

VERMICULAR

Founder Bios



Kuni Hijikata

President & Co-CEO, Aichi Dobby, Ltd.

In 2001, Kuni joined Aichi Dobby to save his grandfather's declining cast iron foundry and revitalize their team of highly skilled craftsmen. He became a certified casting craftsman, developing the skills and deep dedication of craft required to deliver Aichi Dobby's uncompromising quality and craftsmanship. As third-generation president, he knew more meaningful change was needed to save the family business.

In 2006, he recruited younger brother Tomo and together, they pivoted the company from manufacturing industrial casting components to creating high quality, enameled cast iron cookware. In 2010, they launched Vermicular in Japan, introducing the first Made-in-Japan enameled cast iron pot with its signature precision seal, built with the mission to preserve ingredients' natural qualities and inspire chefs of all levels.



Tomo Hijikata

Executive Vice President & Co-CEO, Aichi Dobby, Ltd.

Tomo joined Aichi Dobby in 2006, partnering with his brother Kuni to save his grandfather's declining cast iron foundry. To better understand the family business and complement Kuni's casting expertise, Tomo mastered the skills of precision machining. However, Tomo's biggest contribution lay in his innovative idea in pivoting their industrial cast iron skills and expertise into manufacturing cast iron cookware.

Over the next three years, with over 10,000 rounds of rigorous product iteration and testing, he led the successful development of Vermicular's first enameled cast iron pot with its signature precision seal. He remains in charge of product development from concept to launch.