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## Center Story #13

# Las Vegas Uniforms: Largest Uniform Store in the Country

13th in a series of stories focusing on Commercial Center as written by noted long-time Las Vegas journalist, Diane Taylor.

**In this article, Diane explores the largest uniform store in the U.S., which is based at Commercial Center:**

*• When did Las Vegas Uniforms open here and how many employees do they have?*

*• Exactly how big IS the company's physical footprint? You'll be surprised! Looks from the exterior can be deceiving!*

*• According to Dimitrios, the owner of Las Vegas Uniforms, what two things motivate a person...and which one was the driver for him in the early stages of his career?*

**Need a Uniform? Try the Largest Uniform Store in the Country: Las Vegas Uniforms at Commercial Center**

Dimitrios Stavros, owner of Las Vegas Uniforms, is friendly and charming. When giving a company tour, he remarks confidently that his Commercial Center company is the largest uniform store in the United States. Ask to take his picture and the hands go up to his face. “No, I am a behind-the-scenes owner; I don’t do pictures.”

Las Vegas Uniforms is approximately 19,000 square feet in three company-owned buildings. The size is not obvious when viewing it from the interior of Commercial Center, as it’s just two small doorways under a large company logo. But, enter the

company from the Market Street/ Sahara entrance and the size is much more visible and apparent.

Las Vegas Uniforms opened at Commercial Center on August 26, 2002. At the time, Dimitrios had another store in California, a ready-to-wear location that started selling uniforms when a local school mandated them. He later added medical uniforms.

Dimitrios liked the uniform business and when he decided his second store would be in Las Vegas (which at the time had no large uniform stores), he made it one. He did not want to lease a store and instead insisted on purchasing the building. (He later sold the California store and - for expansion - purchased more buildings at Commercial Center.)

In Las Vegas, Dimitrios knew the medical uniform business was a good place to start so he advertised heavily in the Las Vegas Yellow Pages and in local magazines. He printed flyers, he talked with people. He gave good service (he calls it “solving customer problems”) and bit by bit, the business grew.

These days the company is debt free, and it has an entire room devoted to Law Enforcement/Fire Department gear: uniforms, belts, and even body armor. Las Vegas Uniforms also has a large shoe department, and even carries those specifically for individuals who have diabetes. Online, the company boasts a selection of chef-ware, medical uniforms, shop footwear, and high visibility uniforms including patches and vinyl. Dimitrios says he never liked clutter, so his showrooms are all organized and tidy.

Today, Las Vegas Uniforms has 25 employees, most of whom have many years of service with the company. “We have a terrific team,” says Dimitrios (repeatedly). Break rooms and a cafeteria are available for employees’ use. For customers, the company has a number of conference rooms, one even decorated with colorful Disney characters.

Do all customers come to Las Vegas Uniforms to try on their uniforms? Many do, yes. Dressing rooms are provided. These days, some customers want to buy online, which they can do, with delivery provided. One can sense the size of the business by looking at the products already ordered. The company has also set up individual online portals for the employees of important large business customers.

Though the owner is not shy, Dimitrios is not a guy that likes being out front. He dresses informally, sports a long ponytail and credits his wife, Elvia, who joined the company 10 years ago, with reminders about safety when he rides one of his three motorcycles!

Dimitrios did not grow up wealthy. His family emigrated from Greece, but he was born in California. Dimitrios doesn't like talking about life and its challenges before his 30s, but in his 30s when the opportunity came to turn a vacant building into a ready-to-wear store, he succeeded.

Dimitrios has lots of sayings. One of them is that two things motivate a man: inspiration and desperation. It was more desperation that motivated Dimitrios to accept an offer for that empty building in California which turned into a profit-making store.

The man who admits "I started with less than zero" is undoubtedly a true inspiration to young entrepreneurs. He is also proud that his team continues to do a great job serving the needs of their thousands of loyal customers across the U.S.