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CALIFORNIA CONSTRUCTOR

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Foundation Constructors Turns 50 With Eye on the Future

By Carol Eaton

Half a century ago, in 1971, Fred Cavin and his partners Ray Rose, Joe Hilton and Barney Murdock established Foundation Constructors, Inc. with the mission to provide safe, cost-effective and innovative foundations for the construction industry. Their vision and hard work enabled the company to grow from its early days that began with a single 30-ton truck crane into a modern, dynamic and industry leading pile driving company that performs work on projects throughout California.

Since its founding, Foundation Constructors has built a strong portfolio of projects that have helped lay the foundation—quite literally—for critical development and infrastructure growth in the Golden State. *Engineering News-Record* ranked the company #344 in its 2020 Top 600 Specialty Contractors list, up from its ranking of #409 the year prior.

Strength Through Growth

Foundation Constructors maintains its corporate offices in Oakley, CA. It acquired H.F. Lauritzen Construction in 1976 and in 1978 established a wholly owned subsidiary, Foundation Pile Inc., to better service the Southern California market with offices in Fontana and San Diego. In 2006 it entered the drilled foundation market by purchasing the assets of American Pile Driving. This brought with it a variety of patented and proprietary drilled foundation projects along with a new level of engineering expertise.

Foundation Constructors and Foundation Pile collectively own and maintain a fleet of about 40 pieces of heavy equipment, including multiple cranes and drill rigs. The company specializes in multiple types of deep foundation piling for the commercial, infrastructure, industrial, and energy industries, as well as a long list of other agencies and institutions.

Among its larger projects are recent work at San Francisco International Airport as well as the iconic Mission Rock development in San Francisco, where it is currently completing the third of four buildings. It helped build the iconic Century Freeway project near Los Angeles and the Victoria Canal Intake and Pump Station, which helped modernize the water delivery system for the Contra Costa Water District. In the San Diego region, it is currently focusing on the planned expansion of San Diego International Airport among other current or planned jobs.

Dermot Fallon

Change in Top Leadership

With a core workforce that currently totals around 100 employees, expandable to meet project needs, Foundation Constructors maintains an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) that has contributed to the retention of key employees over the years.

Recently, the company announced changes to its leadership that will position it for continued growth well into its next half century in business. Dermot Fallon was elevated to President and CEO in August 2021 after 21 years in a variety of roles at the company. He replaces Derek Haleky, who is retiring in January 2022 after seven years at the helm. Joining Fallon in the top leadership ranks are John Honaker, Vice President of Operations, Osama Martell, Vice President of Estimating and Project Management, and Brook Serafino, Controller.

"It is an incredible honor for me to lead and serve this great company. I am committed to continuing the values of Fred Cavin and the original founders of the company of safety, respect, integrity and teamwork," Fallon commented.

California Constructor asked Fallon for his insights as company President and CEO on what sets Foundation

Constructors apart, the company's outlook for the next 50 years, and how its employees contribute to the culture of success.

California Constructor: What do you view as the biggest factor or key drivers behind the company's success and growth over the past 50 years?

Dermot Fallon: Foundation's employees have always held a "pioneering spirit." Challenges are embraced – if there is a way, Foundation will find it and we will not give up until the project is completed and commitments made are completed. Our customer relationships are paramount. We value our personal and professional relationships and treat every client with respect, honesty, and integrity.

California Constructor: What is your competitive advantage – what makes Foundation Constructors stand out from the competition?

Dermot Fallon: We are not the biggest company, nor the most expansive in product and services; we do believe however that we have the best history of creating meaningful value for our clients and the experience that they receive from Foundation on their completed project is second to none. We are, and will continue to be, their contractor of choice.

California Constructor: How would you describe your company culture, and how does this contribute to your growth/success?

Dermot Fallon: All of our employees have a high regard of respect for each other, and their individual abilities, and they work very collaboratively together. This characteristic carries over into our working relationship with our clients and suppliers as well. We believe that many of our clients go out of their way to ensure that we are on their project. They have the history, knowledge, and confidence that their project will be completed as expected and the entire "experience" of working with our team will have contributed to the joy and satisfaction of a job well done.

California Constructor: What is your outlook for the future, and how are you positioning Foundation Constructors to continue to grow and succeed in the California construction market in the next five, 10 and even 50 years?

Dermot Fallon: As a California-based contractor, performing nearly 100% or our historical work within the state, yes, we are bullish on the prospects of the California market but we are further diversifying products and services in an effort to reduce risk and concentration in specific market areas. Example of this include: engaging in design-build work, developing internal engineering and design capabilities, the addition of helical and micro piles, marine based work, related concrete and form work, and most recently by opening a new office in San Diego to be more closely aligned in that growing market. ■

AGC of CA Upcoming Events

November 9-12
AGC of California Construct Annual Conference 2021 presented by Procore in Indian Wells

November 11
Construction Safety Excellence Awards in Indian Wells

December 2
Bay Area Region Holiday Bocce Tournament and Toy Drive at Campo Di Bocce in Fremont.

December 3
Riverside-San Bernardino District Holiday Dinner

December 10
Delta-Sierra District Holiday Scholarship Luncheon

December 10
SoCal Holiday Luncheon