

Hildesheim, December 2019: Dr. Zhihua Zhu is new CEO of the der KSM Castings Group



For the KSM Castings Group, the year 2020 starts with a change in management. The top management of the globally operating metal foundry was newly formed.

Dr. Zhihua Zhu is the new CEO of the KSM Castings Group. He is the successor of the previous CEO Vicente Perez-Lucerga. Zhu has a doctorate degree in engineering and works for the Chinese company CITIC Dicastal since 1996, the owner of the KSM Castings Group since 2011. At the time of takeover, Zhu was head of the company owned development institute in China. He already works closely with KSM for many years and was also member of the supervisory board of the company. For several weeks, he is now chairman of the management board and CEO of the KSM Castings Group.

The management team of Dicastal and KSM is convinced that a managing director who came from the owner has better opportunities to support the close cooperation and the global growth of the company group in the future. After the departure of Christoph Salentin and Vicente Perez-Lucerga, the management of the KSM Castings Group now lies in the hands of Dr. Zhihua Zhu (CEO) and Oliver Janz (COO).

The target of the change in management is to promote a better support and integration to be able to offer optimum global solutions to the international customers. "Only good, local employees can contribute to the success of KSM. Due to my previous position at Dicastal and my experiences on the global market, I am very familiar with both companies and can support a close coordination and cooperation in an optimum way. Our target is a common global growth", stressed Zhu.

In addition, the exchange program, already successfully ongoing since 2011, will be extended to move closer together and become a global player. For this reason, other Chinese colleagues are already on site. Colleagues in leading positions contribute to an improved collaboration of both cultures throughout different departments, same as technical experts who assist production etc. Thus, the focus of the company group is an improved competitiveness and a strategic orientation to further ensure global growth.

The exchange program also assist the company in the recruiting of new employees. As many other companies, the shortage of skilled professionals in Germany also affects the automotive supplier industry. Different measures are necessary to be an attractive employer for experts. Thus, KSM offers cooperative study programs to young people, apart from the classic professional training or a trainee program to graduates. Both programs are very popular and are already running successfully. In doing so, the company specifically trains the next generation of employees on its own.

Not only is the recruiting sector of the company strongly depending on the development of the automotive market, just as many other companies. To be competitive on a global level, KSM has focused

especially on the chassis sector in recent years. Lightweight axles, wheel controlled components and aluminum wheels are required both in combustion engines and in cars with alternative drive. Of course, there are ongoing developments and acquisitions for E-engine components.

"I am optimistic that we will have a global growth with KSM. At present, we are in the process of organizationally merging plants to increase their competitiveness. In principle, we will follow the global requirements of our customers", stated Zhu.

Background: The KSM Castings Group is a leading producer of automotive lightweight components for chassis, transmissions, engines and e-mobility. Specialized in aluminum and magnesium components, KSM strives for the top position in both technology and quality. As an important supplier to the global automotive industry, the company is already among the top employers. Reliable partnerships, customer orientation and cost effectiveness are essential key points of the company's strategy. The basis, however, are first-class employees.

KSM operates nine production plants in Germany, Czech Republic, USA and China with a total of approximately 3,500 employees. Among its customers are the major automotive producers and automotive suppliers like Volkswagen, Daimler AG, ZF, Benteler and Bosch. In 2018, the company group achieved a turnover of approximately 539 million EUR.

Further information about the KSM Castings Group can be taken from our website www.ksmcastings.com

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