Outside the electrical box

It was 1973, and 16-year-old DeWayne Rice climbed into the cab of a beat-up Dodge truck.

“I started down a long, bumpy road working as a helper for a small electrical contracting company in Pasadena, TX,” Rice said. “Like many others living paycheck to paycheck, I had no idea where life would lead me.”

After 26 years of working his way through the ranks for other electrical contractors running production, Rice finally had the opportunity to open his own electrical company, Direct, in October 1999.

With the help of his two sons, Rick Rice and Ronnie Tinsley, Rice hit the ground running with his new company. Rice’s experience, along with his sons’ youth and drive, started the family on the quest to fulfill the American dream.

Today, Rice oversees financial matters, sales, business development, customer service and contractual compliance.

“In my free time, I love spending time with my five grandchildren and traveling to places I have never visited before,” Rice said. “In addition, I enjoy weekly retreats to my beach house in Bolivar. The recently renovated beach house was one of the few originals to be left standing after Hurricane Ike.”

Rice’s son, Rick, is responsible for human resource management, sales, project pricing, contract negotiations and management of overall operations at Direct.

“In my spare time, I take part in a friendly round of golf, deep-sea fishing and networking with friends,” Rick Rice said. “I am a husband and father of two.”

Tinsley, vice president and master electrician, develops marketing strategies, creates and implements internal systems, oversees electrical projects design and manages the estimating department.

Tinsley, a husband and father of three, serves on the San Jacinto College Advisory Board and the Sacred Heart Private School Board.

“One of my hobbies is performing music live as a founding member and vocalist for the Houston-based rock band, The Hectic,” Tinsley said. “I am also the president of the Houston Band Coalition, a nonprofit group that promotes the musical arts in the Gulf Coast area.”

Originally founded as an electrical firm, Direct has developed into a multi-divisional service, contracting, and design firm offering turnkey MEP solutions.

Rice shared his recipe for success in the construction industry.

“It takes an overwhelming desire, unsurpassed talent, leadership skills, a hardworking family, a workforce of friends and some street-smart business savvy.” –ab