying thoughtful opportunities for continued growth.

"Howard Industries has an extraordinary history and an equally promising future," said Kelly. "What Gary and his family have built over nearly 100 years is special. The company's reputation, its people and its relationships across the sign industry are tremendous strengths. My role is to support and build on that foundation, working alongside Pat and the entire Howard team to ensure the business continues to thrive for many years to come."

Sutton emphasized that the transition will be seamless for Howard Industries' customers and business partners.

"Our customers have trusted Howard Industries for decades because we deliver on our promises," said Sutton. "That isn't changing. We have a talented, experienced team that takes great pride in what we do. We're looking forward to continuing that work, serving our customers and building on the company's success with Dan's support."

As a longstanding member of Erie's manufacturing community, Howard Industries has contributed to the region's economy and industrial heritage for generations. Kelly views the company's Erie roots, experienced workforce and established industry relationships as essential strengths to preserve and build upon.

"Erie is an important part of Howard Industries' identity," Kelly added. "The skill, dedication and pride of the people who work here have made this company what it is today. I'm committed to supporting this team, maintaining Howard's presence in Erie and investing in a strong, sustainable future for the business."

About Howard Industries

Founded in 1928 by Howard Schneider, Howard Industries is an Erie, Pennsylvania-based wholesale manufacturer of architectural signage including Illuminated aluminum exterior and ADA compliant interior signage products. For nearly a century, the company has served sign companies globally, who market their products to various industries including healthcare, hospitality, banking, retail, government, education, and corporate businesses. Howard Industries is recognized throughout the industry for its commitment to quality, reliability and rapid turnaround times, including its trademarked Next-Day ADA program, which delivers custom ADA-compliant signage within 24 hours.

For more information, visit www.howardindustries.com.

About Two Step Ventures

Two Step Ventures, LLC is a Pittsburgh-based investment firm led by managing partner Dan Kelly. The firm invests in and operates established businesses, working alongside existing leadership teams to preserve their strengths, support their employees and invest in long-term growth. Kelly brings experience in sales and marketing leadership at Stryker and Amazon Web Services, as well as hands-on experience owning and operating small businesses.