Fiberglass maker creates US jobs

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A Chinese fiberglass manufacturer is geared up to recruit high-end talent and fill more than 400 jobs at its new facility near Columbia, South Carolina.  
China Jushi Co broke ground on a $300 million plant in Richland County a year and a half ago. The 80,000-ton fiberglass production line is expected to be put into operation late this year or early next year.  
"We are excited about building a brand-new facility in the composites market in the US," said Ray Wierzbowski, the facility manager. "It's rare to see a large facility being built in the glass business in the US and we want to be the first."  
The company has so far hired more than 50 employees in the US. The first wave of 12 new hires has recently completed training at the company's headquarters in Tongxiang, Zhejiang province.  
The employees were trained, through interpreters, on Jushi's technology and equipment, and learned about glass fiber techniques in the composites and reinforcements business, said Wierzbowski.  
Most of the employees with manufacturing experience will be hired locally, and those with glass experience will come from outside of the Columbia area, he said.  
Last week, the company held a job fair in Columbia, seeking employees for such positions as IT technician, maintenance supervisor and multicraft maintenance technician.  
Wierzbowski, who had worked at Owens Corning before he joined Jushi a year ago, said what attracts him is the company's "aggressive growth strategy".  
Jushi has started global expansion by setting up more than 10 overseas subsidiaries after establishing three domestic production bases.  
The South Carolina facility is the company's second overseas manufacturing base, after the construction of a glass fiber production base was completed in Egypt in September.  
"Our confidence in going global comes from our core technologies," said Gu Guijiang, general manager of science and technology at China Jushi.  
Gu said Jushi is the first Chinese fiberglass company whose technology has been granted a patent in the US. The company's self-developed "super large furnace" features one-of-a-kind technology that enables high efficiency and low energy consumption, said Gu.  
The new facility in Richland County will house a research and development center, which will allow researchers to conduct experiments on the production line, he added.  
As a new inorganic nonmetal material, fiberglass is widely used in many fields such as aerospace, transportation, electronics and construction. Fiberglass-reinforced plastic has become a new generation composite material to replace traditional materials such as steel, wood and stone.  
Fiberglass was invented in the US, so the country enjoys a rich resource of technology and talent in related areas, said Chen Qingyu, general manager of Jushi's human resources department.  
So far, five or six experts have been recruited for the new facility and the company is looking for more.

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