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Taking the Lead on LEED

Using environmentally friendly materials is just the beginning of A.P. Construction's efforts to build green. It says its reputation for quality, efficiency and savings for its clients has made it a regional leader.

BY HANNA ARONOVICH

Taking its cue from clients seeking LEED-certified projects, A.P. Construction Co. is working to educate its staff and LEED-certify its key personnel, Senior Vice President Nick Everett explains. "Nationally, we've seen a big movement toward sustainability and green initiatives, and we're becoming involved in more projects that are looking for LEED certification," he says.

A.P. Construction worked on the Greenwich Audubon Center, one of the National Audubon Society's education centers. Located in Greenwich, Conn., the center was completed in 2002 and built with recycled and other environmentally friendly materials, such as cellulose insulation, rubber flooring and recycled lumber and roofing materials. However, it is not officially LEED-certified because it predates the rating system, Everett notes.

The company also served as construction manager for Nokia's headquarters in White Plains, N.Y.

"We demolished the original building and created a new corporate headquarters with an upscale lobby, cafeteria, rooms for educational sessions, conferencing facilities and three floors of offices," Everett explains. "The project was about \$30 million, and we finished the majority of the building last year." It was completed this year.

The 102,000-square-foot building featured low-energy clear glass with the Lutron Daylight system; a complete energy management system for HVAC, hot water and lighting; recycled-rubber-tire carpet in the hallways and locally sourced bluestone flooring.

In 2006, the Nokia building received the Diamond Award for Engineering Excellence from the American Council of Engineering Cos. of New York.

Library Project

Currently, A.P. Construction is working with the design team at the Darien Library in Darien, Conn., and serving as construction manager on the project, which broke ground in spring this year. Everett notes the \$16 million project is the largest privately funded library in the country.

A.P. Construction Co.

www.apconet.com

2006 sales: \$102 million

HQ: Stamford, Conn.

Employees: 70

Service: Construction management

Nick Everett, SVP: "We focus on developing long-term relationships with subcontractors and owners."



Last year, A.P. Construction completed the Darien Imaging Center, an 11,500-square-foot outpatient facility for Stamford Hospital. "This project is really going to help us leapfrog into other projects for the hospital," Senior Vice President Nick Everett says, referring to a 30,000-square-foot facility for Westchester Medical Group.



Aiming for a LEED Silver rating, the project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2008. Key elements of the building include:

- A four-well geothermal system with heat pumps, which will reduce annual energy costs from \$50,000 to \$30,000
- A native Xeriscape plan with irrigation on the grass areas, allowing all retention and absorption to occur on-site
- Efficient use of water, including low-consumption urinals
- Renewable energy through photovoltaics

Vast Experience

Headquartered in Stamford, Conn., A.P. Construction is a construction management and general contracting firm with a branch office in White Plains, N.Y.

Everett says the company focuses on projects in Fairfield County in Connecticut and Westchester County in New York.

"We sometimes go a little further up in Connecticut, up to New Haven and Hartford, but we stay out of New York City, Long Island and New Jersey," Everett explains.

The company is experienced in all types of construction, including:

- Corporate interiors
- Educational facilities
- Healthcare and municipal facilities
- Residential properties

'Contractor of Choice'

Founded in 1981, A.P. Construction is a division of the Ashforth Co., a full-service real estate company that dates back to 1896. A.P. Construction benefits from the marketing, human resources and legal support of the Ashforth Co.

A.P. Construction says its team approach, attention to detail and the ability to meet the needs of owners, tenants and architects have established its reputation for quality, efficiency and savings for its clients.

The company says it strives to be the "contractor of choice" and to provide the highest value through its commitment to quality and integrity.

Because A.P. Construction does not self-perform its work, strong relationships with subcontractors are essential to execute quality work.

"Some of our subcontractors have



worked with us for 25 years," Everett says. "We focus on developing long-term relationships with subcontractors and owners.

"It's really about partnerships for success," he continues. "Occasionally, a subcontractor will refer us to the owner and help us get the job.

"And, quite often, as construction manager, we bring in specific subs to work on the pre-construction phase to help start the job with everyone involved.

"We are dedicated to the quality of our work more than getting the cheapest price," he adds.

Local Happenings

A.P. Construction offers a range of services, including construction management, in-house estimating, project management,

“IT’S REALLY ABOUT PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS.”

pre-construction planning, design/build and scheduling.

The company's range of services allows it to satisfy diverse clients and adapt to changing market needs.

"Locally, there's a lot happening," Everett says.

"Many office buildings have been sold and ownership is changing hands. So, our relationships are changing as a result," he adds.

"We're working to develop relationships with those new owners and continue to cultivate relationships with former owners."

Diverse Portfolio

A.P. Construction has a varied portfolio, and Everett says the company is looking to become more involved in the health-care sector.

"We see a general trend of more outpatient care facilities being built, and we aim to get more involved in that."

The company has completed two projects for St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Conn., including a 50,000-square-foot intensive care unit and a 15,000-square-foot medical unit. The total for both projects was \$22 million.

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tal," Everett says, pointing to a 30,000-square-foot facility for Westchester Medical Group.

Education Boom

Education is also a hot market. Everett notes the company has worked on several expansion projects for the Greens Farm Academy in Westport, Conn.

A.P. Construction worked on the K-12 boarding school's gym, several buildings for the Lower School (K-5th grade), and currently the firm is working on a new wing and renovation.

"We're also planning to do some additional work for their performing arts center," Everett notes.

Expanding Expertise

When A.P. Construction was founded, the company focused on corporate work and office buildings.

Today, although still involved in those markets, the firm has branched into public and private work, healthcare, education, houses of worship, nonprofit groups and private clubs – such as the \$22 million project for the Tamarack

Country Club in Greenwich, Conn. A.P. Construction completed 50,000 square feet of work including a new club house, pool house, dining facilities, residential facilities for the staff and a pro shop.

Cause for Celebration

Everett says last year, A.P. Construction took a big stand on safety once its revenues reached \$100 million.

"We've been pushing safety initiatives on the project management and superintendent sides, especially," he explains. "However, everyone is trained in first aid and CPR.

"Our project managers complete OSHA 10-hour training, and superintendents do the OSHA 30-hour training.

"We're proud of our safety record," he continues, "and we're always looking for ways to offer more training on specific issues, such as mechanical systems and moisture intrusion.

"A lot of our projects take place in occupied buildings, so we're very conscious of operating safely, and keeping day-to-day activities from being disrupted," he adds.

In addition to safety, A.P. Construction says it is proud to celebrate its 25th anniversary and posting more than \$100 million in sales.

Moving forward, Everett says the company has a solid business plan and expects to continue focusing on several markets.

"We've decided that geographically, we're going to stay in the Connecticut area," he explains. "But, we see the education market changing, especially as the population shifts.

"There's more work in the high school and higher education level, and we plan to be a player in those projects.

"Healthcare will continue to be an area that we are involved in," he adds.

The company plans to keep its revenues at around the \$100 million mark, but strives to operate more efficiently as well as possibly pursue joint ventures.

"We've done some work with [Connecticut-based] O&G Industries in Darien," Everett notes, pointing to Darien High School, which was completed in 2006, and the New Canaan High School, which was finished in August this year. ■



A.P. Construction Company

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