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**SPECIAL SECTION**  
**MILESTONES**  
TURN TO PAGES 14-63  
CELEBRATING 15- TO 100-YEAR  
ANNIVERSARIES

## Keeping Control

"We have a nucleus of people that are very good at what they do," Prismatic's CEO declares.

PRISMATIC DEVELOPMENT CORP. PAGE 14

## Evolving with Time

For 50 years, William A. Randolph Inc. has known what it takes to get the job done right.

WILLIAM A. RANDOLPH INC. PAGE 21

# Team Panattoni

Panattoni Construction's executive team explains how to please repeat clients in the commercial, industrial and office sectors.

PANATTONI CONSTRUCTION INC. PAGE 64

50  
YEARS

WILLIAM A. RANDOLPH INC. | by Katherine Jones

# Evolving With Time

William A. Randolph Inc. is commemorating 50 years in the business with quality projects, dedicated employees and a commitment to excellence, the Gurnee, Ill.-based contractor says.

**W**illiam A. Randolph Inc. knows it takes a lot more than hard work and hard hats to get the job right. "It takes a high level of expertise and commitment, a spirit of integrity and an attitude that's solution-oriented in every way," the company explains. "Our portfolio of satisfied clients spans a wide range of successful projects – everything from commercial buildings to bridges, parking structures to power plants, and schools to water treatment plants."

Its commitment to excellence, as well as its diversity, has enabled the Gurnee, Ill.-based contractor to thrive in the industry for five decades. "We are proud of the 50 years of service we've provided to the industry," says Eric Handley, vice president of commercial construction. "We're still serving a lot of our long-term customers and we want to continue doing so going forward."

"We want to remain responsive to our customers, so we are constantly asking them what we can do better," he adds. "We use technology as much as possible to stay ahead of the game, including computers and Internet-based management applications on the job site. This has been one of the biggest things our customers demand – easier and better communication for them.

Regardless of what it is, we respond to their needs."

## COMPANY EVOLUTION

Founded in 1958 by William A. Randolph, the firm has "evolved with the times," accord-



William A. Randolph recently completed a 146-room Holiday Inn at Chicago's Midway Hotel Center (below).

### William A. Randolph Inc.

[www.warandolph.com](http://www.warandolph.com)

2007 revenues: \$200 million

HQ: Gurnee, Ill.

Employees: 85

Services: General contracting, construction management and design/build

Eric Handley: "We are constantly asking [customers] what we can do better."



50  
YEARS

WILLIAM A. RANDOLPH INC.



William A. Randolph has worked on several LEED-certified projects for Kohl's.

ing to the company. From the late 1960s through the early 1990s, it was primarily focused on the construction of infrastructure throughout Illinois. This included constructing potable water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, water reservoirs, pumping stations, nuclear and fossil fuel electric generating stations and bridges.

Then, "as infrastructure was coming to a standstill, the company focused its attention to building construction," it says. "Beginning in the early 1990s, we built everything from hotels, hospitals, parking decks, schools, office buildings, prisons, restaurants and retail centers."

#### ACCELERATED GROWTH

William A. Randolph Inc. has grown substantially, doubling its construction volume in the past two years alone. In addition, it has increased its staff, both in the field, as well as its executive management. And it has expanded geographically, serv-

ing clients throughout the Midwest. In fact, the firm is considering establishing a second location, possibly in southern Wisconsin, Handley says.

He credits the company's rapid growth to its clients' good fortune, particularly in the hospitality and retail markets.

"Because our customer base was growing rapidly, they were increasing the number of stores and hotels they were building, and we had good timing to be a part of it and grow with them," he explains. "We've been growing with our clients in the past two years."

#### MAINTAINING SCHEDULES

Handley also praises the firm's subcontractor base for helping it "get the work

#### T.N.T. CONSTRUCTION CO.

T.N.T. Construction Co. and William A. Randolph Inc. have been working as a team since 2004. The two companies have collaborated on retail projects including Kohl department stores, Walgreens pharmacies and Wal-Mart stores, as well as the construction of The Shoppes at Fox River retail center. These projects have primarily been located in the Chicago area. William A. Randolph is a fair, competitive general contractor interested in providing a quality project at a competitive price in a timely manner. T.N.T. Construction is proud to be a part of William A. Randolph's success.

## Randolph's Three Key Advantages

"At Wm. A. Randolph, we are committed to providing customers with the kind of engineering and construction expertise they need to get their project successfully off the ground, and the personal, one-on-one service to manage it every step of the way," the company says. "Our philosophy is simple — we are not satisfied until our customer is, and we offer three advantages to make that happen."

These advantages are:

- **A firm foundation** — William A. Randolph's experience spans five decades and the experience of its people is even longer, it notes. As a result, the company has become known for its "solid corps of highly trained engineers." Its ability to assemble the right team of professionals, including top field supervisors and subcontracting specialists, enables it to meet critical deadlines and make last-minute changes.
- **Constructive problem solving** — Before Wm. A. Randolph starts talking with customers about how it can help them on a project, it listens to customers' needs, concerns, questions and challenges. The company believes that by getting to know the owners and their companies better, it can anticipate potential problems and develop a customized course of action. Acknowledging that even the best-laid plans can change, its flexibility and responsiveness are key to keeping a project on track, it says. Wm. A. Randolph promises to work side-by-side with its clients from start to finish so that there are no surprises and no details overlooked.
- **Ground-breaking results** — Wm. A. Randolph says its goal reaches beyond completing its projects on time and within budget — it expects its final products to reflect "craftsmanship of the highest quality." The company believes its craftsmanship sets it apart and shows a commitment to excellence in every phase of development including contracting, building and managing.

done on time and within budget. Without them, we would have a very difficult time doing the business that we do with the clients that we have. They are very demanding clients with very tight schedules, so we need a good group of subcontractors to be responsive to their needs.

"Being on schedule is crucial," he stresses, "because the overall timeframes are

# 50 YEARS

## WILLIAM A. RANDOLPH INC.

being cut back. The approval process is taking longer, so the construction process has to be shortened for the project to remain on schedule. We offer preconstruction services to cut time off the front end

of the schedule to assist in getting the facility open when our clients need them.

"We are always looking for better scheduling techniques to improve on our delivery," he adds.

### BATTLING THE ECONOMY

Due to the economic pinch, "We've seen the hospitality side [of our business] decrease in volume," Handley acknowledges. "Hospitality had been booming in the last three years, and it seems to be the first to drop off rapidly, and retail is right behind it."

However, William A. Randolph's diversified market segments will enable it to endure. "Our background is still very diverse," he says. "This helps us, because when the market changes, we can shift our resources to where they are needed. It keeps our volume steady and keeps our customers happy. Our diversity is our biggest advantage, but our size ensures our customers will get the personal attention they need."

"There is still a lot of work out there, and we are bidding and becoming involved in a lot of municipal projects such as schools, libraries, parking structures and infrastructure projects," Handley notes. "But the competition on those projects is getting fierce due to the lack of work elsewhere. Thankfully, several of our key retail customers – Walmart, Kohl's and CVS, to name a few – are continuing to build, although at a scaled-back pace. We are doing quite a few projects for them at this time."

### GREEN BIG-BOX STORES

In September, William A. Randolph began construction on an \$8 million Jewell Osco Grocery Store in Chicago's Marshfield Plaza that will be LEED silver certified. Green building "is something that we're getting very involved in," Handley says, adding that the company has set a goal to ensure its entire project management staff becomes LEED accredited professionals by the end of 2009.

Working on a seven-month schedule, the contractor is contributing to the 60,000-square-foot project's certification by purchasing materials from regional vendors, recycling its construction debris and "making sure that the specifications are followed very closely so that in the end,

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William A. Randolph  
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50  
YEARS

## WILLIAM A. RANDOLPH INC.

when the audit is completed, all the points are achieved," Handley maintains. "For now, it's just getting started. We're a couple of months into the project and everything has been flowing really smoothly so far."

Kohl's is another William A. Randolph client that is having its buildings LEED-certified, he notes. "Last year, we completed one new store in Romeoville, Ill., and two remodel projects in the Chicago area," Handley says.

"The 2009 construction program has not been finalized yet, but we do know that we will commence construction on remodel projects in Crystal Lake and Elmhurst, Ill., in January."

#### TWO HOTEL PROJECTS

William A. Randolph is approximately 80 percent complete on a \$30 million flagship project for La Quinta Inns & Suites in downtown Chicago. The nine-story, 140,000-square-foot project will include two new towers, as well as renovations to an existing tower. "Because this is La Quinta's first downtown Chicago project, the interior design and overall theme of the hotel has been designed for more of an urban market vs. their typical prototype," Handley says. The project is due to open in April 2009.

The company recently completed a \$26 million hospitality project for developer The Weglarz Co. in Chicago's Midway Hotel Center.

"The Midway Hotel Center now has nine hotels, including the two new hotels just completed; one was a 132-room Marriott Residence Inn, and the other was a 146-room Holiday Inn," Handley says. "Both of them were five stories and around 90,000 square feet each. They opened in October 2008 after a 12-month duration." Both hotels will be operated by White Lodging Services.

#### JOFFCO PLAZA

In October, William A. Randolph completed work on the \$25 million Joffco Plaza in downtown Chicago.

The 250,000-square-foot project, which



In October, William A. Randolph completed work on the \$25 million Joffco Plaza in downtown Chicago.

began in summer of 2007, features two levels of retail – a Best Buy and a Bed Bath & Beyond – under three stories of elevated parking.

Handley says it's becoming more common in urban locations for parking structures to be constructed above retail spaces "because it's more accessible in that people can walk in from the street level, and those driving can park undercover and take an elevator down. It's convenient in a congested, urban site and it's less expensive than building underground parking."

#### ETHICAL AND SAFE

Constructing structures in tight urban sites is one challenge that William A. Randolph continually faces, Handley notes. Another is stormwater pollution prevention. "This has been the topic of the year on any large construction site," he says, adding that much of the firm's management has undergone educational classes teaching stormwater pollution

prevention measures. As a result, "We have seen a benefit on our job sites across the board – everyone wants controlled construction sites that don't do damage to the environment," he says. "Now we know what to do when certain situations arise."

#### LOOKING FORWARD

The company intends to continue its focus on quality projects and excellent service by maintaining a talented staff.

"Having people with the same ideals is very important to us," Handley says.

"That helps us build a good team and keep everyone on board with what we're doing," he continues. "Our company is small enough to have a personal touch."

"We have a family atmosphere where the owner, Tony Riccardi, is here every day and available to anyone.

"Performance and hard work are recognized. It's a very open atmosphere, which contributes to our success." ■