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by Chris Cook/Karen Fronek

Jessica Gomez, CEO  
Rogue Valley Microdevices  
943 Automation Way  
Medford, OR  
www.roguevalleymicro.com  
(541) 774-1900

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## Accomplishing Greatness

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According to Jessica, she and Patrick were pleasantly surprised by the encouragement and support they received from Southern Oregon county agencies and organizations, starting at the community level up through the state government. "Each vitally important entity came together to help the region's first microelectronics manufacturing company take root in Medford," she says, adding that SOREDI helped with the loan process and brought the right people to the table. "This was uncharted territory for all of us. As a company, we represented the start of a brand new industry sector for the region and all the players were willing to put in the effort, and that's what enabled us to be successful."

Today, while running three shifts, the Rogue Valley Microdevices team consists of 20 employees, including chemical and mechanical engineers and lab tech support. With their extensive in-house cross-training program, every team member learns to operate the extensive list of equipment housed in the company's MEMS manufacturing facility. This reflects the company's core value of teamwork.

The value of teamwork is also evident in the company's hiring system, which involves rigorous interviewing processes with the company principles and the team that the candidate will potentially be part of. "We make better decisions together," Jessica explains. "And it helps promote the importance of the team investment in a new team member. In our industry, collaboration and creativity are critical."

Both Jessica and Patrick are extremely excited about their company's trajectory especially in the biomedical field. "We have had the opportunity to support a number of customers working on really exciting technology in biotech. The advances in areas like cancer diagnostics and DNA analysis have been impressive". The company is currently working with startups and international companies that are in the research and development process. "We are fortunate to work with new materials and engineering teams from many of the world's high-tech centers," says Jessica. "We get to be part of and see really cool and cutting-edge products."

Meanwhile, Rogue Valley Microdevices engages with local student interns as a way to recruit up-and-coming top talent. For the past several years, the company has joined other Southern Oregon businesses, including Linde Electronics and Carestream, in the Multiple Engineering Cooperative Program (MECOP). This cooperative internship program helps students who are pursuing undergraduate degrees in chemical, mechanical, or industrial engineering gain a full year work experience prior to graduation. University participants include Oregon State University, Portland State University, Oregon Tech, and the University of Portland.

Jessica speaks highly about Southern Oregon as a place to learn from colleagues. She cites her Southern Oregon edge as the collaborative business approach and mutual respect often missing in larger communities. "One thing I really love about where we live is that even though we're not the biggest or most unique company, we are truly valued by the community," she says. "People are genuinely interested in what we are doing and in supporting us as we grow and learn. That is really unique."

And Jessica enjoys giving back to the place that helped her and Patrick get started. When possible, she helps shape regional business policy and continues working with others to improve the overall business climate. "We really can shape the direction of our regional economy, and that's super exciting."



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Rogue Valley Microdevices | 943 Automation Way, Medford, OR 97504 | [www.roguevalleymicro.com](http://www.roguevalleymicro.com) | (541) 774-1900



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