

Even as a teenager, Dan did not shy away from hard work getting his first job at age 15 loading mopeds onto commercial trucks at a local factory. “The money from my first job allowed me to buy some of the equipment that I wanted, but I didn’t like being bossed around in that manual labor environment. I wanted a career in which I would be respected for my knowledge; so when I returned to school that following fall, I had a brand new perspective on education.”

Fowler and school still did not always mix. “I was smart in class but not really challenged or stimulated,” he admits. “I’d cut class and go practice my DJ skills and wait for the weekend so I could entertain and earn money at the same time.” Chasing his dreams, Fowler expedited the high school process by earning his GED at 16 and enrolling at Jersey City State College later the same year. During his freshman year, he participated in a six-month government technical program (CETA) that taught him more about his passion - electronics.

After completing the program, Fowler received several job offers ultimately choosing to work as a copier service technician for Highbeam Business Systems, a prominent African-American owned company. “When I started working, I knew nothing about copiers; but over the years, I learned a great deal while in the industry which greatly increased my mechanical, technical, and customer service skills. They sent me to many corporate training institutes, and the profession allowed me to travel from office-to-office daily,” he stated.

While in the corporate sector, he continued to pursue his entrepreneurial interests by working as a DJ, soon adding the title of record producer to his resume. “I was a business professional by day and in the fast lane by night,” he recalls. Thanks to the latter, he began keeping company with a woman he had met at a New York nightclub. That relationship resulted in the birth of his first two children, Cori, 22, who now serves as Operations Manager for American Technologies and Damian, 20, a soldier proudly serving our country in the United States Navy.

After 16 years in the industry, Dan abandoned his copier job, was awarded legal custody of his children, began collecting unemployment benefits and moved his family to Florida. “When unemployment and my savings were depleted, I wound up on welfare,” he said. He remained on relief for three years, which allowed him the time he felt he needed to do his “daddy thing.”

Then, in 1993, he received an extraordinary break through a businessman whom he had previously worked for. The man offered him a position running the business office of Taurus Communications in Washington, DC. He packed his belongings and his two children and returned north. According to Fowler, he was “traveling around the country selling copiers to churches and other organizations when my brother came to live (and travel) with me. At that time, he had created a fancy computer system and brought it with us as we toured the nation. People suddenly started buying our computers like crazy. That concept and initiative sparked a foundation for what is known today as American Technologies.”

In December of 1994, Dan was introduced to a Haiti-born single mother named, Marie Jacinthe Raphael. After a month-long whirlwind romance, the two were married, their prior children became brothers and sister and they began to build a family together. Within months, with only \$300.00, Dan and Marie started American Technologies, LLC. “We initially built custom computers and did well with that for about five years until Y2K hit and contracts started drying up,” said Marie. Still, Y2K proved a mixed blessing for the fledgling business that would soon revolutionize power-point style presentations. According to Daniel, “when the computer manufacturing business began to fade, I thought, ‘why not read what we have to say into a microphone, add music, graphics, text and animation and make a more powerful impact on businesses marketing efforts.’” That birthed the first advanced version of high-impact video marketing productions. Though slow in catching on, the popularity of the format resulted in American Technologies landing contracts with Hewlett Packard, several colleges and universities and a plethora of other non-profit and for-profit companies.

In 2001, Dan and Marie decided it was time to leave the Washington, DC area. “Dan and I looked north toward New York and then we looked south. We decided to head south and found a home in Atlanta. We moved here virtually homeless and knew nobody,” Marie says.

A Father’s Day gift of a broadcast-quality, digital video camera from his wife more than a decade ago allowed Dan to add video streaming to American Technologies’ offerings. That new product was actually inspired by a request from the 100 Black Men of America, one of the firm’s long-term clients. With the success of webcasting for the “100”, many others have begun webcasting their conferences, meetings and other special events through American Technologies.

Sticklers for excellence, getting close to their clients and providing great customer service, which Dan learned early in his career working as a copier service technician, has endeared many influential Atlantans, including the Reverend Markel Hutchins. In 2001, Hutchins, then President of the National Youth Connection (NYC), became one of American Technologies’ first clients in the metro-Atlanta area. “I needed a company that could take various pieces of footage from television broadcasts where the media had captured our work at NYC and make a product that we could use as a marketing tool. Since that time, I have personally witnessed their growth as a business and family. Their product has gone from good to great to unmatched. Among the things that make them unique is the amazing skill of the Fowler children.”

The success of American Technologies has allowed Dan and Marie to fully involve their six children; Cori, 22, Damien, 20, Lawrence, 16, Kellie, 13, Daniel, 10 and Kaliah, 8. In addition to teaching their children the “nuts and bolts” of computerization, Dan and Marie have carefully instilled other responsibilities such as managing money and philanthropy. The children are interviewed annually and “hired” just as they would be for a real job.

Not only has Dan, Sr. moved to the top levels of technical expertise, but his children are doing exceedingly well also. While 20-year-old son Damien is living out the family's core values and patriotic commitment by serving as an aircraft mechanic in the US Navy, the other Fowler children are working directly in the business. Sixteen-year-old Lawrence helps to train and supervise interns and other personnel; thirteen-year-old Kellie scans graphics for editing; ten-year-old Daniel junior writes elaborate and complicated source codes for many of the high-tech online projects; and eight-year-old Kaliah edits sound and video clips. Cori, oldest of the Fowler offspring, has been building computers since the age of seven. "At first it was just something to do," said Cori, now 22. "Now it's my passion as well. My father teaches us everything about the business; so much of what he used to do, like editing, we can now all do."

Dan looks at his own personal life and the 14 years since he and Marie created American Technologies and is thankful to his Creator. "Although we are experiencing some levels of prosperity, our best and most successful days are yet to come." A state-of-the-art television-recording studio is under construction and their growing list of clients includes the Atlanta Business League, the Economic Empowerment Initiative, Patchwork Recording Studios, Atlanta Technical College, the Dallas Austin Foundation, Prentice Properties, West End Medical Center and many others. "I believe that the next three years will bring for them an extraordinary degree of expansion," said Hutchins. "Most of their business has been repeat and through referrals. People don't typically refer a business unless they have an exemplary product."

In full acknowledgement of the powerful word "family," I understand why American Technologies has chosen the motto to be, "Beyond the Cutting Edge . . ."

Learn more about American Technologies by visiting www.americantechnologies.net