

# 2023 Construction Safety Excellence Awards (CSEA)

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION 3**

**C S E A 2023 Grand Award Winner**

Hensel Phelps 6

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**10 of the Safest Contractors in America**

Andron Construction Corp. 12

EW Howell Construction Group 15

Faith Technologies Incorporated 19

Jordan Foster Construction 24

Noble Texas Builders 30

Slayden Constructors 33

Sundt Construction, Inc. 39

VJS Construction Services 44

Whitaker Ellis Builders, Inc. 48

# Introduction

Jon Oppenheim, Southeast Region Construction Leader for WTW (Willis Towers Watson) introduced the awards and noted “I consider it an honor and privilege representing WTW, as a long time sponsor of the AGC Construction Safety Excellence Awards.” The purpose of the CSEA is to recognize those construction companies who excel at safety performance. These awards are unlike other award programs in that the criteria is not limited to frequency rates. The CSEA selection process is considerably more comprehensive. We all know that paper does not save people, people save people and just because it didn’t happen doesn’t mean it can’t.



**On March 15, 2023 nearly 1,000 contractors attended the AGC-Willis Towers Watson (WTW) Construction Safety Excellence Awards (CSEA) lunch that was held at the AGC National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.**

The importance of safety cannot be overstated. Consider this Sir Brian Appleton quotation. He was a technical advisor on the Piper Alpha disaster, which is the worst offshore disaster in UK history. His quote underscores the importance of safety. He said:

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**Safety is not an intellectual exercise to keep us in work. It is a matter of life and death. It is the sum of our contributions to safety management that determines whether the people we work with live or die.**

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That’s powerful. Every action we take, every choice we make, could have consequences that we, and the people we love, might not want to have to live with. Safety is about more than protecting yourself. It’s about protecting your coworker, your friends, and your family from a life without you. It is equally about holding paramount the safety and health of others so that they can work and live their best and most productive life.

There are thousands of construction sites in operation across the country, and each one presents a certain set of hazards that need to be accounted for. The importance of safety is indisputable and the benefits of having a safe construction site go far beyond the obvious. Construction is an inherently dangerous profession. Practicing proper health and safety on the job site will do more than protect workers and the public. The right processes and procedures will also benefit your business by helping you by staying compliant, respond more quickly to incidents, preserve your bottom line, build your brand, enhance your reputation, and help recruit and retain talent.

Construction has made significant strides in protecting the industry’s workers from physical harm. There is a need to look at workers’ health and safety more holistically, addressing not only physical welfare but mental and emotional well-being as well.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was formed in the 1970, because “in the prior 25 years, more than 400,000 Americans were killed by work-related accidents and disease, and close to 50 million more suffered disabling injuries on the job,” and these injuries had “cost billions of dollars in lost wages and production,” according to records. You need only look at photographs of some of history’s construction projects to see work conditions that would result in unknown amounts of injuries, losses, and fines today. We’ve all seen the old photographs of iron workers lounging on beams hundreds of feet from the ground without any PPE present. Those pictures illustrate the progress we can make when there is a focused approach. This moves the needle. This saves lives.

Mental health affects worker safety. Even if no actual illness is diagnosed, it’s easy to imagine how a worker’s mental state might affect his or her ability to make good decisions and recognize potential hazards. The mind drives the activity of the body. To work safely, people need to be mindful of what they’re doing, and that’s part of the conversation on mental health.

Our industry loses more colleagues to suicide annually than all of OSHA’s Fatal Four Hazards combined. Suicide, which is arguably the number one most preventable cause of death. We are better than this. WTW is proud to report that the industry is responding with purpose and focus. WTW in 2020, introduced our Ideal Body Environment And Mind (IBEAM) mental health and suicide prevention education and training platform. Over the past three years, our platform has been piloted, tested, reviewed, and continues to gain momentum. IBEAM was referred to in a CDC publication as a promising practice for the industry to adopt. A technology based, self-directed module is being developed to augment and complement our skills based live delivery model. The AGC Culture of Care initiative and newly created Mental Health Task Force continue to drive positive outcomes by increasing literacy and reducing the stigma associated with mental illness. These are just an example of the industry coming together to fight a crisis. Together we will make a difference. Together we will move the needle. And together we will save lives.

The winners of the coveted CSEA awards profiled here are members of a select group of likeminded, forward-thinking companies on the forefront of change and responsible for transforming the construction industry. They have chosen to stare down an inherently hazardous industry and push to make it a safer place to work and create a more compassionate culture. They place people before profit. Their efforts are tireless and performed for a cause not for applause. We can all learn from their leadership.

The AGC-WTW CSEA program is the industry’s elite safety excellence awards program for companies of all sizes and occupational divisions.

It is unique because finalist contractors make a 5-minute verbal presentation to five judges and the judges ask each finalist a series of unknown questions for 10 minutes. The CSEA program recognizes companies that have developed and delivered premier safety and risk control strategies.



**CSEA Finals Judges:**

Kevin Cannon, CSP, ARM - Senior Director, Safety, Health & Risk Management, AGC of America

Mike Fredebeil, CSP – SVP, National Director Construction Safety & Risk Management

Anthony J. Militello, PE, CSP, CQ - Lead EHS Consultant, Shirley Parsons

Jim Smoltz - Global Lead, EHS High Risk Activities, Google

David Wessin - Vice President Safety & Risk, Tower Eight Staffing Solutions, Inc

The CSEA showcases companies that have achieved continuous improvements and maintenance of their safety and health management systems. In 2023, there were 48 total finalists among 6 divisions and 18 categories.

AGC and WTW presented the Grand Award for Construction Safety Excellence to Hensel Phelps. The first-place winner of each category was included in the evaluation that determined the “Best of the Best” of the 2023 Construction Safety Excellence Awards finalists.

On January 16 and 17, 2023 preliminary judging for the CSEA final competition took place in New Orleans, Louisiana.

**A total of 28 preliminary judges consisting of safety professionals from the construction industry, AGC Chapters, WTW construction risk professionals, and construction insurance carriers evaluated and scored the initial 78 CSEA applications from across the country.**



# CSEA Grand Award Winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



**HENSEL PHELPS**

Plan. Build. Manage.

## At a glance



### Projects

Infrastructure and General Building



### People

Established 1937, 4,000+ employees

## About our company

Founded in 1937, Hensel Phelps currently has over 4,000 employees located throughout the United States. We work in aviation, commercial, education, government, healthcare, hospitality, industrial, correctional, mission critical, and transportation.



## Why we deserve recognition



At Hensel Phelps, we believe that working safely is the most important thing we do because it's about people and their families. Safety is at the core of what we do and integrated into each of our core values. We focus on three pillars of safety excellence to further

enhance our culture: leadership involvement, employee engagement, and accountability (including positive reinforcement).

**Leadership involvement:** At Hensel Phelps, our President and CEO is the champion of our safety culture. This approach influences all employees because he demonstrates visible safety leadership. When President & CEO took over his new role on January 1, 2019, Mike Choutka's first order of business was safety. Mike immediately released a safety message called "Mike Choutka's Safety Expectations." Mike outlined his expectations and a call to action to make Hensel Phelps the safety company in our industry through five concepts:

1. Integrate safety into everything you do.
2. Have a plan and the proper controls in place.
3. Observe your surroundings and provide safe working conditions.
4. Stop work when there is an unsafe act or condition.
5. Recognize and reinforce safe acts.

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**... Hensel Phelps places the highest value on the safety and health of our employees, Trade Partners, and our communities. Our vision is to be the safest company in our industry by creating a culture that engages all stakeholders. Our guiding principles to achieve this vision include Leadership Involvement, Employee Engagement, and Accountability.**

Message from Hensel Phelps  
Senior Leadership

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**Our Craft Awareness, Recognition, and Engagement in Safety (CARES) Program is an example of how we engage each trade on all projects. Care is a craft-based safety committee that meets weekly and discusses safety concerns and suggested improvements with management to ensure craft have a voice when it comes to safety.**

**Employee engagement:** Our Craft Awareness, Recognition, and Engagement in Safety (CARES) Program is an example of how we engage each trade on all projects. Care is a craft-based safety committee that meets weekly and discusses safety concerns and suggested improvements with management to ensure craft have a voice when it comes to safety. Each CARES Champion is a liaison between the trades and management to ensure all voices are heard and concerns are addressed.

**Accountability and recognition:** We have made a concerted effort to be proactive and measure safety performance on our projects rather than just looking at end results. An external assessment of 25 leading indicators selected from our safety and health program is conducted twice a year. Assessors are trained on the criteria and receive guidance on how to score each item. These elements are updated annually to help drive performance based on events, policy changes or focus areas of the company. Assessment elements include planning, leadership involvement, craft engagement, risk mitigation, and field observations. Projects receive a score for each item and then an overall score for the assessment which is sent to our President. Our President responds to every report recognizing the project for performing well or holding the team accountable. In addition, our President and CEO periodically sends personalized thank you notes and a special recognition gift to people that stand out in safety.

To bring our pillars of safety excellence together, each project team holds Executive Safety Culture Charrettes where Trade Partner executives are brought to each site throughout the life of the project to build the safety culture. This program engages all project stakeholders and recognizes achievements at the project, identifies potential issues, and recognizes the craft for what they are doing well. The most important facet of this program is that Trade Partner craft sees their company executives participating in our safety program.

## Safety and risk management innovations



Hensel Phelps implemented the “Energy Wheel” hazard recognition tool this past year to help craft and supervisors identify hazards in the work area before they immediately start work. Hazard recognition is an essential skill that is required for every activity performed on a jobsite. It is required to successfully complete an Activity Hazard analysis, perform a Safety Task Assignment, complete SAFE observations, and perform an operation.

We often assume workers can see hazards that are present and anticipate those that may emerge. Accident investigations suggest that lack of hazard recognition skills are a contributing cause in many accidents. The energy wheel serves as a tool that can be used during the Safety Task Assignment to help identify hazards associated with each form of energy that were not apparent when developing the Activity Hazard Analysis. For example, a crew may use the mechanical icon to identify rotating machinery, tension in cables, and other hazards.

## Safety and risk management program description



Hensel Phelps has created a comprehensive safety and health program that must be implemented at all locations. The Safety and Health Manual is an overarching policy to support the philosophy that all injuries can be prevented. It applies to all

Hensel Phelps locations and employees. The Code of Safety Practices is an employee handbook designed to communicate our safety and health policies to craft employees in an easily understandable format (both printed and available via mobile device). The Accident Prevention Plan (APP) is a site-specific document used to identify and control unique risks on each project and communicates our requirements to trade partners.



**During the accident and near-miss investigations, we identified a common theme that workers were not identifying hazards before they immediately went to work, and/or the hazard was not accounted for in the AHA. As a result, we incorporated a hazard recognition tool called the Energy Wheel into our safety task assignment which helps workers systematically identify high-energy potential hazards.**

Hensel Phelps reviews our program annually to identify opportunities for improvement, gaps in our systems, or areas that need to be updated based on lessons learned. Our Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) is our primary tool for planning an operation, identifying hazards and controls, and communicating the plan to the workers. During the accident and near-miss investigations, we identified a common theme that workers were not identifying hazards before they immediately went to work, and/or the hazard was not accounted for in the AHA. As a result, we incorporated a hazard recognition tool called the Energy Wheel into our safety task assignment which helps workers systematically identify high-energy potential hazards. We also learned the quality of our safety task assignments needed to be improved so we conducted training on effective ways to complete the safety task assignment and encouraged more open communication. Now the safety task assignment focuses on high-energy hazards associated with the operation and ways to control exposure. This program has helped us effectively identify hazards and is fostering more open communication within crews about their hazard recognition skillset.

Hensel Phelps' Safety Accountability for Everyone (SAFE) Program includes all personnel on our projects and is our primary method for observing and correcting unsafe behaviors, environmental conditions, and reinforcing the safe behavior of workers by recognizing them for a job well done. Our program highlights the concept that everyone — from co-workers to partners, clients to family members — is part of the safety network. Our SAFE program focuses on effective communication, a consistent safety presence in the field, and immediate correction of hazards and unsafe behaviors. Each safe or unsafe observation is entered via mobile data entry allowing for immediate access through a real-time dashboard—filterable to individuals and supervisors—to identify trends that require immediate action. Our call to action includes: CHECK for safe and unsafe behaviors. CONNECT with the people you work with and communicate with respect. Reinforce what people are doing well and stop work and correct the hazards if something is unsafe. COMMIT to working safely. Encourage every individual in your safety network to commit to working safely and watching out for each other.

The implementation of our safety and health program is driven by our Safety Management Tool (SMT). This tool is required of each project and the deliverables of our programs are assigned to various people to manage so all employees are engaged in our safety program and learn how to manage safety. This also ensures safety professionals are not the only people managing safety. The Safety Management Tool and the staff assignments are updated at least quarterly and audited by senior management during job reviews. Additionally, all personnel are evaluated on their safety performance during employee evaluations.

Safety Connect is our internally developed safety management system which includes the following applications: accident / near miss reporting, SAFE (observation program), personnel and trade partner management, safety orientations, hour tracking, and an Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) Builder. The AHA Builder was developed in 2021 and officially launched in early 2022. This tool is designed to provide a baseline AHA for Hensel Phelps self-performed operations that incorporates a risk assessment tool designed to increase awareness about operational risk and effective controls. It also incorporates Hensel Phelps policy, best practices, and regulatory information in the control mechanisms resulting in more comprehensive AHA's because our teams can focus on the unique risk for the operation at the site. AHA's are also available on mobile devices making them more accessible in the field. Safety Connect gathers all the information gathered on each site and makes the data actionable by surfacing it to safety dashboards.





To promote safety, each month we publish a company newsletter that celebrates our craft and recognizes the foreman for their safety performance in our “Craft Corner.” Additionally, our foreman and superintendents are recognized for reaching specified milestones in their careers and for their active participation in our safety program. Each person is eligible to receive a Hensel Phelps watch and plaques at our annual Old Timers Event. In an effort to recognize craft, we highlight one craft person a month in our company safety calendar. Their picture is included along with a quote from them about why safety matters. To recognize projects, we started an annual award five years ago that recognizes a District that goes an entire year without a recordable injury. Our “Zero Accident Award” is given out at our annual Stockholders event and celebrates the dedication of our people in an entire District. Since 2015, we have issued eleven of these awards. Additionally, throughout the year, we develop safety videos related to new initiatives along with jobsite posters with QR codes to the video. Example videos that we produced this year include Hazard Recognition with the Energy Wheel, a video highlighting some CARES teams, how to conduct a proper pre-task plan, and a safety message from our President and CEO.

We recognize that the construction industry has one of the highest rates of suicide among all other industries. We have created a program called Culture of Care as an overarching program where resources for mental health, employee assistance programs, resource material, and tailgate meetings are posted for accessibility. In addition, we have partnered with a leading industry expert to conduct training for all of our personnel about mental health and suicide prevention. The topics include provided include Burnout and Resilience, How to Help Someone Experiencing a Suicide Crisis, A Manager’s Role in Suicide Prevention, and Pain Management and Substance Abuse. To date, we have trained over 2,000 managers on these topics. Corresponding tailgate meetings for the same topics are posted on our Culture of Care website so the information can be communicated to the field.



For further information from Hensel Phelps or sharing of best practices, please contact

Jerry Shupe, Corporate Director of Safety and Health at [jshupe@henselphelps](mailto:jshupe@henselphelps)

**78**

Applications



**48**

Finalists

**6** hours

of new employee safety orientation



**85%**

of CSEA applicants have craft workers that completed OSHA 30-hour for Construction



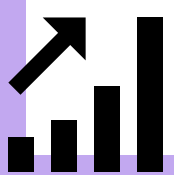
CSEA applicants had an average:

Total Recordable Rate - **1.16**

Lost Time Rate - **0.25**

DART Rate - **0.74**

EMR - **0.71**



**48%**

of CSEA applicants complete monthly safety performance trending reports.

**22%** - complete quarterly



**51%**

of CSEA applicants perform fitness for duty and agility testing



**97%**

of CSEA applicants have supervisors that completed OSHA 30-hour for Construction



**90%**

use employee safety culture/perception surveys

**46%**

were 3rd party

**54%**

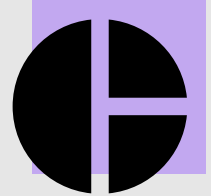
of surveys were in-house

**74%**

were performed either annually or bi-annually

**97%**

of CSEA applicants complete an annual formal safety program evaluation



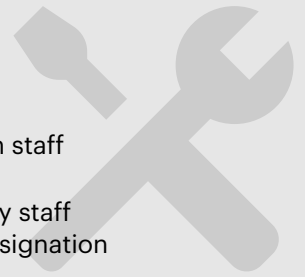
**78%** are completed in-house

**22%** by an outside 3rd party

**45%**

of CSEA applicants have a CSP (Certified Safety Professional) on staff

**91%** of applicants have safety staff with a degree or professional designation



CSEA applicants had a site-specific safety orientation for craft workers of:

**85%** 2 hours or less

**15%** is over 2 hours



**87%**

of CSEA applicants conduct random drug tests and

**74%**

include subcontractors in the testing



**86%**

of CSEA applicants attend national construction association meetings such as AGC





# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Construction Management and General Contracting



### People

Established 1969



## About our company

Andron Construction is family owned and operated, since 1969. Located in Goldens Bridge NY, Andron provides preconstruction and construction services in the NY metropolitan areas of NY and CT. Andron performs preconstruction, value engineering, and construction services for an array of clients. Our delivery systems range from General Contracting to Construction Management with a GMP. Our portfolio includes projects in the Healthcare, Senior Living, Multifamily Residential, Education, Science & Technology, and Cultural markets.

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**This prestigious safety award measures our firm directly against our competitors and other AGC member firms. What we do is not easy, and it takes a concerted effort to perform at such a high level. It is through consistent commitment to safety that we are able to compete and to be recognized on a national level. Year in and year out, Andron employees step up to answer our mandate that everyone return home in the same condition as when they arrived at work. We are thankful for everyone's contribution to our safety efforts!**

Message from Andron Construction Senior Leadership

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## Why we deserve recognition



We at Andron feel morally obligated to provide a safe construction site, for everyone who must work in it or travel through it. We have been family-owned and operated for over 50 years, and we have always regarded our employees as part of our family — their safety

is of utmost importance to us. Our attention to safe work practices has produced an excellent record of low incidents and low loss of time. It has also qualified us for membership in a captive insurance program, where we have been enrolled since 2010.

We believe that safety and quality go hand-in-hand: workers who pay attention to safety pay attention to their overall operation and produce high quality work. Over 25 years ago, Andron management determined to improve safety performance, and instituted the ZERO ACCIDENTS goal to promise safety as a high priority. Concrete and measurable standards reflected in the performance evaluations of Andron employees and subcontractors

**We believe that safety and quality go hand-in-hand: workers who pay attention to safety pay attention to their overall operation and produce high quality work. Over 25 years ago, Andron management determined to improve safety performance, and instituted the ZERO ACCIDENTS goal to promise safety as a high priority.**

have evolved into the comprehensive programs and policies that Andron deploys today. Safety is the first message received when a worker arrives on site. Safety is the first agenda item for every job meeting. Safety is practiced and reinforced daily and weekly through jobsite inspections and toolbox talks, quarterly through off-site team safety training and collaboration, and annually through our captive insurance program review and evaluation.

Safety is critical to a successful project. Safety does not happen by chance but occurs through attention to safe practices both in and around the construction site. Andron's people bring their safety experience and safety enthusiasm to every project. The proof is in the results. Andron's attention to safety is evidenced by our record of over 950,000 hours worked with zero lost time or reportable incidents to Andron workers during the past 9½ years.

### Safety and risk management innovations



In response to a single lost time incident in 2013, Andron standardized our process for developing Site Specific Safety Plans for each new project and implemented new protocols designed to identify hazardous conditions and prevent

accidents. Andron continues to emphasize safety at all our job sites, through management commitment, worker participation, hazard identification and prevention, education, training, and communication.

In 2021 we recognized the need for more subcontractor specific and project specific safety and incident data. As a general contractor, Andron has always paid attention to, and judged ourselves, on our own incident and lost time rates. Tracking subcontractor incidents alongside our self-perform hours on a project-by-project basis provided anecdotal evidence, but more data

was required to truly evaluate project-specific safety performance. In 2022, we implemented a system to track total subcontractor work hours and lost time by project, which when combined with our self-perform data, has given us a complete safety picture and allowed us to apply lessons learned company-wide.

### Safety and risk management program description



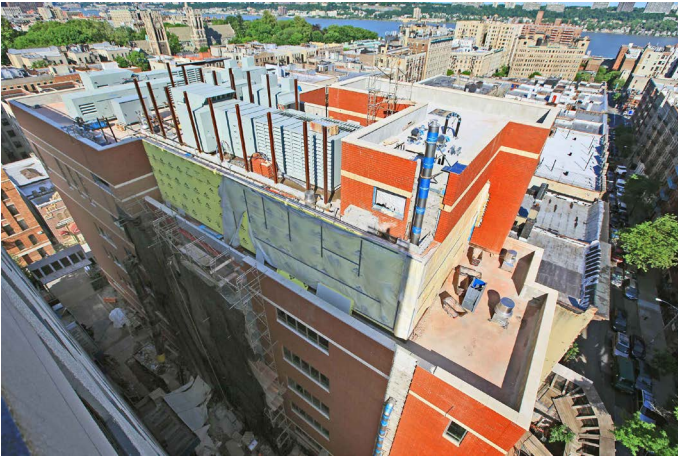
Andron's corporate policy is to promote and provide a safe worksite for everyone. Andron's performance goal for safety is: ZERO ACCIDENTS. The reason for this goal is that safe practices yield high rewards: healthy and productive workers, quality

construction work, lower insurance costs, and future business from customers who demand a safe workplace. Safety starts at the top: our President and Chief Operations Officer is our Safety Officer and is involved in all aspects of operations. With comprehensive policies that govern conduct from planning through completion, we foster a culture of safety that permeates throughout our entire organization.

Andron's safety program and safety practices are measured and evaluated by independent safety consultants annually: judged for compliance and relevance. Independent site safety inspections for each current project are performed regularly. Internally, Andron holds quarterly safety training sessions for operations and carpentry teams.

For each new project, Andron prepares a detailed site management plan, developed with full input from the owner, that includes all measures needed to isolate the construction areas. We develop a site-specific safety plan, with a focus on high-risk activities, post it in the field office and distribute it to each subcontractor. Andron requires site-specific safety plans from each subcontractor and holds them accountable to an agreed-upon Safety Annex.





Andron site supervisors are required to complete the OSHA 30-hour course, and all workers are required to complete the OSHA 10-hour course prior to employment onsite. Each new hire participates in a safety orientation workshop, to understand the site-specific safety plans and rules of conduct, to discuss the project description and major milestones with their associated hazards, and to review the required personal protective equipment. Andron develops training protocols for employees and workers that align with any changes to OSHA policy revisions or recommendations.

Since accidents tend to occur around activity, workers are best positioned to minimize risk. Andron's policies require workers to be aware of risk, to identify exposures to risk and report them promptly for immediate correction. A clean site is a safe site. Workers are encouraged to provide input for the daily and weekly site safety inspections, and to ensure implementation of company policies and practices, Andron includes safety performance in every employee's annual evaluation.

Recognition by AGC of America is an honor and a tremendous accomplishment that everyone in our company is proud of. Everyone plays a part in this award by understanding, promoting, and enforcing safety on each of our projects. Hard work and diligence allow us to maintain our high standard of zero lost-time incidents in a safe workplace. It is an effort, but one for which we reap great rewards: ensuring that our employees and subcontractors and clients go home each and every day in the same condition as when they arrived so that they can fully participate in every aspect of life with their family and friends.



For further information from Andron Construction or sharing of best practices, please contact  
Chuck Winter, President and COO, at [cwinterjr@androncc.com](mailto:cwinterjr@androncc.com)

# CSEA top winner

## 10 of the Safest Contractors in America

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**EW Howell puts extended effort year-round to implement a top-notch safety program, which has been repeatedly recognized as one of the best in the nation. We are proud to be acknowledged for our rigorous standards and unwavering safety record by the national and New York chapters of the Associated General Contractors of America.**

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### At a glance



#### Projects

General Contracting and Construction Management



#### People

Established 1891, 200+ employees

### About our company

EW Howell is a New York based general contractor and construction management firm. For 130+ years, EW Howell has built many of New York's most important structures.

EW Howell is an experienced general contractor and construction management company with offices in Long Island and New York City. We service private developers, corporations, industrial clients and institutions in the tristate area, offering full-service construction, project management, consulting and more. Our work is divided into the following six individual market sectors:

- Arts & Culture
- Education
- Healthcare
- Commercial
- Special Projects
- Interiors

### Why we deserve recognition

For the past 130+ years, EW Howell has distinguished itself as one of New York's preeminent builders. Our commitment to delivering a quality product that exceeds the expectations of our clientele is matched only by our devotion to ensuring the health and safety of all those that set foot on our projects. We at EW Howell employ an approach to safety that begins at the top and filters through all levels of our organization. Our executives and top management personnel are held to the same standards as our field teams, and they are expected to serve as an example for those that follow them. This helps ensure that a dedication to safety is ever-present within the entire project team. We encourage and empower our project teams to take ownership of the safety program on their site, make it their own and grow as individuals as well as advancing the entire corporation.



**We want our personnel to work at projects free from recognized hazards and to leave that project at the end of their shift in the same condition that they began it.**

The New York City construction industry had 11 fatalities in 2022, the most since 2019, while recorded injuries also rose to 554 last year after plateauing in 2020 and 2021. While the number of fatalities was the highest in three years, the NYC Department of Buildings notes that in the last seven years the number of overall incidents has trended down. Though these numbers point to a downward trend in total incidents in the Empire State, for EW Howell these figures represent an unacceptable outcome. Lives cut short in preventable incidents that forever alter the fabric of families and communities. As members of both the New York State and New York City AGC Safety Committees, our company CEO and Corporate Safety Director have invested countless hours helping to improve and advance construction safety in New York State. To this end, EW Howell has made a commitment to ensure the safety of every individual on our projects through continuous education, safety training and over-sight.

Our goal at EW Howell is not ground-breaking nor is it much different from that of any other general contractor/construction manager in the country. We want our personnel to work at projects free from recognized hazards and to leave that project at the end of their shift in the same condition that they began it. Where we differ is in our approach to make this vision a reality. EW Howell's top brass have made it known, both through proclamation and action, that safety is the number one priority on our projects. We are committed to doing our part to improve our industry with the hope that the "Howell Way" becomes the standard rather than the exception.

## Safety and risk management innovations

As a general contractor, our main commodity is our personnel. We provide the expertise and know-how to coordinate all the moving pieces ensuring that our client's projects are delivered on time, in budget and with an emphasis on safety and quality. With this in mind, EW Howell has made a tremendous investment in our employees and our processes. Through our achievement as an ISO 9001 certified firm, we have established standardized procedures and practices for all departments and divisions. This standardization has a direct impact on safety as it lays the ground-work for training, pre-planning of hazardous operations and communication between our field teams and the safety department. Additionally, EW Howell has retained the services of the FMI Consulting. Graduates of the FMI Leadership Institute learn how to reach their leadership peak potential and leverage their abilities for maximum effectiveness. Strong leaders are paramount in achieving safety excellence and graduates of this program return to EW Howell as partners in accomplishing our safety goals.

## Safety and risk management program description



### Management ownership and involvement:

EW Howell senior management continually takes an active role in ensuring that safe work practices and procedures are incorporated into construction operations.

Pre-planning meetings are held with the project team and subcontractors for high-hazard operations to include cranes, demolition and confined space in which areas of concern are identified and accounted for. Members from EW Howell's Senior Management attend the annual Obayashi North America Safety-Con in California where new industry trends related to safety are presented and companies have the opportunity to share their experiences and improve their safety culture. Senior Management also plays a vital role in EW Howell's vision strategy for which we have retained FMI Consulting to lower business risk by building a deep pipeline of strong leaders.







**Risk identification and analysis:** Prior to the mobilization of any EW Howell project, a standardized project kick-off meeting is conducted and captured with Procure. Typical high hazard activities are identified

prior to the start of construction and processes/procedures are evaluated to ensure an acceptable level of risk with worker/public safety being the prime concern. Tools, equipment and machinery are reviewed to identify any potential for undue risk and/or possible substitution for safer alternatives. Early constructability reviews allow operations, engineers and safety to identify potential hazards and develop solutions before they become a problem. We work hand in hand with our Zurich Risk engineers to identify potential risks on our project sites and to help create an effective loss-prevention strategy. Additionally, as members of the Zurich North America Construction Roundtable we have access to a wealth of safety knowledge from the vast array of sitting members.



**Task design:** In keeping with the NIOSH hierarchy of controls, engineering controls are the preferred method of protecting workers when the hazard cannot be substituted or eliminated.

The EW Howell Healthcare Division has had great success in implementing engineering controls in the construction/renovation of occupied hospitals. The use of prefabricated temporary wall systems have been used on EW Howell projects to contain dust and maintain ICRA requirements while self-contained HEPA filtration units work to filter harmful contaminants and maintain negative air requirements. EW Howell has worked with tool and equipment suppliers to ensure that our employees, as well as subcontractors on our sites, have the required tools to comply with OSHA's respirable crystalline silica standard. Where hazards cannot be effectively controlled through engineering methods, work is scheduled and planned to reduce the exposure to affected workers. Painting, epoxy flooring installation and other work involving the use of volatile organic chemicals are identified in pre-construction planning as operations that will need to be completed after-hours. EW Howell maintains and continually updates a library of 'Best Practices' and 'Lessons Learned' to ensure our personnel know how to build the "Howell Way".



**Safe work methods:** Subcontractors on EW Howell projects are contractually required to submit a Phase Hazard Analysis (PHA) outlining their scope of work, individual tasks, associated hazards and required mitigation factors. As the ability to influence safety is high at the project start and diminishes as the project progresses, it is paramount to conduct pre-task planning early and often. EW Howell has embraced the concept of prevention through design (PtD) and takes a proactive approach to control hazards as early as possible in the build process at the source. EW Howell recently achieved our ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems certification. This certification and the associated SOPs and Best Practices will lay the foundation for a standardized process for managing all aspects of a project. With regard to safety, this process allowed us to uncover weaknesses in our program that we were able to correct and improve upon.



**Worker engagement, involvement and participation:** Our project managers, superintendents and foremen are crucial in ensuring that EW Howell's procedures, policies and commitment to safety are implemented in the field. As our boots on the ground, they are at the front line of maintaining a safe and productive job-site with an emphasis on planning, coordination, training and education. Worker engagement starts the day that EW Howell and subcontractor workers step on site for orientation. Workers are taken through site specific safety issues and invited to share their thoughts and experiences to help continually improve safety at the site. Through weekly foreman's meetings and daily pre-task planning sessions all are encouraged to bring forward thoughts or simply ask a question that may have gone un-asked.



**Safety training and validation of training:** Training for EW Howell employees is accomplished through a multi-tiered approach which involves in-house training, third-party accredited training providers and online training modules. Training requirements for EW Howell employees are clearly defined for all levels of employees from division vice presidents to administrative personnel. Training is tracked and monitored through the use of online software. In total, over 95% of all EW Howell employees, to include office personnel, have completed OSHA 30-hour training within the past five years. This is required so that all involved from estimating, buy-out and other non-field positions are aware of OSHA requirements and the dangers that are all-too common on construction sites. Newly passed NYC Local Law 196, has set extremely strict standards for the required safety training on NYC construction projects.

While this training is required for field supervisory personnel, EW Howell has mandated that all personnel operating in NYC, to include Division VPs, Project executives and Project Managers, also receive this training. Through our online tracking software, we are able to analyze data related to training to draw correlations between training frequency and accidents/incidents. The frequency of quality training delivered to our employees in a user friendly and accessible medium has a direct impact on the reduction of accidents and the overall safety culture of our project sites.



**Subcontractor management:** EW Howell employs a substantial group of vetted and trusted subcontractors that are leaders in their areas of expertise, many of whom have worked and forged relationships

with EW Howell for 30+ years. Our pre-qualification process for subcontractors is an in-depth review of OSHA history, insurance requirements, EMR verification and financial statements, among other documentation. Subcontractors are required to submit a site-specific safety plan for the project which includes a Phase Hazard Analysis (PHA), hazard communication program, SDS, silica exposure control policy and fall protection program with documentation of employee training. Additionally, subcontractors must review and sign-off on the project EW Howell site specific health and safety plan. In the event of a difference between the subcontractor plan and the EW Howell plan, the more stringent of the two will take precedent. Subcontractors are required to designate a competent person(s) to be on-site whenever work is taking place and submit documentation designating such person(s). The EW Howell QA/QC department works diligently to ensure that materials, procedures and processes match the approved specifications, holding subcontractors accountable for the quality of their work. Recently, the QA/QC department pioneered and implemented a 'Zero Punch List Program' to be employed early on a construction project to continually check that all work is being installed and completed correctly. Any non-conformances or deficiencies are caught early and corrected quickly.

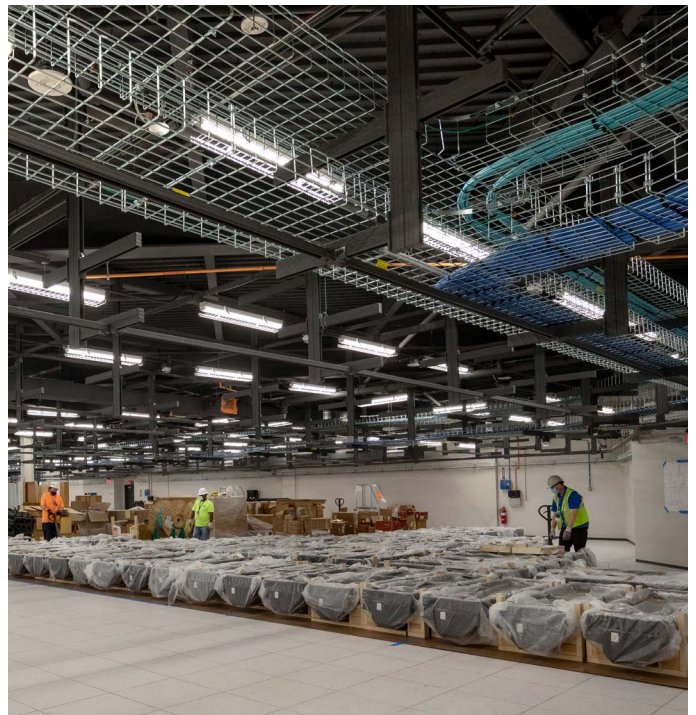


### **Emergency and crisis management:**

As with all aspects of construction, pre-planning is key with regard to emergency and crisis management. For every project, site specific emergency action plans are created. Services to include police, fire, ambulance, local hospitals and utility companies are identified and documented. This information, along with site specific evacuation procedures to include alarm methods/ exit routes/muster points/reporting methods, are incorporated into every site-specific orientation for new employees. Local fire departments and emergency service personnel are often invited to tour our sites and are encouraged to provide feedback regarding site conditions.

For further information from EW Howell or sharing of best practices, please contact

John Masciopinto, Asst. Safety Director, at [jmasciopinto@ewhowell.com](mailto:jmasciopinto@ewhowell.com)



# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Critical Technologies, General Building and Industrial



### People

Established 1972, 2,700+ employees

## About our company

Faith Technologies Incorporated (FTI) is a dynamic organization comprised of construction, engineering, manufacturing and renewable energy experts. We create success for our partners and team members through innovation and expertise, rethinking how energy is designed, applied and consumed and providing solutions that go beyond the ideas of today. With expertise across all our divisions — Faith Technologies®, EnTech Solutions™ and Excellerate® — we are one connected company, bringing our partners' visions to life to ensure a sustainable future.

With FTI, you get one of the nation's leading industrial electrical contractors, electrical engineering systems contractors, and technology systems contractors, all from one trusted source. Our electrical services are supported by more than 50 years of experience in a wide range of building types, so you can feel confident as we approach any electrical contracting project. Licensed across the United States with 20 locations, our number one core value is an uncompromised focus on keeping people safe.

Electrical contracting and systems engineering, with an extreme level of safety, quality and reliability — this is FTI.



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**At FTI, we are continually on a quest for zero safety incidents, and we're proud to be recognized for our efforts by some of the most admired safety-conscious organizations in the country. Our team members are engaged in safety on our job sites each day to keep themselves and others safe.**

Rocky Rowlett, vice president of safety

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Our CEO Mike Jansen said it best when he noted that we don't compete with a lot of organizations, but we want to partner with many, to make the entire industry safer. At FTI, we strive to be the best in all we do, including partnering with trades, customer/clients, and tooling companies to make the industry safer, more efficient and more productive.

At FTI, our first core value is an uncompromised focus on keeping people safe. We drive to conduct business in a manner that allows each employee to work each day without incident or injury. We believe all incidents and injuries are preventable, and we demonstrate this belief through the daily business activities of the corporation. From the moment we begin the day, to the moment we put the last tool away, safety is top of mind for the nearly 3,000 team members of FTI. Our industry-leading safety statistics are a direct result of our never-wavering focus on the safety of every one of our team members. When leaders embrace safety, safety becomes an integral part of the working culture companywide.

Reaching toward the AGC Construction Safety Excellence Award only focuses our safety efforts toward zero incidents. We continue to find ways to improve as 2022 was our safest year in history.

### Why we deserved recognition

As the winner of the Specialty Category in 2022 and 2023, and recipient of the AGC Construction Safety Excellence Grand Award for 2020 (one of few that have won the Grand Award multiple times), FTI was charged with bringing the industry along on our journey to zero injuries. To accomplish this, we created a 6-video safety series called Charged!, where we shared comprehensive information about our safety program to support others to implement best safety practices in their organizations.

- The first three episodes focused on our holistic safety and wellness efforts that support the mind, body and soul of our employees.
- In videos four and five, we invited others to walk alongside us with a focus on some important aspects of FTI's safety program; our operational risk management (ORM) program, and our pre-planning and manufacturing and how safety is incorporated into every project from the very start.
- Video six took us to the beginning — our comprehensive safety training, where our safety culture is instilled beginning on our employees' first day with the company and continues through their entire career at FTI.

Our Charged! video series reached nearly 250,000 people through our social media channels, via blog posts and internally to our team members. We appreciated the support of AGC and Willis Towers Watson in sharing our series via social media, the AGC newsletter as well as being guests on the ConstructorCast podcast.

### Safety & risk management innovations



**Quarterly Innovation Awards** — Innovation is at the heart of our success, and our team members are best positioned to drive innovation. Our Project Innovation Award program was designed to reward individuals or teams who improve a process related to a task or project, including safety improvements. Entries are scored based on identified criteria, with cash rewards of up to \$2,500. These innovations are recognized as new best practices.



**Ladders last** — We know that falls from heights are a leading cause of workplace injury throughout the industry. Our Ladder Last efforts utilize preconstruction planning upfront, reducing the need for ladders on the job site by designing out work at heights, or incorporating lifts in their place.



**No-knives** — When we saw a pattern of safety incidents caused by knives on our job sites, we went to work to prevent them by eliminating fixed-blade knives on our sites. Safer tools and processes were investigated, obtained and deployed on all job sites. The result 100% reduction in knife-related incidents across our sites.



**Productivity and safety** — One might assume that focusing on increasing productivity might result in a decrease in safety. While this may be true if you attempt to increase productivity by cutting corners, our approach to productivity is focused on proper planning, efficient communication and effective coordination.

In recent years, approximately 60% of our safety incidents have occurred during secondary or waste-time activities, rather than primary time or essential tasks. In other words, we are safer when we are focused on driving value to our customers.

Nothing is more important to the success of our safety program than the commitment and involvement of our management and leadership. From supporting safety through budgetary resources, to personally conducting job site safety audits, our management and leadership embrace and participate in FTI's safety process in numerous ways.

This participation also serves another purpose, as leaders are emulated by those around them. When leaders embrace safety, safety becomes an integral part of the working culture company wide.



## Safety & risk management program description

A number of programs and elements speak to FTI's company culture. With a number one core value of an uncompromised focus on keeping people safe, we've created an environment where safety is second nature to our team members. Our leading-edge safety programs — beginning with our hiring process and new-employee onboarding, through daily operational risk management (ORM), through interactive, people-based safety recognitions — have enabled us to achieve safety excellence through continual, gradual efforts. However, we never 'rest' on safety and consider our results 'good enough!' We are continually on a path to zero injuries.

Safety is a crucial part at all levels of our company:

- **Hiring processes** — Several detailed safety-related questions are asked during the interview process. New employees undergo mandatory drug testing, background checks and OSHA 10-hour training prior to stepping onto a job site.
- **Project selection** — FTI uses Bid Smart to grade its clients and customers, ensuring they have the same high safety standards as we do.
- **Safety through design** — It is a standard practice that all projects that we have a design capability on go through a safety design meeting where we can "engineer or eliminate" hazards or risk prior to dealing with them on site.



**Monthly meetings with Mike** — How do we know what an employee thinks if we don't ask them? An innovative employee suggestion that has continued to support our safety and overall company communication has been an internal "all call." In our "Monthly Meetings with Mike," a monthly meeting with our CEO, Mike Jansen and other leadership, our 2,700+ employees dial into webinar which always begins with safety, including a review of any recent incidents or near misses, reminder of upcoming training, and the sharing of other announcements. Mike has been known to throw out various safety challenges in the monthly call, encouraging participation in our safety question of the day, for example, where employees who participate and accumulate higher scores than Mike are eligible for cash incentives. It's a great example of the importance placed on safety at every level of the organization.



### **Operational risk management (ORM) —**

The ORM daily work briefing takes place on every job site before the start of work each day and consists of a five-step process that ensures every task is analyzed and carried out safely. This takes place at a crew assembly point or gang box area and provides a daily review and a visual reminder of the identified hazards and control measures involved with the work being performed. It is generally conducted by the site superintendent or foreman but may also be conducted by a lead person or crew member to enable additional participation. The interactive process involves all crew members in the discussion and developing work plan, and the leader uses a whiteboard to illustrate five core functions to identify and document the process of hazard identification and controls:

- Define the Scope of Work
- Analyze the Hazards
- Develop and Implement Hazard Controls
- Perform Work Within Hazard Controls
- Provide Feedback and Continuous Improvement

Throughout the day as work progresses, employees are required to report any change in work conditions that cause unforeseen or unidentified hazards to emerge, and an additional ORM briefing takes place if needed.



### **Best-in-class training programs —**

FTI took its best-in-class training program and elevated it to a whole new level when we created Faith Technologies University (FTU), comprised of our Learning and

Development department team of more than 70 facilitators. Safety training is an integral part of our overall FTU curriculum, and our training professionals are an extension of our team of 30 full-time safety professionals.



We know that continuous learning means continuous success, so in addition to our valued safety training, employees are able to build their trade training, computer skills and leadership development.

First impressions are very important, we also have an 8-hour safety orientation that takes place on an employee's first day with the company covering several training topics including Focus Four, equipment training and PPE training. We believe it is a must to put safety top of mind on day one. Weeks 2-4, field employees participate in a Quick Start class where they are introduced to site-specific tasks/tools and are trained on how to safely perform these tasks prior to going out to a project. Over the last few years, we've also added workplace violence awareness and training, to encompass the unfortunate need for this knowledge for employees both in the workplace and in public settings. Annual emergency preparedness plans are also updated and reviewed at every one of our locations.





**Health & wellness program** — FTI has an award-winning wellness program director who guides the company and employees in their journeys toward optimal physical and mental health. Working with

our wellness partner agency, we are able to provide personalized health plans for employees to meet them where they are in their health journeys and help them improve their daily lives.

As part of our wellness effort, we initiated a Culture of Care task force which meets regularly to discuss the constant changes dealing with the current mental health crisis. The team is made up of multiple disciplines and provides our employees with up-to-date information to continue to keep themselves and their families safe. Culture of Care Champions are in place throughout all of our locations across the country who have received specialized care in supporting employees who may be struggling with mental health issues.



**Safety to the core** — At FTI, we recognize safety as a critical element in the success of our business, and we consider our front-line workers an essential part of our safety team because they know what will work

and what will not. Some of the steps we've implemented with strong results include:

- Bi-annual employee safety perception surveys.
- Commitment and involvement by senior leadership and commitment to significant resources for safety training.
- Accountability for safety within production, not only within the safety department.
- Active participation in the safety process through job site supervision and project management.
- Daily implementation of comprehensive safety policies and procedures that exceed regulatory and industry standards.
- Frequent, formal and extensive job site safety inspections.
- Integration of safety into the work process.
- Maintaining a competent Safety department that is the resource to our safety efforts.

In our company history, FTI has never stood on our laurels and felt like we've done 'enough,' whether it's building our business, satisfying our customers or keeping our people safe.

For further information from FTI or sharing of best practices, please contact

Rocky Rowlett, Vice President of Safety at [rocky.rowlett@faithtechinc.com](mailto:rocky.rowlett@faithtechinc.com)

# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Infrastructure and General Building, including Commercial, Mixed Use, and Multifamily



### People

Established 1969, 750+ employees



## About our company

Jordan Foster Construction is a leading general contractor in the state of Texas. Since 1969, the company has been dedicated to delivering exceptional infrastructure, commercial, and multifamily projects with excellence and integrity.

Jordan Foster's Building Group specializes in hospitality, multifamily, office, retail, industrial, healthcare, and entertainment venues. The Building Group is committed to providing first-class construction services and building lasting relationships. Meanwhile, Jordan Foster's Infrastructure and Concrete Group is responsible for building highways, runways, taxiways, bridges, water systems, and utilities. Strengthened by Jordan Foster's detailed safety and quality control systems, along with advanced planning, allow the Infrastructure & Concrete Group to consistently deliver high-end projects.

With over five decades of experience and billions of dollars in completed projects, we apply our deep industry knowledge and extensive trade partner network to servicing clients and the communities we build together.

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**Where we make a difference is we don't only give people that opportunity to speak up, but we teach people how to speak up, Alvarez adds. We have created this language, this communication that we have now where our field safety leader — and anybody who sees anything — has that common language with their superintendent that they can go up to them and say, 'Hey, we think we could do this a better way.' Construction is inherently dangerous, but they're making a difference to not only their crews, but to the families of their crews. So that to me is a very strong voice that we have been empowered to use.**

Damian Alvarez

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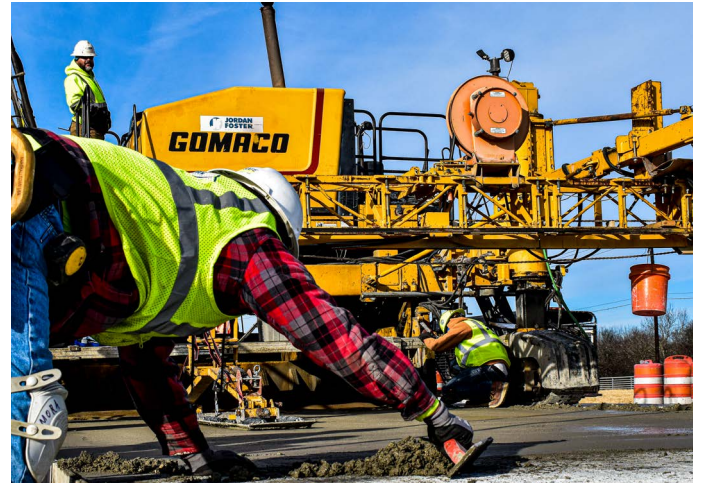


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**We love to share what we're doing, if we come up with something that's the best practice, we share it with the industry and with everyone. That's another way to push the industry forward related to safety for the future. We all agree that we have to protect our people, so that gives everyone a common starting place. If you protect your people, and you have a strong culture of safety that can be replicated on every project that you have, then you're going to be a better builder across all aspects of what it takes to be excellent.**

Tricia Kagerer

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### 3. Job done right

The JFC executive team identified Job Done Right as one of our core values. It empowered the safety and field safety leader team to focus on becoming trusted advisors to influence every aspect of consistent job execution to improve overall project performance.



### 4. Safety is the great equalizer

JFC Executive leadership recognized that Safety creates a common goal. Safety can sometimes be the one thing everyone on a project agrees on. Projects are complicated by their unique challenges and risks that can interrupt schedules, budgets, and execution. JFC consistently sets high expectations regarding safety and holds to them despite supply chain issues, schedule plans, permits, work sequencing, and trade partner scope of work. The safety expectation sets the tone for the overall project and can open communication lines and solve conflicts that would otherwise go unsolved.



### 5. Leaders improve the lives of the workforce

Safety is the core value that changes the culture to create pathways to leadership and growth. JFC implemented our first field safety leader (FSL) program. We identified natural field leaders and enrolled them in a year-long program focused on critical safety information as a cultural and communication curriculum. The candidates now fill our leadership pipeline for project forepersons, superintendents, and safety managers. Now in its 3rd year, the program is so successful that we have expanded and grown to include a Catalyst 2nd-year graduate program. Our FSL and Catalyst graduates are now leading the FSL curriculum in the field and mentoring their groups voluntarily.

Intentionally cultivating our culture by investing in our people creates pathways for growth opportunities and contributes to JFC's goal to be construction's safe employer of choice. JFC takes pride in investing in our people, and we exemplify all the qualities the AGC CSEA Award epitomizes.

## Why we deserve recognition

JFC's Safety Program should be considered "the Best of the Best" in America because we have created a genuine safety culture far beyond the illusion of safety reports. We built a trusted environment where our executive leadership team hears directly from the field leaders and collaboratively works together, empowering action that continuously improves operational performance. Jordan Foster's Safety mindset can be summed up in 5 Core Tenants:



#### 1. Top-down & bottom-up

The executive team sets the expectation of safety; that part is easy. Yet, top-down communication will only get us so far. Ensuring every member and those at the most significant risk of harm are empowered, challenged, and heard requires strategy, intentionality, and commitment.



#### 2. Safety predicts success

Safety performance is the most significant leading indicator of project success. We have learned over the years that when a project struggles with essential safety milestones, it will struggle with everything, including quality, schedule, and overall profitability. Our Safety matrix provides an early warning system allowing us to address issues quickly and get projects back on track.

## Safety and risk management innovations

Through the lens of risk management we created 3 technology-based strategies to improve & measure workforce engagement and communication including:

1. Created our own unique Safety Byte video library providing unique, specific learning microbursts and designed a new delivery method using construction-specific technology platform providing communication, knowledge transfer, and training in real-time.
2. Designed our Field Safety Leader Program to provide safety and leadership education, training, and resources so that the identified 'Leaders without a Title' armed with excellent communication and conflict resolution skills would have the opportunity to influence and create connections in the field. The candidate utilized a comprehensive leadership learning platform to develop five key metrics of leadership and performance, including communication, relationships, alignment, execution, and capacity, by creating a common leadership language and multiplying it across the organization.
3. Redesigned our Pre-Task Planning process to transform it into a Daily Planning Conversations (DPC) utilizing advanced technology that leverages data insights from video-based daily conversations.

## Safety and risk management program description

There is a saying, "culture eats strategy for lunch." When it comes to construction safety, it rings true. When people are under pressure, they revert to what they have always done. For construction safety, that can mean cutting corners, blaming the victim, or ignoring or hiding hazards. Historically the leadership challenge celebrated in construction is a dominating culture typically based on low support and high challenge. Jordan Foster's executive team set out to break through the outdated dominating culture and replace it with a liberating culture of high support and challenge to fight for the highest good of those we lead.

Jordan Foster defines culture as atmosphere. It is the air that our field associates and trade partners breathe while they are performing their work. Our executive team recognized that their job was to take the time to intentionally define, share and grow the safety culture. By setting expectations and investing directly with our field leadership, JFC has created a culture, so we don't leave culture up to chance. The common framework guides our field leadership to multiply a safe culture where people work together for the greater good of each other. They shape it through their interactions and their words.

JFC strives for safety excellence through technology, mentorship, risk management, and field communication.

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**We are in an ever-evolving industry. What was good for us a few years ago will not be good for us a few years later," she admits. "We're very, very good at making sure that we continue the conversations that we need to have within Jordan Foster to keep us moving forward and be pioneers in this industry. The uncomfortable conversations sometimes are the most important conversations to have. Investing in not only the company that you're in, but predominantly the people that you employ, is an extreme way of not only valuing them, keeping them safe, but also making sure that the values in the culture that you as a company are promoting, is emulated and also spoken about at large.**

Asma Bayunus

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## Risk identification and analysis

The risk identification and analysis begin at the design and budgeting stages of the project. The operations and design team collaborate with the safety team to identify unique challenges impacting constructability safety, budget, and planning. JFC utilizes various technology platforms to communicate and track risk.

**HCSS:** Our civil group utilizes HCSS for estimating, operations, fleet, and safety management. Estimating plans for project success through proper staffing, trade partner selection, safe means, and methods. Operations and fleet management integrates all aspects of equipment maintenance and repair, giving our team members real-time access to maintenance service. The Safety Module captures near-miss, observations, and inspections evaluated by risk management and utilized to pinpoint trends and target areas of improvement.

**Samsara:** Auto incidents continue to be a high frequency and severity exposure for the construction industry. To improve driver safety and minimize the risk of 3rd party auto incidents, JFC partnered with Samara to install Dash Cams that automatically capture high-definition video. We review trends in driving behaviors like speeding, distracted driving, or harsh braking to inform drivers and provide real-time coaching.

**Samba safety:** Provides continuous Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) monitoring providing automatic alerts when an employee receives a negative violation. The system allows us to identify at-risk drivers and provide education addressing high-risk behavior.

**Mind forge:** JFC built a communication network platform for sharing knowledge, training, onboarding, and crisis management communication with our field team. We offer interactive, engaging training, including virtual reality sessions, to provide easy access, state-of-the-art safety education, and the ability to measure knowledge retention.

### Task design

JFC uses engineering controls to design for the safety of our field associates, trade partners, and the public. For example, our civil group works in neighborhoods and business areas, creating a potential risk for the residents and the public. To reduce the risk, we created a risk mitigation plan focused on reducing the impact of vibration on nearby structures. Our strategy outlines the methods and procedures used to monitor vibration and defines acceptable conditions according to accepted best practices and reporting criteria.



### Safe work methods

Traditional Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) processes have morphed into inconsistent compliance processes, leading to hidden hazards on projects. JFC shifted from a checklist JHA Process to a video diary Daily Planning Conversations (DPC), providing a powerful reflection of employee engagement, activity preparation, and culture.

DPC is a high-impact way to empower crews to speak up, recognize, and protect each other. Effective DPCs are two-way dialogues, not top-down lectures. We utilized a simple framework to educate our field leaders on what constitutes a good DPC, including:



#### 1. Leader engagement

The person leading the conversation asks the crew questions that prompt thoughtful responses, not canned replies.



#### 2. Participant engagement

Multiple crew members answer questions, ask new ones, and respond to each other.



#### 3. Planning & work

As well as discussing hazards, the leader covers the day's work and expectations.



#### 4. Question quality

The leader's questions encourage meaningful responses that move the conversation forward and establish a common understanding.



#### 5. Active caring

The leader demonstrates genuine interest in the conversation, uses words like "please" and "thank you," and makes people feel comfortable speaking up and participating without fear of judgment.



#### 6. Real hazards

The leader addresses the hazards related to the day's work and encourages others to add to the discussion and report unsafe conditions or behaviors.



#### 7. High hazards

Everyone knows those hazards and ensures controls are in place to avoid serious injury or fatality.

Utilizing the Factorlab application, behind the scenes, we use artificial intelligence to gauge the effectiveness of the DPC and the level of care conveyed. Executive leadership reviews the videos and comments on the content providing positive reinforcement.



**Worker engagement, involvement, and participation**

JFC successfully implemented a Field Safety Leader (FSL) process to create a common language around leadership and open communication channels between field associates and executive leadership. We designed our FSL to provide safety and leadership education, training, and resources so that the identified ‘Leaders without a Title’ armed with excellent communication and conflict resolution skills would have the opportunity to influence and create connections in the field. We utilized a comprehensive leadership learning platform to develop five key metrics: communication, relationships, alignment, execution, and capacity.

We invested in our people and have successfully filled our leadership pipeline for project forepersons, superintendents, and safety managers. Many FSLs have been promoted within two years of completing the program. For example, our current Safety and Training Manager was one of the program’s first graduates. At 18 years old, Jorge worked as a general laborer. Today he is the Safety & Training Manager, leading our entire operation’s safety and education efforts.

The FSL candidates work diligently with our in-house Pastor to promote our Culture of Care initiative to promote mental well-being while reducing exposure to suicide. Our team works diligently using in-person visits and messaging to provide communication channels.

**Safety training and validation**

We designed a new delivery method using a construction-based technology platform to deliver training and orientation. After completing a comprehensive risk assessment, we determined that incidents still occurred despite the in-person training and education hours. A few hidden challenges included:

- Inconsistent transfer of knowledge based on the trainer’s personal experience with the topic
- Lengthy PowerPoint presentations that lacked compelling interest
- Inability to utilize the training in real-time in the field
- Inconsistency in necessary documentation despite automated reports

For example, they are documenting equipment operator experience needed to be more consistent. We created a Safety Byte video to address the functions of each piece of equipment. Utilizing a learning management system, the Safety Bytes are assigned to the operators via text messaging and completed on a phone or iPad. The safety leader then follows up with in-person confirmation of knowledge retention and understanding of the key concepts. Key Performance Indicators show that all operators are up to date on their training metrics. The operators provide feedback and input on the content and ease of use of the LMS system.

**Subcontractor management/prequalification program**

JFC has implemented a comprehensive prequalification process where we review trade partners’ financial and aggregate work limits, contractual obligations, and the safety and quality process. We have created a preferred trade partner criterion, which allows us to identify like-minded trade partners and mentor and develop those through targeted evaluations. Our safety review considers lagging indicators, including OSHA recordable rates and citation history, and leading indicators, including safety observation and audit data, as well as past performance on projects.



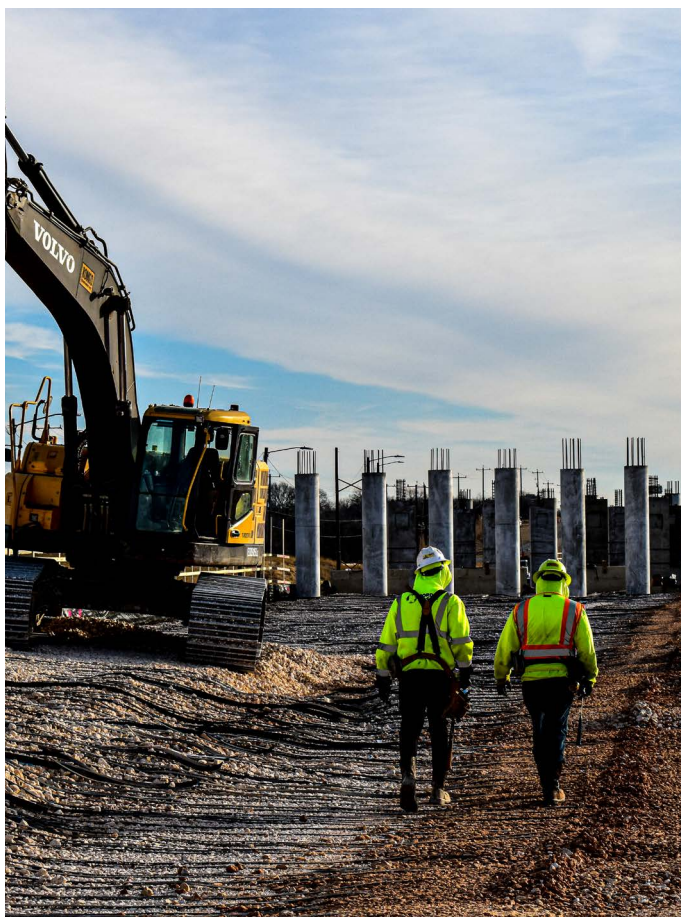
### Emergency and crisis management

We created an “All Hazards’ Approach” to crisis management, performing a Crisis Risk Assessment considering the potential frequency and severity of events and their probability, including human, property, and business impact. The assessment results in an overall risk score based on the likelihood of the event and our preparedness level. Our integrated response team includes risk, safety, operations, human resources, and executive leadership representatives. In 2022 we provided in-person Crisis Response training for over 250 associates across Texas.

Our Crisis Response process also addresses the potential aftermath of a crisis from a mental health perspective. Our Total Worker Health initiative actively reaches out to anyone impacted by a crisis event to ensure they have the resources they need from an emotional health perspective.

### Innovation

JFC created an integrated approach to risk management called the Total Cost of Risk (TCOR), allowing our executives to make informed, risk-tolerance-based business decisions. We track every risk, safety, and operational loss exposure cost. We set expected outcomes by division, history, and exposure creating a TCOR report card. We transform how leaders identify, prevent, and mitigate overall bottom-line performance risk. JFC is committed to innovation through technology, leadership, and results.



### Diversity equity & inclusion

According to the AGC Surety and Risk Management Group, the number one risk for construction companies is attracting and retaining talent. The construction industry is known for being a stoic, good ol’ boy network. Contractors struggle to fill crews, field leaders, and management positions. Long-term construction workers have always been the backbone of the industry. As they retire, a younger generation is not filling the pipeline. The industry is perceived as unstable and dangerous. Similar to Safety Initiatives, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts must be woven into an organization’s business philosophy to succeed. A written Diversity program won’t cut it. Awareness, mentoring, and intentionally creating cultures of inclusion are critical.

Jordan Foster Construction has expanded the role of safety to focus on several key initiatives focusing on becoming the construction employer of choice in Texas, including a commitment to DEI and expanding our commitment to creating a culture of care. By finally crushing the old, antiquated, prohibitive ways of thinking and committing to an inclusive culture, our organization will thrive in the future. To achieve that goal, JFC hired a female Executive Vice President of Risk Management who is responsible for Safety, employee engagement and retention, the Women’s leadership council, our culture of care initiative and all aspects of leadership.

JFC Safety team is at the forefront of creating a holistic culture where everyone, men, and women, experiences an open, honest, authentic culture. JFC embraces the AGC’s Culture of Care concepts throughout our organization.

For further information from JFC or sharing of best practices, please contact

Tricia Kagerer, EVP Risk Management at  
[TKagerer@jordanfosterconstruction.com](mailto:TKagerer@jordanfosterconstruction.com)

# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

General Building, Renovations/  
Restorations, Maintenance



### People

Established 2015, 118 employees

## About our company

Noble is an employee-owned General Contractor based in La Feria, TX with offices located in San Antonio and Houston. As a General Contractor, Construction Manager at Risk, and Design Builder, Noble oversees and manages every aspect of construction. Market sectors include education, government, healthcare, and retail.

The company mission we stand behind every day is “...inspire hope, improve lives and strengthen communities we live in.” We build a sense of belonging and unity that inspires our team to make a difference and immerse themselves into the fabric of our community. Our service goes beyond our work. We strengthen and empower our communities through volunteerism, charity, and educational advocacy. Noble was honored by the Governor’s office as the recipient of the “Community Impact Award.”

Our founding partners each had established 20–30-year careers with a large commercial general contractor when they took a leap of faith to form Noble Texas Builders 8 years ago. The company was originally, and is to this day, based upon secure, lifelong relationships, and building quality facilities that serve and empower our communities.



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**Our job is to make sure that everybody goes home safe every single day. That includes all the subcontractors, suppliers, our clients, architects and just anybody who walks onto the site. We take safety very, very seriously. We have a passion for what we do, and we are always looking for ways to improve. We have taken what we have learned from working at other companies, incorporated best management practices, then created new ways to improve and develop programs unique to Noble. We continue to challenge our employees to come up with innovative ways for safety excellence.**

Message from Noble Texas Builders President and CEO Rene Capistran

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We believe that no job is so important that it can't be done safely, and proper planning will always enable the execution of safe performance. All Noble employees are required to be at minimum OSHA 10 hour certified before beginning work on a job site and must have obtained 30 Hour Certification within the first 12 months of employment. We require all subcontractors to have a competent person (OSHA 30 Certified) onsite to supervise their employees. Noble goes to great lengths to offer training resources to our subcontractors, and site inspections of subcontractors' scopes of work.

### Why we deserve recognition



Since the founding of our employee-owned company, Noble has had ZERO accidents resulting in time away from work. The company was originally, and is to this day, committed to being accident-free. Safety is embedded in all three of our core values - Trust,

Teamwork, and Community. We believe that no job is so important that it can't be done safely, and proper planning will always enable the execution of safe performance. Our team members join Noble with an inherent understanding that safety is their responsibility every day, on every job site.

We create a culture of personal safety responsibility through company-sponsored education and training. We provide comprehensive, onsite training for all personnel, including OSHA Certification and equipment operator certification.

Our safety program is implemented long before boots hit the ground. We hold preconstruction meetings with subcontractors, owners, architects, and engineers to discuss major work activities. During preconstruction, we discuss potential exposures with each subcontractor and formulate site-specific safety plans. All specialty contractors are required to complete a job-specific safety analysis daily detailing the potential hazards and their plan to complete this work safely. We require fall protection plans based on site conditions such as elevation and ground stability for a crane.

We consistently create new processes and programs that not only benefit Noble and our clients but that might also be adopted by other companies. Even if that means our competitors have access to our best practices, we are ultimately committed to improving the industry. If there is a safety issue on a job, the project manager and superintendent create a solution that is reviewed with the company president.

**We create a culture of personal safety responsibility through company-sponsored education and training. We provide comprehensive, onsite training for all personnel, including OSHA Certification and equipment operator certification.**

### Safety and risk management innovations



Noble sets the bar high to continually expand our safety program. We pair the best of time-tested safety protocols with current technology. We have QR codes on all employees' hardhats which pull up our safety manual from a smart phone. It also has a feature to

alert our safety managers and top management if there is an accident on any of our projects. The project staff would scan the QR code and select the alert mode to send out the message. We also brought in a consultant to train our employees in the event of an active shooter on our job site or offices, the training covered what steps to take and actions to prevent harm to ourselves and jobsite personnel.

What we are doing for safety that isn't conventional is utilizing the Open Space program — this is a 360-degree camera installed on a hardhat or carried on a stick. An employee will walk the entire project each day taking the same path, the file is uploaded into our database and viewed by top management, executive staff, our safety professionals, A/E team and end users. Safety practices of the entire workforce are reviewed outside as well as inside the building, capturing every aspect of ongoing work.



## Safety and risk management program description



Noble has continuously worked to instill a safety culture way of life for our employees. This culture is embraced by senior management, executives, and our hourly workforce. Our safety vision is to create and promote a culture of personal safety responsibility for

our employees and that of our subcontractors through education and training.

Top management leads the direction of our safety program development and execution. Every employee from the President/CEO to our hourly crew is integral in implementing our program. Senior management made the decision to have cameras installed on all project sites — big and small. This allows multiple users to view work in progress daily. Our architects, engineers, owners, and safety professionals can view our projects in real time from their offices, on the road, during weekends and holidays. If anyone sees an issue, all they need to do is make a phone call and the issue will be reviewed immediately.

**Our safety vision is to create and promote a culture of personal safety responsibility for our employees and that of our subcontractors through education and training.**

We track training and encourage our employees to further their safety certifications. This provides us with a safety-certified workforce and ensures our subcontractors are following the proper safety guidelines while operating equipment, using ladders, checking electrical cords for grounds and in good working condition, using the correct PPE for the task at hand, inspecting tools, PPE, ladders and fall arrest systems prior to use.

We conduct bilingual safety orientations, weekly safety meetings and safety stand downs. The effectiveness is validated by a low EMR and maintaining consistently accident-free jobsites across Texas. All safety training is provided at no cost to our employees / subcontractors and is conducted by our in-house Safety Manager and third-party safety consultant company. Our superintendents and project managers include safety in all project planning.



Our CEO, Vice President, Operations Manager and Safety Manager walk our projects at least every other week with safety as their primary focus. Our safety manager and an outside safety consultant review all projects every other week so there is a written safety inspection each week. Top management, the superintendent and project manager are all copied on the safety inspections and are required to correct any deficiencies immediately. They are also required to explain why there was a violation and what measures they will take to prevent future violations.

We host risk reduction workshops for our subcontractors to enhance their program, and at times even asked our Risk Management Company to help enhance our subcontractors Insurance Program to ensure the subcontractors could meet the Noble Contract Requirements.

When confronted with the challenges and concerns of COVID, Noble purchased equipment designed to sanitize the environment for the safety of all. All job site trailers, as well as offices, were treated on a regular basis and weekly split shifts were scheduled to ensure all jobs were always fully operational with a full and healthy team.

All Noble employees know what our safety goals are and work hard to ensure safety is our primary focus. Noble was established around our commitment to safety, to eliminate recordable injuries. Our team members join Noble with an inherent understanding that safety is their responsibility, and they will be held accountable every day on every job site as well as in the office.

For further information from Noble Texas Builders or sharing of best practices, please contact

Juan Delgado, Vice President  
[jdelgado@nobletx.com](mailto:jdelgado@nobletx.com)



# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Infrastructure and General Building



### People

Established 1937, 4,000+ employees

## About our company

Found in 1984 and based in Stayden Oregon, Slayden focuses on the construction and renovations of Waste water and Water treatment facilities along with capital construction improvements.

Slayden performs work on many water and wastewater treatment facilities in the Pacific Northwest, with a large portion of the work being self-performed across a variety of contract types, including design-bid-build (DBB), Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) and progressive design-build (PDB). The big four of construction safety (falls, pinch points, caught between, and electrical) continue to be a top focus in the field and are included in the training. These are unique hazards that we routinely see on our projects. Our safety teams do a fantastic job of preparing and planning for these risks; we develop work plans, JHA's, and pre-task plans to review with all on-site employees and subcontractors before all work activities. We pay equal attention to monitoring and enforcing quality control on our projects to ensure we provide the highest quality work product possible and to prevent rework since it can pose a unique collection of work hazards. We utilize the plan, do, check, and act practice that ensures we deliver the quality products for which Slayden has become known.



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**Our Goal at Slayden is committed to the goal of zero incidents on all projects. Even if you think a shortcut is safe enough for you — it's not safe enough for Slayden Constructors. We empower our employees to focus on our core values which are to Be accountable, Be a team, Build Customer partnership, Act with Integrity and Make a difference. By empowering our employees to focus on our core values, we have been able to shape our workforce to focus on safety and on building great project morale. By working as team and empowering our employees with safety, we have been able to build a great company who have become family.**

Slayden Constructors Leadership

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## Why we deserve recognition



To say that top management is involved in Slayden's safety culture would be to understate their commitment, but more importantly, their practices. For Slayden President Vance Martin, the executive staff, and even our office personnel, safety is a daily practice and

responsibility, and it fully supports the requirements we mandate in the field. Executives routinely visit project sites and conduct safety walks with management and safety leaders. We know this positively impacts our engineers, crews, and subcontractor partners, whom we require to follow our safety program in every detail. Our respective safety performance records, with hundreds of thousands of hours, worked without incident, demonstrate Slayden leadership's direct involvement in the safety culture. Leadership tasks field personnel with being responsible for their safety, but also the safety of others. We empower all field personnel with Stop Work Authority; if they perceive an activity is or could potentially be unsafe, they can stop the work until a safety supervisor has cleared the activity.

Each month, Slayden holds a companywide All Hands Safety Meeting via MS Teams, led by project executives, company officers, and senior personnel; all employees attend each month. This meeting builds trust and communication between executive leadership and project teams nationwide. We typically present our Top Five At-Risk categories for the previous month, the mitigations implemented, report on near misses, and additional lessons learned across our active project



**We pay equal attention to monitoring and enforcing quality control on our projects to ensure we provide the highest quality work product possible and to prevent rework since it can pose a unique collection of work hazards.**

portfolio. Sharing this information across the company increases safety awareness throughout each level of the organization, thereby helping prevent similar accidents in the future.

From new hires to experienced executive board members, Slayden strives to achieve our daily goal of zero incidents. Safety for the public, our employees, and other personnel on or near the work site — and safe environmental practices — remains our top priority. Our approach is to identify unsafe work practices and conditions and perform work safely that are consistent with first-class design and construction practices. We understand that enforcing safety practices and guidelines lead to better project results and requires employee buy-in from every executive team member to each employee in the field.

Slayden graduated from the 5-Year Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) in 2013; we continually exceed the requirements of state and federal law each year. Our proven safety record is the culmination of the policies, practices, and involvement established by our company leadership and practiced daily by employees. Our program is often awarded with local and national AGC awards and by those of OR-OSHA.

Finally, with our multiple ROSE Awards in the AGC's Oregon-Columbia Chapter and our past CSEA awards, Slayden demonstrates a proven record that only the most distinguished firms can claim. However, beyond the awards, our focus is on our employees, partners, and all project personnel, including their families, friends, parents, etc. Our daily goal is for every team member to return home to their family daily. If one person isn't safe, no one is safe.



**Our proven safety record is the culmination of the policies, practices, and involvement established by our company leadership and practiced daily by employees.**

### Safety and risk management program description



Slayden Management is heavily involved with the day-to-day operations of the safety program. The Corporate Safety Director conducts a weekly update with the President and Director of Operations. Each project's status is reviewed, including

training events and any recent incidents; they also discuss major work on projects requiring additional safety support. Typically, all three will be present on the project to reinforce the emphasis on safety. The project teams ensure that work plans, JHAs, and the document that appropriate training occurred before the start of the high-risk task. Slayden management verifies and confirms that these work plans, JHA's, and the appropriate documents that accompany this work is completed before the start of work.

For 2022, Slayden management receives each project 3-week look ahead schedule to management staff, including safety, to be part of the planning phase of all work activities. This has helped with planning site visits, training, and forecasting high-risk work. It allows the safety management team to plan with the project team to ensure that we plan for safety before the work begins. This includes planning for rescue in confined spaces and deep excavations for crane use.

By communicating with the project team and management staff, Slayden fully integrates all levels of staff, from craft to executive leadership. By engaging different levels of management, we can identify risks that wouldn't be identified if the schedule wasn't shared with management staff.

All tasks on a job require a JHA and work plan before work begins. JHAs tie into the work plan and identify PPE requirements, procedures, and steps to prevent hazards so we can complete each task without any significant

### Safety and risk management innovations



Outline some of the Innovations that the construction community could learn from and prevent employee and subcontractor injuries.

One of the key developments that Slayden has had over the year is the implementation of their Highwire Safety Reporting software. It has allowed us to gather findings on all our projects and generate reports from project to project that allows us to project what projects need the most attention essentially proving us leading and lagging indicators. We have been able to share this information on a monthly basis with all our project teams on our monthly All Hands Safety call where we share all our statistics for the previous month and forecast any future items for the upcoming months. We have made it a point to ensure that our project teams communicate with one another frequently and pass information between one another. The more information that is related to the field, the better the outcome of preventing incidents from occurring. This has also helped us manage our subcontractors as General contractor. We have been able to maintain a great TRIR over the years which is below the national average, and because of the engagement our project teams have with Highwire we have been able to achieve many awards and project milestones. The greatest tool that we have been able to use over the years is the technology that is made available to us, which is where the industry is moving into. Technology can be a great tool for many of us to use, if we use that tool the right way.

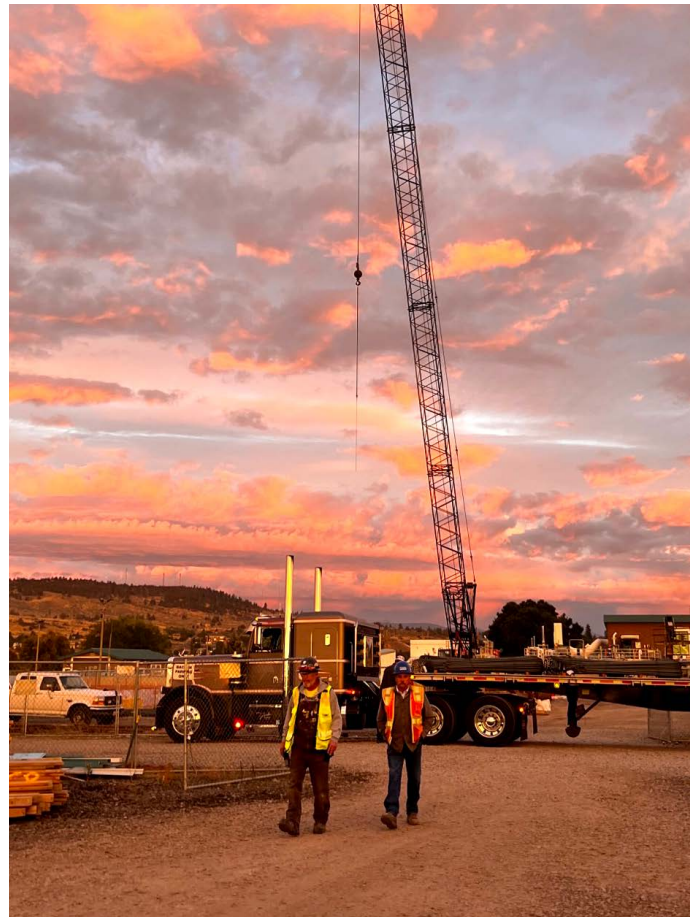
risks. Project Superintendents and Foremen create the JHAs, which are reviewed by Executive Management and approved by the Safety Director. Approved JHAs are shared with field staff, who must sign off that they've read and understood the task's JHA. Additionally, if we modify a JHA or work plan, everyone responsible for the work must acknowledge and sign the updated document after review. By involving management in JHA and work plan creation, we ensure top-down processes have a bottom-up implementation.

We hold a daily pre-shift meeting to review tasks and risks for the day along with doing stretch and flex. If a work area conflict is identified, the issue is resolved that morning, so we don't have overlapping craft activities. After each pre-shift meeting, the work crews have a Stretch and Flex session to prepare physically for the workday. The stretching session lasts less than 10 minutes and increases productivity, and decreases the risk of personal injury.

Slayden uses Building Information Management (BIM) to digitally rehearse difficult or complex work. Before construction starts, planners visualize the sequence using 4D scheduling and adjust the schedule, crane layouts, and direction of work to address major operational and safety issues early. We can model the exact movement of each piece of equipment with spatial/temporal accuracy. Once complete, the superintendent presents the digital rehearsal to the work crews, points out exactly what the work process will look like, and discusses any concerns or hazards that may not have been addressed in the 4D visualization. This includes completing work plans, crane lift plans, and accessing confined spaces. Using 4D models, we plan for high-risk work, reduce the exposure to our employees, and provide the necessary equipment to complete the work safely.

The Project Superintendent develops the work plans, which include necessary tasks, hazards, JHAs, tools, materials, equipment, and quality control items to avoid rework. Project Management personnel audit the work plans weekly to verify accuracy and completeness. This includes adding important tasks to the 3-week look ahead and ensuring that it is shared with management staff, safety, the operations director, and the company president.

Using Highwire, Slayden can track all risk categories, the number of inspections per month, negative findings per month, training, and Improve Its. We can also produce mock OSHA audits. Every project team has access to Highwire, so data and trends can be shared with the team to mitigate hazards. Since incorporating Highwire into our daily operations, we have seen a significant drop in our overall TRIR.



**We hold a daily pre-shift meeting to review tasks and risks for the day along with doing stretch and flex. If a work area conflict is identified, the issue is resolved that morning, so we don't have overlapping craft activities.**

We host a monthly All Hands Safety Call on MS Teams that employees must attend. It includes office employees, remote workers, project teams, including craft personnel. Each month we have a different manager emcee the call making it an interactive experience. We periodically spotlight one employee's contribution to safety, review any near misses or lessons learned from the previous month, and provide updates on any rule changes or program changes. The All-Hands call promotes employee engagement with senior management staff. Our Director of Operations and President are always present during the call.

**We host a monthly All Hands Safety Call on MS Teams that employees must attend. It includes office employees, remote workers, project teams, including craft personnel.**

Additionally, every quarter, we have a Safety Committee that meets virtually to discuss safety on all projects and any concerns we encountered during the previous quarter. Each active project nominates a manager, supervisor, and craft lead to be part of the Safety Committee. The meetings have been beneficial in promoting further engagement and soliciting feedback from the field. Following each committee meeting, we pick a project to audit, and the safety committee member located centrally to the project selected will audit the project's safety performance in person. The audits provide valuable exposure to employees on projects with different scopes and safety practices. The audited project also benefits from a fresh pair of eyes that can offer objective feedback. The face-to-face interaction via the audits also drives the importance of building relationships and professional camaraderie.

To ensure we effectively transfer our emphasis on safety and quality to new hires, Slayden conducts a 90-day mentoring program wherein new hires follow seasoned mentors to ensure they have the proper training appropriate for their role. Mentees are immersed in our safety and quality control culture, while mentors demonstrate safe behaviors. This practice allows new hires to progress successfully at Slayden while further enforcing our safety culture.

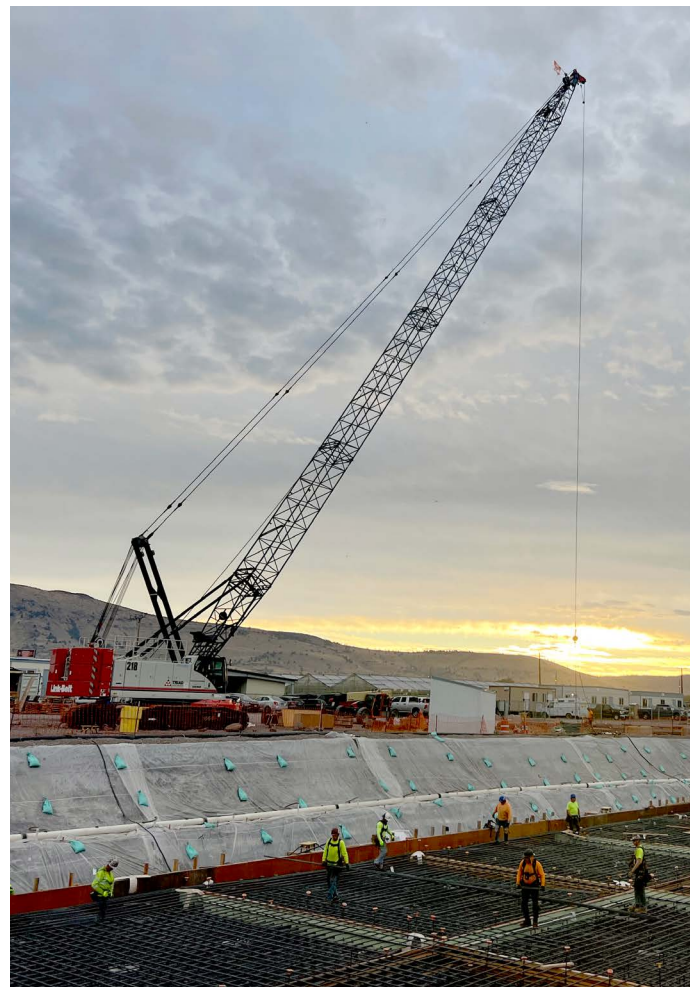
Slayden hosts safety training once per month on each job site. We create a list of trainings at the start of each year based on expiration dates from the previous year, the quantity of newly hired employees, and near miss events or non-compliance actions. We prefer to hold our training with in-house trainers to build relationships between our safety team and our craft employees, plus we can incorporate our policies along with OSHA requirements.

Everyone on the project staff has, at minimum, OSHA 10 certification. Our Safety Director is an OSHA 10- and OSHA 30-hour outreach trainer. We believe it's important that our trainers are people who see our employees every day and work beside them and can confirm that the teachings are taken to heart and followed consistently. Our Safety Director and Safety Managers are currently taking the train the trainer courses so that in the future we can keep all training in-house.

Our safety team and third-party providers conduct mock OSHA inspections on each job site every quarter. These inspections encourage our project managers and superintendents to view our site safety programs from an outside perspective, which leads to behavior changes and a safer project site.

Before the project begins, Slayden hosts a preconstruction meeting with our Project Manager, Safety Manager, and subcontractors to review the job requirements. We discuss potential job risks and mitigations in detail and use long-term planning for risks and safety.

**We also include subcontractors in our safety celebrations. We track incidents for our subs and have none in 2022 across all our project sites.**



All subcontractors are expected to follow the Health and Safety Plan, JHAs, work plans, etc., as if they are Slayden staff. Subcontractors attend our daily pre-shift meetings, weekly safety meetings, and any training held on-site. Our Improve Its process includes evaluating subcontractors daily. We also include subcontractors in our safety celebrations. We track incidents for our subs and have none in 2022 across all our project sites. Subcontractor performance is reported to our staff during our monthly All Hands Meeting, including the work hours that are reported by our subcontractors.

In addition to our project-specific site plans, which identify clear lines of communication in an emergency, Slayden proactively maintains early and frequent communication with the local Fire Department. We invite the Fire Department to visit every job site every quarter so that they are familiar with the job site, are aware of access roads changes and trenches, and understand the general hazards on the project in case of an actual emergency.

Annually on each project site, we hold a mock safety drill which includes a rescue, fire, or chemical spill. Our corporate Safety Director and project Safety Manager watch the drill and note areas of success and deficiencies. After the drill, the Safety Director and Safety Manager review with the project team issues that need correction and opportunities for improvement. For projects on active plants, we often participate in the Owner's safety drills.

Slayden will also include an active shooter trainer for all projects. This is something that we want our project teams to be aware of, as there are more severe incidents that have been reported in recent years. By training our staff, we have seen a significant reduction in our overall Total Incident Rate.

**In addition to our project-specific site plans, which identify clear lines of communication in an emergency, Slayden proactively maintains early and frequent communication with the local Fire Department.**

For further information from Slayden Constructors or sharing of best practices, please contact our

Lendel Del Cid, Safety Director  
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# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Transportation, Infrastructure,  
General Building, Industrial



### People

Established 1890, 100% employee owned  
2,400+ employees

## About our company

Established in 1890, Sundt is one of the oldest builders in the country. Our expertise spans multiple markets, including transportation industrial, building, concrete and renewables. Our 133 year-old company is 100% owned by 2,400+ employees and located across 13 offices and numerous projects throughout US.

## Why we deserve recognition

Sundt's (already) industry-leading safety program (named an AGC Top 10 Safest Companies in 2022) has continued to supplement and enhance our traditional rules-based compliance program into a progressive safety system. We are committed to leverage the principles of energy-based safety and human performance to mitigate high-energy hazards (The S#! That Can Kill You) through the Identification, implementation, and execution of controls. This starts by first engaging full-crew safety meetings each and every day through the use of our STCKY Wheel to stimulate conversations of the S#! That Can Kill You. The STCKY Wheel promotes 8 areas of high-risk Sundt work (Our fatal 8) and the identification and implementation of adequate controls needed to complete the work safely. These meetings are captured and audited by on-site safety team members and off-site senior leaders using the APP Risk Talk via phones and iPads. The project team then gets their chance to walk the work through



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**Sundt's safety program, Safety By Choice-Stop The STCKY is enhancing our traditional rules-based compliance program by leveraging the principles of energy-based safety and human performance. STOP The STCKY is designed to mitigate high-energy hazards (S#! That Can Kill You) through the identification, implementation, and execution of controls.**

Sundt Construction Senior Leadership

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STCKY Walks, which are safety walks focusing on the fatal 8 of STCKY Wheel and assessing whether adequate controls are being executed to keep our employee-owners safe. Any work without adequate controls in place is immediately shut down until corrective actions have been implemented. Safety is not the absence of incidents, but instead, the identification, implementation, and execution of controls. The STCKY Walks are inputted and compiled through our Sundt Safety APP, and we are enjoying new dashboards of STCKY information. This new data is helping us effectively review, manage, and implement improvements, trainings, coaching, and best practices to continue support to Stop The STCKY. Sundt

**The project team then gets their chance to walk the work through STCKY Walks, which are safety walks focusing on the fatal 8 of STCKY Wheel and assessing whether adequate controls are being executed to keep our employee-owners safe.**

Safety ultimately starts with our best-in-class President and CEO, Mike Hoover. Mike consistently visits various offices and job sites demonstrating his commitment by conducting STCKY walks. Mike's annual townhall meetings always have a deep dive into our safety performance and the content is masterfully delivered by Mike himself — not delegated to a safety manager. His generous leadership allows us to hold a board position with the Construction Safety Research Alliance in the mission to eliminate serious incidents and fatalities in the construction industry with transformative research and defensible science. Mike Hoover and Sundt were co-sponsors of the bi-annual CISI Summit, consisting of 25 major contractors whose top executives come together every other year for a 2-day meeting to discuss one thing—safety. CISI's goals are to influence the entire construction industry to work safely and to elevate safety awareness in the United States. Sundt will be the lead sponsor of the CISI meeting in 2024. Additionally, Mike Hoover and our executive committee has established progressive leading Objectives and Key Results for our business operations of (1) STCKY Success (35% of our incidents need to have adequate controls in place), and (2) operations need to complete one STCKY Walk per week. We are currently retiring TRIR as a performance measurement. We at Sundt believe Safety is ultimately not the absence of incidents, but instead, the identification, implementation, and execution of controls.



### Safety and risk management innovations

We continued to enhance our new innovations, and each of them centers around having quality interactions with our craft workers.

Head protection has not drastically improved, some say in over 50 years, and we have now chosen Milwaukee, TYPE II Helmets, as the SUNDT Helmet. It's top and side rated, cooler by almost five degrees, and the chin-strap will help prevent secondary head impacts.

To aid our craft in effectively planning safety for their daily tasks, we doubled and built an additional 100 "Red Boards" to now include our entire Transportation Group. Each morning, our craft gather for stretch and flex and task-safety planning around these Red Boards that are updated daily to reflect STCKY exposures (Stuff That Can Kill You), productivity challenges, important notices, etc. This innovation has allowed our craft to have meaningful and relevant conversations about safety for the day. Personnel take turns leading the daily talks and many happily volunteer to jot their ideas on the boards. This innovation has caused safety meetings to go from one person dictating a message to more of a group discussion which has further fueled our safety climate.

Next, we innovated a better way for our craft to conduct their daily safety plans. Traditionally, our industry's daily safety planning consists of a supervisor dictating the plan after attempting to cram all their details for the day onto a piece of paper. Sundt craft are now using an app called Risk Talk that drives and records their safety meetings. When we want to audit a daily safety plan, we don't waste time trying to track down the paper that likely ended up in the foreman's truck — we can audit the meetings from anywhere at any time and hear the essence of what was discussed. We have completed thousands of these safety meetings to date and our craft are highly appreciative of this practice.





## Safety and risk management program description

### Management ownership and involvement

In 2022 we expanded our Safety Leadership Group from nine employee owners (Group Presidents and Safety Managers to 28 senior leaders of our company, including our entire corporate safety department.) This group meets monthly to review and implement improvements to our program. One improvement has been the implementation of chinstrap helmets as we are committed to preventing secondary head impacts. Training was and continues to be given by our Group and District Managers showing their commitment to this innovation.

Additionally, Sundt management is consistently involved in SLIs (Safety Leadership Inventories completed quarterly to assess demonstrated safety leadership), high-EMR contractor reviews, monthly STCKY walks, Level 2 and Level 3 incident reviews, STCKY Success shares, and ultimately, STCKY / Safety Week every May; again, in May of 2023, our management supported companywide participation in STCKY / Safety Week with daily project visits.

**We developed a new safety inspection app for High-Energy Controls, called STCKY Walks. The STCKY Walks App is strikingly intuitive and drives our leaders to ensure the safe execution of controls for high-energy exposures.**



### Risk identification and analysis

When planning and assessing our work, our management teams use a science-based method we call the STCKY Wheel. The method focuses on high-energy exposures and direct controls. Our jobsite leaders conduct pull planning, 6-week, and weekly lookaheads with our trade partners to properly ensure safety controls are properly planned for. This past year we have expanded the use of Sundt craft red board and Risk Talk use from concrete to now all of our transportation group work.

Supervisors are now listening and auditing those safety meetings with the intent to give constructive feedback in improving our morning planning sessions. There are ten questions reviewed, a mix of safety, quality, and production, to evaluate how well each of those are discussed.

We developed a new safety inspection app for High-Energy Controls, called STCKY Walks. The STCKY Walks App is strikingly intuitive and drives our leaders to ensure the safe execution of controls for high-energy exposures. Our safety team was trained on the app's development and makes enhancements on the fly for the frontlines. By using the app to guide their STCKY Walks, our people have deeper and more impactful conversations with the craft.

Each year, our safety team analyzes trends and creates monthly awareness campaigns consisting of an enterprise-wide safety topic, toolbox talk, slide deck, STCKY video and more. For example, October's campaign was about fall protection and everyone received an informative, yet catchy desktop background picturing a worker erecting falsework while maintaining 100% tie off.



### Task design

We conduct design safety reviews maximizing safety for the workers, members of the public, and end users by ensuring compliance with regulations while targeting risks by "designing in" controls like taller parapets on roofs, gap-free edge protection, guarded skylights, pre-installed anchor points, etc. We frequently install isolation valves at existing facilities prior to starting excavation work to prevent unplanned utility disruptions which is safer for our workers and facility occupants.

As an engineering control, we create detailed site logistics plans using software and digital modeling. We focus on the separation of people and equipment during construction activities, so we use models to predict how traffic will interact on site. We elect to install separate gates to keep pedestrians at a safe distance from equipment/trucks. Commonly, we will design the site's layout to prevent the backing of equipment.

Another risk we target with engineering controls is the planning and sequencing of leading-edge work. We identify which trades will be conducting leading-edge work, analyze their scope, and identify controls for eliminating or mitigating fall exposures. To prevent dropped objects, we analyze where edge protection systems and canopies will be installed.

We use pull planning at each project to effectively sequence work, prevent physically stacking trades or workers, and prevent out-of-sequence conflicts. Participants consist of each contractor and the Sundt project management team.



### Safe work methods

Each project team completes, maintains, and implements a Safety Management Plan (SMP) that addresses project-specific risks and safe work methods. Each month, we validate that the SMP is effective via a review involving safety managers, project managers, district leadership, and executive managers. In addition, our area safety managers conduct quarterly audits of each SMP to validate effectiveness and implementation.

Each trade contractor is required and held accountable for implementing an adequate Work Plan which includes a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) and Task Hazard Analyses (THA). JHAs cover the entire scope broken out by definable features of work while THAs supplement JHAs with daily/changing conditions or procedures.

To verify that Work Plans and JHAs are adequate, a Sundt safety professional reviews them prior to work taking place. During work, Work Plans, JHAs, and THAs are audited by the Sundt project team to verify effectiveness — especially when non-conformance or unsafe practices/conditions are identified. The frequency of THA audits conducted by Sundt employees is monitored and communicated, driving a high percentage of completion through accountability.



### Worker engagement, involvement, and participation

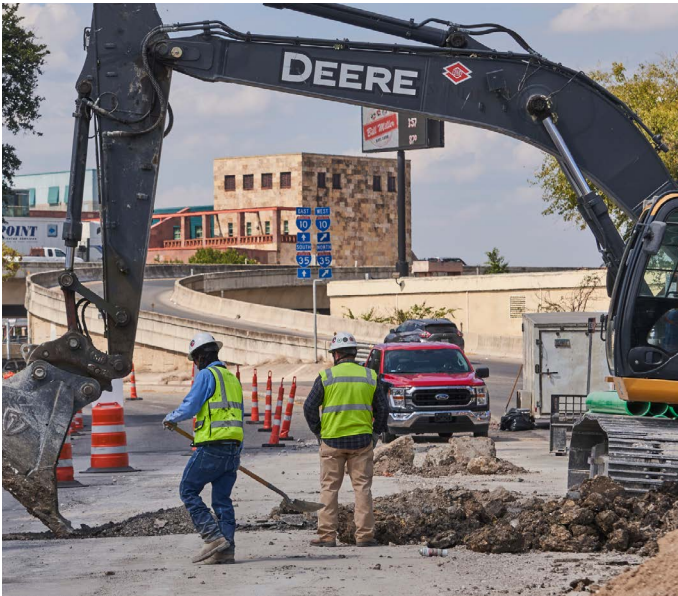
We ensure worker engagement, involvement, and participation through work planning, recognition, Climate Surveys, our SVIS program, Relentless Housekeeping, our Foreman Development Program, and more.

Our craft are given the opportunity to plan their work, implement initiatives, and participate in incident prevention/analysis. We provide a dedicated platform for craft to express their ideas for enhancing our safety program called Sundt Voices in Safety (SVIS), a project-based health and safety committee implemented to maximize both Sundt and trade partner craftworker involvement and feedback by providing a collaborative forum. SVIS is structured to encourage respect, collaboration, integrity, and innovation. The goals of SVIS are identify, implement, and recognize safe work practices; identify and correct hazards; instill HS&E commitment; and enhance craft engagement in HS&E. Our SVIS committees now complete SVIS Walks, similar to our STCKY Walks, to better improve job site safety. Some news areas of assessment for our SVIS committee members include hearing conversation and silica awareness.

Each project conducts preparatory meetings, pull planning, three-to-six-week lookaheads, and trade coordination meetings. These processes have been proven effective at identifying and mitigating risk—especially risk from trade stacking and overhead work. The people closest to the work are involved in these processes and therefore have decision-making power on how work is performed which positively affects safety. Our project managers and superintendents ensure adequate participation from each stakeholder involved in these processes.

Each project team writes a recognition plan that specifies a budget and addresses the site-specific methods that will be employed to show worker appreciation (i.e., tickets, drawings, on the spot appreciation, gift cards, certificates of appreciation, etc.).

Each project team writes a cleanliness plan and is expected to maintain “Relentless Housekeeping” which massively drives worker engagement by showing workers we care for them and want to provide them with a clean workplace. It also drives worker participation and involvement because they are provided with the resources and empowerment to take ownership of the site's condition.



### Safety training and validation of training

Our top new program is a full day at our STOP The STCKY Academy. Employees experience all parts of our Safety By Choice-Stop The STCKY program and their responsibility as part of it.

Sundt's "Center for Craft Excellence" has been highly successful at educating our people in multiple disciplines by providing necessary tools and training. We partnered with Central Arizona College to offer a three-year apprenticeship and five, one-year certificate programs in a variety of in-demand trades. This results in our craft employee-owners feeling motivated and empowered to perform their work safely and with high quality.

Sundt has a culture of learning supported by our Talent Development group. We have a robust safety-training system for our operations staff that ensures completion of mandatory training. Our corporate safety trainer monitors this system and oversees its evolution. We developed a training video database specific to the processes and equipment used by our craft. When new personnel come to one of our sites, they attend orientation which consists of impactful videos and messaging leaving them empowered to work safely, speak up, and listen up.

We consistently validate that our training efforts are effective via field inspections and weekly safety quizzes. Each week, a safety question is emailed to all operations employees. A dashboard tracks the results and indicates where training needs enhancement.



### Subcontractor management

We thoroughly vet each contractor and hold preparatory and pre-installation meetings prior to allowing their mobilization. These meetings facilitate relationship building and ensure that expectations are laid out up front, so that everyone is on the same page with safety, quality, and production.

Some contractors exhibit negative safety trends or have an EMR over 1.0. Upon their identification, we bring our leadership together for a tough conversation of radical safety candor. This ultimately leads to enhanced partnering and re-focused commitment, and an outcome of a project-based risk mitigation plan to help our trade contractor complete their work safely.



### Emergency and crisis management

Our HSE Team continues to participate in the Sundt Crisis Committee which has a dedicated crisis phone number and email address that generate a series of notifications when contacted. Our projects continue to prepare for crises with regular practice drills/evacuations. All employees have the Sundt app which has an intuitive crisis module. The module contains response steps, recent crisis alerts, and a contact list.



### Safety culture and recognition

In the past, effort has been spent implementing corporate programs, but with our diverse scopes of work, we have found better results with project teams budgeting, planning, and implementing their own recognition program. So now, every project is required to have a project-based recognition program which is monitored monthly through our project Safety Management Plan.



### Innovation

Innovation has found itself as a Core Value at Sundt. In the past two years, 6 of the top 8 innovation awards have been Safety Innovations; led by the mobile equipment inspection APP for our operators and mechanics for better communicating safety issues with our equipment.

For further information from Sundt or sharing of best practices, please contact

Paul Levin, Corporate Director of HS&E at [pclevin@sundt.com](mailto:pclevin@sundt.com)

# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Preconstruction, Construction Management, General Contracting, Design/Build



### People

Established 1947, family owned  
250+ employees

## About our company

VJS Construction Services (VJS) is a Pewaukee, WI based and family-owned construction manager, general contractor, and design builder. Our roots began as a two-man start up in 1947 and now has grown into a leadership team of nine with over 250 employees.

To better meet the needs of our clients, we have expanded services to offer preconstruction, construction, design/build, and real estate services to the aviation, civic and community, corporate, healthcare, education, manufacturing/industrial, multi-family housing, religious, retail and hospitality, and senior living markets.

We are proud of our long-standing partnerships with clients and trade partners and grateful for the exceptional customer service provided by our dedicated team members. The strength of these relationships is a testament of how we are able to boast 80 percent of our annual income as repeat business, with some clients as building partners for over 30 years.



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**We are honored to receive this prestigious award from AGC in recognition of our team's unwavering commitment to maintain and prioritize VJS' safety-first approach daily. Our people are the lifeline of our safety.**

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VJS is honored and privileged to have built communities in southeast Wisconsin for the past 75 years, and as we prepare future leaders of VJS, we look forward to another 75 years of devoting talent and creativity to build places that transform life and work.



**At VJS, no one is too important for safety. All levels and all roles are expected to participate in various safety initiatives.**

### Why we deserve recognition

At VJS, no one is too important for safety. All levels and all roles are expected to participate in various safety initiatives. Our safety program is focused on improving the way we operate and building a safety culture by way of a holistic approach. Our senior safety manager sits on the board of Wisconsin Construction Wellness Community and utilizes the knowledge shared about mental health issues within the construction industry to implement a mental health plan, as part of our safety program, to be available to our staff during their most vulnerable state.

What sets us apart from other general contractors is our preplanning approach to ensure safety, the involvement of senior management in reinforcing safety standards throughout the company and the relationships that we build with every one of our employees so that they always prioritize safety. Our commitment to safety is about more than compliance, but rather to strive for safety excellence in all aspects of our work on every project, every day, through employee feedback and engagement.

Our commitment to our safety-first approach is evidenced by being awarded the Wisconsin Corporate Safety Awards for two consecutive years, and now, being named as one of the nation's safest construction companies by the Associated General Contractors of America in 2023.

### Safety & risk management innovations

Some specific initiatives VJS has implemented to improve safety and reduce risk includes:



Specific on-site training when a fall exposure is potentially greater than the norm. For example, wood roof truss installation is very complex, and we would provide specific safety training for that type of installation. Employees responsible for the installation would be met with prior to the actual installation, to ensure they understand the precautions necessary. Since this is our largest exposure, we spend a lot of time on in-house classroom training for all field employees.



Utilizing stair towers instead of ladders. Traditionally, the construction industry has used extension ladders to access different floors of work, which can be problematic due to weight limits, trip hazards, and additional risks. As a company, we are working to mitigate the need for extension ladders — using stair towers when available as they are a safer and more reliable method to access different floors of work.



**VJS provides Safety Pledge posters at each jobsite where field staff read and sign the commitments of working safely. Each person is also given a pledge card to remind them of these commitments.**



Providing industrial floor squeegees during winter months to reduce slips, trips, and falls related to ice. We also provide specific ice melt solutions when applicable, as standard salt methods cannot be used on fresh concrete.



'Nothing Hits the Ground' policy on all projects. Tidiness on the project is essential to reducing trip hazards, fire loading of the building, maintaining emergency access/ egress in and out of the building, etc. All contractors and subcontractors are responsible for daily clean-up of all forms.



VJS has developed custom site safety carts to keep First Aid Kits, Fire Extinguishers, Eyewash Stations, AEDs, and other safety necessities close to the work, yet out of the weather. These can be hoisted by crane on large structural jobs yet are small enough to fit through a standard door frame during finishes.



Safety Education Orientation and Specialized Training. Safety training and education at VJS starts with a new employee safety orientation and includes OSHA required training and site-specific training. Each employee is required to view a safety training video and complete a test to measure their comprehension, they are not allowed on a jobsite until they pass the test. Our safety training materials are bi-lingual for our Spanish speaking employees.



Stretch and Flex, a mandatory stretching exercise program performed on our jobsites daily. Stretching before the workday begins helps our crew warm up their bodies to prevent body sprain/strain injuries.

### Safety & risk management program description

At VJS, safety is not a goal; it's a requirement. VJS emphasizes that "safety is the only way to work." It is the obligation of every VJS employee to make safety a priority. VJS provides Safety Pledge posters at each jobsite where field staff read and sign the commitments of working safely. Each person is also given a pledge card to remind them of these commitments. Safety initiatives intended to empower our team include but not limited to are:

- Daily foremen meetings.
- 'Atta Boy' recognition program.
- Brand Champion recognition program.
- Thomas S. Schueler Safety Award, given in honor of one of the firm's late founders.
- See It, Own It, Share It safety policy.
- Behavior Safety and Safety Perception surveys.
- Dedicated inbox for employees to submit feedback regularly.
- Safety art contests for the children of VJS employees.
- Safety trainings which include CPR and First Aid training and active shooter training.



- Daily foremen meetings where we talk about and review the safety items of the day.
- Bi-annual superintendent evaluations completed by the senior safety manager.
- VJS distributes a company-wide newsletter every week. In the newsletter, we provide Tool Box Talks. Topics may include: frostbite precautions, electrocution, and static electricity — all common things encountered at home as well as at work.

We believe if we prioritize our employees' safety overall, it will carry over to the jobsites. Our team members are empowered to drive change within the company and continuously improve the way we operate as a whole.



We implement a site-specific safety plan as a proactive approach taken before any shovel hits the ground and appropriate measures are executed to ensure all potential hazards are kept to a minimum. This plan is distributed to all senior project managers, project managers, superintendents, and foremen. It is kept in the job trailer and reviewed with all subcontractors working on the site. Additional safety proactive approaches include but not limited to are:

- All projects include a thorough Job Hazard Analysis before work can start.
- VJS conducts weekly project meetings that begin with safety.
- VJS hosts pre-task planning meetings to define the scope of work, analyze hazards, develop and implement hazard controls as well as how to perform work within hazard control.
- VJS performs prefabrication in-house by installing wall panels which improves quality, reduces waste, and helps us to meet the construction deadline.
- Project Manager Safety Training Program
- We have engaged a third party to facilitate lean safety training as another resource and tool for our employees to identify and reduce waste in processes to mitigate the risk of workplace accidents and illnesses.

For further information from VJS or sharing of best practices, please contact

Elizabeth Polheber, Senior Safety Manager at [Epolheber@vjscs.com](mailto:Epolheber@vjscs.com)

# CSEA top winner

10 of the Safest Contractors in America



## At a glance



### Projects

Infrastructure and General Building, including Commercial, Mixed Use, and Multifamily



### People

Established 1969, 750+ employees

## About our company

Formed in 1997, Whitaker Ellis performs a variety of high-quality concrete construction projects. Based in Oregon, W/E performs work in OR and SW WA, while specializing in medium rise residential buildings parking structures, and large data centers.



W/E performs work in all phases of concrete construction. From multi story parking structures, commercial buildings, to medium rise residential buildings averaging 4 to 12 stories, as well as concrete “tilt-up” structures. We also perform small jobs down to the curb level due to our close working partnership with General Contractors. Concrete construction involves heavy dangerous work. Our usual hazards include working outdoors in excavations during severe weather. Building footings, walls and columns with different forming systems presents extreme fall hazards as well as access hazards while moving forms and material with tower & mobile cranes, or telescoping forklifts. This type of work also presents many “struck by” hazards. Our controls focus on training to our internal procedures, which include many things above and beyond the OSHA requirements and include a relentless effort on planning and communication. We have learned many hard lessons as a company in the past. These lessons have given us the experience and information to create internal procedures that were developed to eliminate the known problems we can expect. In the pursuit of excellence to improve our safety record, we have also gotten better and better at quality and production as well.

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**The pursuit of excellence requires that we exercise and further develop our core values daily on every task at every job site. Safe, Innovative and Fast. The culture we build and maintain today will pay dividends every day in the future.**

Randy Johnson Safety Director  
Whitaker/Ellis Builders Inc.

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**At Whitaker Ellis Builders our owners and top managers participate at all levels of Safety in our company operations. This involvement begins with Safety planning by our Operations VP and Management team before we even decide to estimate and bid on work.**

### Why we deserve recognition

The ROSE 2020, 2021, 2022 awards, and CSEA 2021, 2022 & 2023 awards were outstanding accomplishments. We are committed more than ever to continue our progress towards the goal of zero incidents. We are continuing to improve our processes and searching for more effective ways to help our safety culture and performance. Our owners and top executives are addicted to improvement, and the results that come with continued effort.

At Whitaker Ellis Builders our owners and top managers participate at all levels of Safety in our company operations. This involvement begins with Safety planning by our Operations VP and Management team before we even decide to estimate and bid on work. Our owners and management team fully expect, and demand that zero injuries can and will be the top performance objective.

Upon award of a project, the safety planning starts with the estimating hand-off to Project Management and the assigned Superintendent. From this point our Superintendent spends one to two weeks learning the details of the project and developing a site-specific safety plan that incorporates all company Job Hazard Analysis, and company developed procedures for all high-risk aspects of concrete construction, such as deck erection with shoring and crane use to name a few. During this planning phase, our Superintendents meet with our General Superintendent, and Safety Director to review and discuss all aspects of the project safety and construction plan. At this time, we highlight the key risks that are anticipated, and the applicable safety policies and programs that are the most relevant, utilizing the vast experience of lessons learned by the entire management team. This planning phase also includes a review of personnel that will be assigned to key leadership roles such as the site Red Vest Safety Leader, Forklift Operator, Crane Rigger/Signaler, and Foremen as needed. All of this communication and planning takes significant time and effort, but the management team is highly engaged at this level. It has become obvious to us in our experience that what starts well ends well!

While there are many direct examples of top management involvement in our safety journey at Whitaker Ellis, the most impact-full action is when our owners walk the job site and demonstrate safe work behaviors while engaging the crew and supervisors with questions and observations. Our top management team accompanies a safety professional at least once a month for a full day of visiting projects and make non-scheduled site visits to gain firsthand knowledge of project issues and challenges. Our owners and executives attend all incident reviews regardless of the severity. These are performed at our main office with the entire crew involved. We believe that this process has great value in the opportunity for all people to learn and improve.

We are committed to pushing forward a cultural shift where safety is not only the number one value on every person's mind when they wake up in the morning but is a core value of each person's day, every day.

**We assisted in creating the survey, and are the first company to try it out, which just concluded! Our work with this organization as "Construction Advisors" continues currently in 2023, as we are helping to develop training curriculum that can be delivered to field and management to better understand how to develop and measure the safety culture and climate in the workplace.**

## Safety and risk management innovations

In 2022 we conducted another (first was in 2019) “safety climate” survey with the Oregon Health Sciences University, Institute for Occupational Health Safety Climate lab that is designed to learn more about the inter relationships between different safety climate factors. We know we have a great safety climate and culture, but we are trying to learn what factors are more important to each other. We assisted in creating the survey, and are the first company to try it out, which just concluded! Our work with this organization as “Construction Advisors” continues currently in 2023, as we are helping to develop training curriculum that can be delivered to field and management to better understand how to develop and measure the safety culture and climate in the workplace. Another innovation we have been working on for several years is the development of a passive exoskeleton suit designed and built by “Herowear”. The current model being released around August 2023 is the “Apex 2”. The Apex 2 is a result of testing prototypes and numerous improvements done after field testing on our guys in the field. We are very excited to see this device gaining further acceptance and use in helping to reduce the number of lower back strains and injuries in construction.



### Management ownership

The Whitaker Ellis management team is intimately involved in the implementation and continual maintenance of our safety programs and plans. This is accomplished with a physical presence and utilizing technology. It is the goal of Whitaker Ellis to ensure all precautions are met and measures taken in providing a safe working environment for our employees, while promoting and pursuing an injury-free culture. Whitaker Ellis Management provides the leadership and funds necessary to provide a safe workplace for all of its employees and in doing so, comply with and push beyond applicable safety, health, and environmental regulations. Senior Management takes responsibility to develop and implement the necessary policies and procedures to accomplish our goal of a workplace free of recognized hazards.

Our written and backed safety philosophy is grounded on five statements:

1. All injuries can be prevented
2. Management is responsible for preventing injuries
3. Working safely is a condition of employment
4. All operating exposures can be safeguarded
5. Training employees to work safely is essential.



### Risk identification & analysis

Safety begins prior to bid time. Before we even estimate and bid a job, we look closely at the project, customer, location, type of construction, and identify if we believe we can perform the work to our safety standards! If we are awarded a project, we identify our risks by continuously pre-planning our work from start to finish. Every member on our team is responsible for identifying hazards, bringing those hazards to the table, and resolving them with a plan to eliminate exposure. All employees are required to report any near misses that occur during the workday. Near misses identified as having potential for immediate risk on all projects are then shared with the field for company-wide education; shared near misses are read aloud by the foreman or job site supervisor to all employees on all job sites during stretch and flex. Our near miss program assists us in analyzing trends as leading indicators which we take out to the field for training, direction, and discussion. This year we also added a weekly meeting with our project management teams that include the upper management team and all Safety staff. In this meeting we discuss all safety incidents and concerns for the previous week and discuss upcoming safety issues for the new week. This has allowed us to focus quickly on changes and challenges that arise and quickly engage with a safer plan of action.



### Safe work methods

Through encouragement to share information among our team we have been able to push innovation and forward thinking in an attempt to engineer safety hazards out of our job sites. In order to reduce the potential for falls, we have implemented company-wide the use of Peri-Up aluminum stair systems on all projects requiring access to upper levels, greatly reducing the use of ladders, and mitigating risk within material handling. We also identified slip and trip hazards across our job sites due to open excavations and in-place formwork. To reduce potential for injury we have implemented the use of aluminum 24” wide stages, to create safe walkways and eliminate the need to climb in and out of formwork and through congested reinforcing.

We have a policy for mentoring new first year apprentices “Yellow Hardhat Program” that has reduced injuries by over 50% in 2021, and 70% in 2022.



### Task design

This year we also instituted a “ladders last” policy that promotes use on aerial lifts for elevated work, and stairways for access when feasible. This resulted in reduced use of extension ladders by 40% companywide.



Our policy for protecting openings on decks goes above the OSHA standards by requiring all openings bigger than 18” to be covered and protected by installed guardrails. We install cast in place anchors in all columns and concrete decks where feasible, for trades that come in behind us and building owners to use for fall protection long after we are gone.



### Worker engagement

We promote engagement with workers through education and leadership for all of our employees.

We stress to our employees that as construction workers, they are a part of a challenging industry, they are part of a unique team, and their fellow workers depend on them. We educate our employees on the importance of focus and empower them to stop work at any time, on any project, if they have safety concerns or uncertainty about the task at hand.

Our focus to empower our employees is showcased in a partnership agreement we enter into with each and every employee. Each employee is given the immediate authority to identify an unsafe act and immediately correct it and/or bring it to the attention of their supervisor, regardless of their position. Corrective action is to be taken immediately by the employee, their supervisor, or another competent person on-site. We train on this in new hire orientation and verify that everyone knows what it sounds and looks like. Each employee will participate in the pre-task planning of the day’s activities and understand the safety risks for the activity. Each employee will understand the purpose behind and fully participate in our field safety programs. Our supervisors use these procedures and time to begin the engagement process at the individual level.

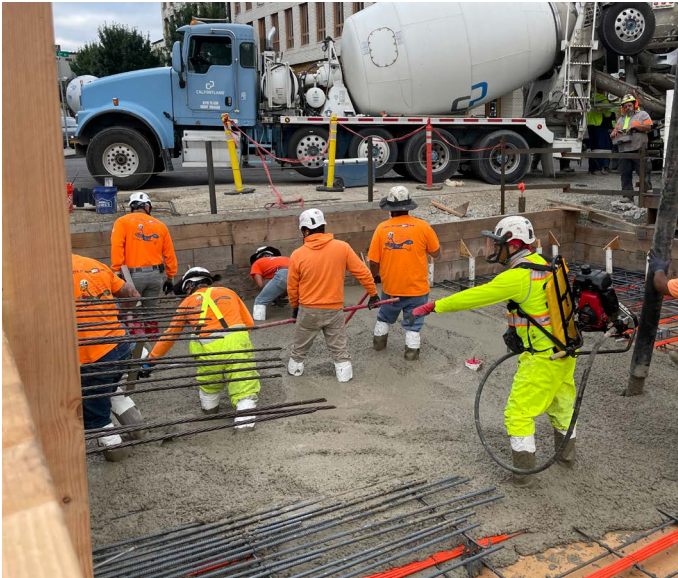


### Safety Training & validation

Each quarter the company safety director, general superintendent, and project managers hold a field supervisors meeting in which front line supervisors discuss and critique a minimum of five near miss incidents, safety audit results, and safety needs on their projects. The focus of these meetings is to educate and empower our field leaders and strengthen communication between the supervisors and the safety department in an open forum setting and provide our supervisors with the tools to educate the newer generation of tradespeople. This year we started a new policy that requires 40 hours training per year for all management employees. This training focus is for safety related training outside of OSHA requirements. Our yearly evaluations and bonus include accountability for this standard being met.

We have revamped our entire on boarding process, with the ideal that safety starts at the door, extending our orientation process to ensure a complete understanding of our expectations, safety policy and procedures. We provide ongoing in-house training for operating and working around equipment and specialty training. We utilize Procure to initiate, distribute, and document weekly toolbox topics for awareness and training. We validate training results with daily site audits, behavior-based observations, and continual communication company wide.





### Subcontractor management

Pre-task planning daily, also involving all our trades and subcontractors, is vital for effective safe work planning. We require all subcontractors to participate in our pre-task planning and Flex & Stretch. This enables the relationships and constant communication regarding previously unforeseen conditions, added or deleted tasks, identification of new hazards and the placement of engineering controls to mitigate hazards is essential in order to adapt to the constantly changing environment. W/E believe that a great plan that is communicated and followed eliminates risk and injuries!

In 2021 we began to require that our subs use a rated helmet on some projects. If it makes sense for us, it makes sense for our whole team!



### Emergency crisis management

We address emergency and crisis management during initial orientation as well as send out a packet to each job, job trailer, superintendent, and foreman. This information is posted and explained to all employees. Within the packet, are specific step-by-step procedures to be followed. This will provide immediate guidance during a high stress situation. We cover major incident response procedures, severe injury procedures and form work failure. Making sure every employee is aware that time is of the essence, we need to minimize impact to customer, employees, and surroundings. The entire management team is involved during crisis and deployed as necessary. Every six months we require a company-wide review of the procedures internally and with each employee.



### Safety culture & recognition

We believe that new employees understand our culture usually before a new hire orientation! Our reputation is well known in the trades as being a great company to work for. Safety Orientation re-reinforces this to those that are not aware. We really focus on relationships and communication. When this is demonstrated by supervisors in the field and management when they participate in the field, the circuit is completed, and the new employee helps us grow our culture even further.

We continually build and grow relationships by recognizing excellence by individuals at job appreciation lunches and all company events in front of their peers. We do monthly and quarterly events companywide, for just this reason.

For further information from Whitaker/Ellis or sharing of best practices, please contact

Randy Johnson, Safety Director  
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# Construction Safety Excellence Awards — Grand Award Winner



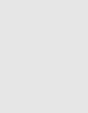
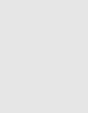
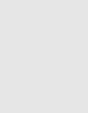
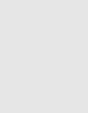
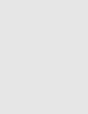
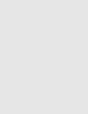
Hensel Phelps

For more information on the CSEA, visit [WWW.AGC.ORG/CSEA](http://WWW.AGC.ORG/CSEA)

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