



## **ORIENT AMERICAN ORE COMPANY, L.L.C.**

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### **About the Company: Our History**

**Orient American Ore Co., LLC (OAO)** is a partnership between two individuals that had never met, talked or communicated in any way until the founding of their company in 1995. One of the partners, Roger Buchholtz, had a daughter that was in South Korea operating English-as-a second-language schools. Jim M. Lee, father of one of her students, was in the business of supplying industrial commodities to Asian Pacific Rim countries that he procured in S. Korea and China. Jim had a very successful business but mentioned to Roger's daughter that he would like to do his business in the United States. Roger's daughter, Deborah, said to Jim, "My father might be interested in that business."

Jim proceeded to sell his business and home and moved his family of five to Kalamazoo, Michigan. (In most of the Orient a member of a family represents the remainder of the family. Today, Roger jokes that Deb "over represented" the rest of us.) Deb told Roger that Jim was coming to Kalamazoo, but she did not know exactly when. Roger found out when he received a phone call from his future partner that he and his family were at a gas station just off the Interstate (I-94) that passes through Kalamazoo. Roger had a major sleepover at his house that night.

Roger and Jim hit it off immediately as did the families. It was a natural fit. Jim brought to the partnership his engineering degree and he and his father's purchasing experience in Asia (particularly China) going back to the 1950's. In addition, Jim's family had owned and operated the largest amorphous graphite mine in S. Korea until the mine became too deep to be economical.

Roger brought to the partnership his economics degree and management experience in two *Fortune 500* companies, entrepreneurial experience in forming and operating six companies, his knowledge of U.S. and western markets, western business practices and English communication skills.

In addition, the partners have enjoyed the benefits of Roger's son's (Brian) engineering expertise (MA ME) and the mining and metallurgical knowledge of his college professors at Michigan Technological University.

Roger's daughter Deb, upon her return to America, was able to apply her MBA in economics and finance from the University of Chicago to the benefit of the business.

After several years of considerable effort by the partners and Deb and some of OAO's customers (one of them providing the most help is the largest processor of graphite in the world), Jim has now obtained his U.S. citizenship.

Since 1995, OAO has always delivered product on time and within specifications at more than competitive prices. OAO competes with much larger companies, but has demonstrated an uncanny ability to procure and transport products at a lower cost than their big brothers. Two generations of purchasing experience and relationship-building has allowed OAO to eliminate most middle men from their purchases and assure that quality standards and delivery timetables are met. The relationships OAO has with suppliers of products and transportation services, combined with low overhead costs, allows OAO to beat the competition in spite of the larger overall volumes of their competitors.

Orient American Ore Co. LLC did it when no one else could. We were the first company to be able to find high purity anthracite coal in China and bring it to American steel mills that were too distant from America's Pennsylvania anthracite coal to be economical. America has no significant graphite deposits, so to meet this need OAO was also the first company to bring to America high quality Chinese amorphous graphite to the delight of U.S. industry to compete with the higher priced graphite from other countries. From truckload to full vessel quantities, OAO has reliably met the need of customers.

Although the company specializes in graphites and other carbons, we also supply many other ores as well as alloys and inoculants, and other industrial commodities such as bennite, magnacite, bauxite, etc.

Elsewhere on the website is a listing of example products and specifications, but it only a small sampling of the products and specifications available. If it is an industrial commodity, then OAO has likely handled it or can find reliable suppliers at an economical price to meet your specifications.