

Reflections of Art E. Favre

As a child growing up on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, I had no clue what a refinery or petrochemical plant looked like, let alone ever dreamed I would be involved in building and maintaining them. But even at that young age, the process of seeing new facilities being built fascinated me. I guess my building interests came from the fact that both my great grandfather and my grandfather were wooden ship builders, and my dad served in the Construction Battalion during World War II.

With a desire to be involved in construction, but not knowing exactly which path to take, I came to LSU to study architecture. It didn't take long for me to figure out I did not have the artistic talent to pay the bills as an architect. Thankfully, LSU started the Construction Management curriculum during my sophomore year, and I found a pathway to fulfill my educational objective. The knowledge instilled in me by the dedicated faculty at LSU has served me well

throughout my career. In fact, one of my instructors is a past recipient of this award, Roland M. Toups.

Having minimal exposure to the industrial construction sector during college, it was somewhat ironic, and a little scary, that my first job opportunity after graduation was with a local general industrial contractor. The disciplined thought processes toward problem solving taught at LSU, coupled with several great mentors within industry, allowed me to learn the unique characteristics of industrial construction early in my career. In construction, with the right background and a lot of sweat equity, success can be achieved. After a short tenure in Houston, Texas with a major national engineering and construction firm, I was offered a managerial position with another industrial construction firm in Baton Rouge that exposed me to the international market. After several not-so-enjoyable overseas trips, I knew my interests centered closer to home.

At the age of 29, with more energy than sense, my partners and I started Performance Contractors, Inc. From three employees, the company has now grown to over 4,000 involved in construction, maintenance, and pipe fabrication serving the refinery, petrochemical, chemical, and power industries. Much of our success is directly related to the quality of education received here at LSU, as over 35 of our top managers are LSU graduates, most from the Construction Management Department of the College of Engineering. The discipline and technical background taught within the College, combined with the development of people skills and sound management techniques, uniquely qualifies these graduates to be successful upon entering the profession.

Throughout my career there have been many advances in our industry that have made the engineering and construction profession a safer, more productive and highly technical field. Our industry designs and builds the economic engine that drives this great nation and the global economy. Future successes will be a product of today's students. We should all take the time to give something back to the next generation. Each one of us must get involved in the educational process. Encourage young people to consider our profession as a rewarding career opportunity. The quality of life for our children and grandchildren depends on our success in bringing top quality students into the engineering and construction professions.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the College of Engineering as the first Construction Department graduate to receive this prestigious honor. Being a member of the first graduating class, I know there will be many deserving candidates to follow in years to come, as the professionalism of

our industry continues to excel. Our career paths are a journey through life inspired by the principles and knowledge instilled upon us during our collegiate years. "Forever LSU!"