



# Ladies in Autosports

Teresa Stucky

“Even though it’s hectic, stressful, and fast paced; as crazy as it sounds I enjoy my job!”

Sales Representative & Production Scheduler for McKinney Corporation

By Julia Aschenberg

**LIA Mag:** Today we are here at McKinney Corporation talking to Teresa Stucky. I got to know Teresa when I worked for Mckinney Corporation right out of College. I thought Teresa would be a good reference person to interview because of her valuable information she could give to other women who want to get into the automotive racing industry. Hi Teresa

**Teresa Stucky:** Hi Julie

**LIA Mag:** First of all I know back when I worked at McKinney Corporation you had been with the company for a while and had a wealth of information to share with customers. When exactly was your date of hire at McKinney Corporation?

**Teresa Stucky:** October 12, 1998

**LIA Mag:** Prior to McKinney Corporation where did you work?

**Teresa Stucky:** I have a degree in Landscape Architecture and I was working for a local landscaping firm not necessarily as a designer but as a landscaper on a crew and I did that for three years.

**LIA Mag:** When you first started at McKinney Corp what was your initial position and jobs, duties, and tasks?

**Teresa Stucky:** I actually started at the position that I still hold today. I started as a Sales Representative answering the phone. Taking orders over the phone. I then fill and ship the orders to our customers. Those were my daily duties when I first started.

**LIA Mag:** Are those still today?

**Teresa Stucky:** Partly.

**LIA Mag:** You do those tasks and more, right?

**Teresa Stucky:** Currently I am now more of a Sales Manager slash Production Manager. I still answer the sales calls and enter those orders in to be filled and shipped. I am sometimes tech support.

**LIA Mag:** Okay in tech support as in what type of questions are you answering?

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**Teresa Stucky:** What kind of bracket a customer needs. If there was a new rule change then what type of items they would need to update their chassis. If a customer wants to mount a particular item, I try to help them with bracket or tabs that we make to help them in mounting those items.

**LIA Mag:** Now when you were talking about rule changes are you talking about NHRA (National Hot Rod Association) or IHRA?

**Teresa Stucky:** NHRA mostly

**LIA Mag:** When you were talking about your current duties you were also talking about your Production Manager. What exactly do you mean by Production? What would a person need to know, someone wanting to get into the racing industry, about that particular duty?

**Teresa Stucky:** Because I have been at McKinney Corp for 10 years now plus I am familiar with the machinery we have in house and their capabilities. So, it is my job now when we need items for reorder I create the work orders. I make sure we have the materials in house to do that and then schedule with the appropriate machine and let the employee know when we are going to need that part.

**LIA Mag:** What type of machines are you familiar with when it come to production?

**Teresa Stucky:** CNC Lathe, CNC Mill, WaterJet, CNC Punch, Welders, and Fabricators

**LIA Mag:** As long as you have been here would you be able to go out and run any of the machines?

**Teresa Stucky:** No I only do the scheduling of the machinery.

**LIA Mag:** If you were asked to run any of the machinery would you be willing to do something like that?

**Teresa Stucky:** I don't know.

**LIA Mag:** You obviously have the knowledge of what machine does what for the different jobs.

**Teresa Stucky:** I don't have the knowledge to set the machine up. I don't have the technical ability to run the parts on the machine. I am strictly the production scheduler.

**LIA Mag:** Why don't you run us through a typical day for you here at McKinney Corp. I know from working with you that a normal day can vary from one day to the next day. Just run us through from first thing in the morning until you ship packages out at 4:00/4:30 p.m.

**Teresa Stucky:** When I first get here in the morning I try to finish up what I was working on the day before, which is sometimes a couple of different projects. I listen to my voice mails. I check the e-commerce site for new orders from the night before. Follow-up with customers who have placed orders when I have questions, such as if there is a substitute for a part they need when we are out of that particular part. If they need additional parts and do I have any suggestions, for instance; if they ordered one item maybe do they also need this other part for their chassis or body. Phone sales keep me pretty busy. Throughout the day most of the times the customers don't have part numbers per say they just know what they need to mount. It is my job to get the appropriate material, parts, hardware or what not for them to be able to mount them. If it is something I cannot answer then I refer them the Murf or Todd.

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Throughout my day I usually have a laundry list of things in my head that I try to get done and usually by the end of the day maybe only one item gets done. Because of the nature of the business things always have to happen quickly when a customer calls and says that they broke something and they need it in a hurry. If we don't have a put together item it is my job to find out how and when we can get something for them so they can be back out on the strip racing.

**LIA Mag:** Okay so are talking about orders. So you are taking phone orders, web site orders and emergency calls take precedence over everything, right?

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes

**LIA Mag:** How involved are you when they are doing a back or front half of a chassis. What involvement are you in helping the guys out in the shop with that item.

**Teresa Stucky:** I usually try to have what we call a pull kit ready for them. This involves in looking at documentation of the chassis that we are either building new or back or front halving. Looking at the documentation and verify that those parts are still required. Then I gather those parts for the guys so that they don't have to stop and come to the parts counter and go back to the shop. In doing those kits if I find that we don't have it is my responsibility to create a work order to schedule to have those parts made so that they can continue working on the chassis.

**LIA Mag:** I saw recently that you went to the Frank Hawley Drag Racing School.

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes I did

**LIA Mag:** You looked like you had a blast

**Teresa Stucky:** I did

**LIA Mag:** Okay, how did it come about that you went to Frank Hawley's School. I was pleasantly surprised!

**Teresa Stucky:** It was kind of funny. I was kind of in a rut. The day-to-day work even though my day is different all the time. I felt I needed a wake me up call, something different. I was talking to one of the guys down there at Frank Hawley's Drag Racing School and ask about their classes. He said they have a gas dragster school and you could do that if you wanted to and I said all right I'll look into that. The employee emailed me the information and from there I asked my husband, Bob, if he thought it would be okay. He kind of looked at me funny. Bob said: "If that is what you want to do". I said it will only be a couple of days and then I'll be back home. So that's what I did. I asked Murf if I could go and he was excited about it and thought it was cool that I wanted to do it. And so I did it and it was fun and exciting to do. I never thought about racing in the past, I did it to shake things up a bit.

**LIA Mag:** Was it kind of like, well instead of the wake-me-up, or thrill, did you want to see what things were like on the other side of the fence?

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes that was part of it and that was an eye opener. That is the side that I have a lot of respect for, the drag racers. It was a shock on how to do things like that.

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**LIA Mag:** So, you said it gives you perspective and you have always respected the racers. It gives you the perspective of how quick they have to react to things that happen instantaneously on the track.

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes.

**LIA Mag:** It probably helps you to understand why things are happening and betters the work you do for them, true?

**Teresa Stucky:** True. It helps. If somebody is talking about levers that are in the wrong spot I completely understand now that that has to happen. That is second nature to you. If it is not right where you expect it to be then your not winning the race you're not reacting as quickly as you need to be.

**LIA Mag:** So, is it safe to say you're not 100% in your element then?

**Teresa Stucky:** Right.

**LIA Mag:** Okay! So all those pieces. One small minor adjustment makes a difference and every driver is different.

**Teresa Stucky:** Every driver is different and they like to have things where they want them. There is a reason for that and it's reaction time

**LIA Mag:** So did you have yourself a good reaction time?

**Teresa Stucky:** No, No, No I've never done anything like that before. I have never even raced other than trying to make it to work on time. So it was a completely new experience for me. I was so nervous that I thought I was going to get sick the first day.

**LIA Mag:** Oh really!

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes, I was so nervous. After the first class and pass in the car. It was the first time I sat in the dragster and put the suit and helmet on. It was in the month of July in Florida, so it was very hot. Sitting in that little bitty cockpit, being strapped down and waiting my turn to go was just nervous. I was trying to remember everything that you have to do. Not that the steps are difficult but they have to happen quickly and you have to do them in the right order or you don't go down the track.

**LIA Mag:** Oh, okay. Now before you are ever able to make that first pass how much class are you in to learn the regiment of what you need to do? You surely don't go down the track the first thing. How long are you in class learning?

**Teresa Stucky:** You are in class 2 or 3 hours learning quickly what you need to do . There were maybe three of us that had never done this out of a class of sixteen. I was one of the novices. There was a lot of information to soak in quickly. And when they put you in the cars you think okay I was sitting in class and now this is completely different because this is right here and now what do I do. My brain is freezing and my mind is ah!!! By the time you make pass after pass you get better and better and by the second day by the time I got to my last pass I actually felt more comfortable though I was still nervous.

**LIA Mag:** How many passes do you think you made in that first day?

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**Teresa Stucky:** I made three passes.

**LIA Mag:** On the second day did you have more class room time?

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes just a little bit. Because after each pass you would go back up to the classroom and Frank would go over everything that you did well or did wrong. In my case there was a lot that I did wrong. And he would try to help you improve yourself and what you needed to focus on to do better.

**LIA Mag:** Now did he do that individually or in a class room setting?

**Teresa Stucky:** He would tell everyone.

**LIA Mag:** Do you recall your fastest time?

**Teresa Stucky:** I want to say it was like 110 and it doesn't sound that fast, but it happens in a matter of seconds.

**LIA Mag:** Did you go down the 1/8 mile or ¼ mile

**Teresa Stucky:** The 1/8 mile. You start out at 200 feet, than you go to 400 feet, and than you go to 600 feet. Depending on how well you do, Frank allows you to go that much further. So your first pass is only like 200 feet. Pretty much start and stop. Take your foot off the throttle. Students could progress at the rate of their learning. So there were students making full passes, the very special ones, but not me. This was an awesome learning experience I had and the classmates I had were very supportive. All the staff there at Frank Hawley's Drag Racing School was exceptional.

**LIA Mag:** You would recommend the experience?

**Teresa Stucky:** Oh yes, and not only for drag racing. With Frank's classes the things that he teaches you can be applied to life. He talks about your subconscious and how you react to things, just the stimulation in general and not just in racing. He just explains why you do the things you do. Like when you are telling your foot to do something and it is doing the complete opposite. He explains why that happens. Learning how to focus, practice and visualization. Just all kinds of things you learn.

**LIA Mag:** Some of the other students that were down there in your class. Were they down there to obtain a license?

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes there were a hand full of them that were down there to get their license and I think 4 or 5 got their licenses.

**LIA Mag:** The classmates that were down there licensing where were they from?

**Teresa Stucky:** Oh it varied. We had a defensive end for the Carolina Panthers, which he licensed in the Firebird. By the end of class if you didn't license you could pay extra money to stay and make a few more passes to get your license. They offered him to stay and license in the dragster and he stayed and licensed in both. Another classmate was from Renessaler Indiana, Chicago, and Georgia. More of the big east coast.

**LIA Mag:** Now would you do the class again?

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**Teresa Stucky:** Oh yes I would, but I would take my husband with me.

**LIA Mag:** Now would you ever go into racing yourself?

**Teresa Stucky:** No I would not go into racing. There is a part of me that thinks about it, but I know myself. My family life, the life style I lead, it would be too much to try to do that.

**LIA Mag:** With the combination of working here and doing the drag racing school how long from day one did it take you to get comfortable with the nuts and bolts of the industry? I know for me I worked here for a couple of years and I was just getting comfortable, however, you really have to know the nuts and bolts. How long did it take you to get comfortable

**Teresa Stucky:** I would have to say a year for me to feel really comfortable. Even today there are times that I am scratching my head, okay what is this customer asking me for. It is more the McKinney terminology and the drag racers terminology sometimes isn't the same. So there is a lot of questions that I ask my customers. Most of them are open to that and sometimes they hesitate and I can tell they are wondering why is this gal asking me these questions. Why does she need to know this? It really helps me to fine tune the order and make sure that I send them everything that they need for what they are trying to do on their chassis/body.

**LIA Mag:** Because they don't know what the parts names are.

**Teresa Stucky:** Right, It is my job to make sure that they have every tab, screw, cable, whatever they need. They may not know everything that they need, but it is my job to know what their needs are.

**LIA Mag:** You started in October and the drag racing season is dying down at that time. What was your first drag race that you went and how was it when you first went to that first event?

**Teresa Stucky:** I believe it was the Nationals in Indianapolis that following year.

**LIA Mag:** The Grand Daddy of all races.

**Teresa Stucky:** Yeah and it blew my mind.

**LIA Mag:** How so?

**Teresa Stucky:** Just the sitting in the stands and watching the fuel cars go down the first time I'll never forget it. I was shocked at how it just shook your body, the noise, and smell and you could feel it and how fast that they went. I was floored so-to-speak. It is funny because anybody that has never been and you go with people that have been they are always watching your reaction. I remember some of my co-workers and friends watching me to see how I was going to react. I remember I went WOW that is complete Power! That is awesome

**LIA Mag:** I know that your job is never the same and can change at a moments notice. The job that you do everyday what is probably the most gratifying part of your job?

**Teresa Stucky:** It's making that customer happy. When they call in and say need something and I'm able to get the order out and they receive the parts. And either I don't hear from didn't get this and where's this. I like to help people. The thing I like most about my job is that it isn't the same thing every

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day. It is fast paced. I am never bored. If Murf ever heard me say that I'm bored he'd say what's wrong with you. Sometimes it is very hectic and sometimes it's stressful but honestly I kind of enjoy that about my job as crazy as it sounds. Your day flies by very quickly. I'm always busy every day. There is always a problem to deal with.

**LIA Mag:** Then I would call that challenging.

**Teresa Stucky:** Yes, it is very challenging, however, I like that about my job.

**LIA Mag:** Any other gal wanting to get into the auto racing industry whether having a job like you have or owning their own company similar to McKinney Corporation. What advice would you have for them to begin getting into the industry?

**Teresa Stucky:** I would have to say, not that this was my original plan. From my previous experience I can read a blueprint, which was very helpful here at McKinney Corp. As far as determination you need to be tough because sometimes people aren't nice and that's part of life. Learn and observe everything you can as far as even if you're remotely interested in it for Production. Even if the job isn't racing oriented you can learn. If it is a technical or sales background you can always learn something new. You just listen and you learn and read all the information you can. Listen from your boss, co-workers and people in the industry

**LIA Mag:** Should you ask questions?

**Teresa Stucky:** Oh yeah and I still do. I am always asking Todd and Murf question after question. That is one thing that Murf has said about me is that I am always asking questions.

**LIA Mag:** What is the future for Teresa Stucky? Do you want to stay in the industry?

**Teresa Stucky:** I love what I'm doing and hope to stay in this industry for at least the next 10 years.

To sum up the interview with Teresa Stucky who works for McKinney Corporation. I want to thank Teresa for taking the time out of her very hectic schedule to do the interview with LIA Magazine. I have also had the privilege of working with Teresa for two years and got to know her on a personal side. She is a very knowledgeable person when it comes to what parts a customer needs for their top fuel or funny car chassis. To speak with her she appears very humble, however, she is your ticket concerning your needs for having the right parts for your chassis. So don't hesitate to contact her at McKinney Corp for all your chassis needs.