ADDING COMMUNITY VALUE THROUGH EXTERIOR BUILDING RESTORATION

by Katie Gutierrez

GABRIEL CASTILLO, ESTIMATOR FOR Alexandria, Virginia-based Pillar Construction, could teach a master’s course in customer service. After all, he regularly leads a team to replace the outer skin of high-rise buildings—when all occupants remain inside.

“Restoration projects involve more customer service and attention to detail,” Castillo explains. “We understand that people are living there and expect quiet times in the mornings and clean [work sites] at the end of the day. Our Estimators, Project Managers and Field Personnel all have part in providing excellent customer service.”

According to Castillo, achieving the right combination of efficacy and consideration has been a product of time. Founded in 1995 as a specialty subcontractor with no more than 12 employees, Pillar now has offices in Virginia, Texas, and Washington DC, New England and Florida, and an employee count topping 200. Additionally, the company has evolved to a full-service construction company, offering preconstruction services and
consulting services for the restoration of buildings, waterproofing, light gauge framing, and drywall and stucco application. Castillo attributes their continuing growth to the hard work and passion their employees exhibit each day.

"We have created a great team of architects, engineers, and construction professionals that enables us to manage several jobs concurrently in different areas," says Castillo. "Our success is basically because we're not just expanding. We're achieving a controlled growth. We know where we want to be and where we're successful, and can provide 100 percent assurance to our clients that we're experts in what we do."

Indeed, Pillar Construction's hundreds of projects, divided between high-rise apartment buildings and hotels, medical buildings, offices, retail, houses of worship, schools, and more, reflect the company's unique expertise. Castillo takes particular pride in the $3 million restoration of the Vista Grande in Virginia. The 30-story building was 20 years old and, due to its aging exterior skin, leaked water through doors and windows, and contained mold that upset tenants. Additionally, neighbors frequently objected to the building's old and unsightly paint colors.

"Based on the recommendations of several inspectors and consultants," Castillo says, "we tore off the skin of the building, put new exterior sheeting, and waterproofed the entire structure. Pillar assisted the HOA in selecting the new color and look of the building. We took advantage of STO Studio, a service that is offered to architects and owners to visualize the color scheme of the property." This computerized rendering helps compare color options based on photography or computer-generated 3-D models.

The process lasted an average of six months, during which 100 percent of the tenants still occupied the building. In the end, Castillo says, Pillar Construction added value to an entire neighborhood, and the building's reviews have been extremely positive.

Another notable project Pillar undertook was the restoration of the Sheraton Hotel in South Padre Island, Texas. The Pillar Construction Texas team removed the exterior sheeting, installed waterproofing, and enhanced the hurricane resistance system—just in time for hurricane season. Additionally, the company has worked on two extensions of large hospitals in Florida. Working on medical facilities requires extra care with the disposal of trash and debris. Castillo's team meets the scaffolding, covers work areas, and uses vacuums to minimize the impact to the environment.

"Every job is different, even if we're doing the same thing," says Castillo.

"We can train [new employees] on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you're smart and passionate and know what you're doing, you're at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it's not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar's success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY. — Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train (new employees) on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you're smart and passionate and know what you're doing, you're at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it's not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar's success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY. — Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train (new employees) on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you're smart and passionate and know what you're doing, you're at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it's not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar's success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.
consulting services for skin restoration of buildings, waterproofing, light gape framing, and drywall and stucco application. Castillo attributes their continuing growth to the hard work and passion their employees exhibit each day.

"We have created a great team of architects, engineers, and construction professionals that enables us to manage several jobs concurrently in different areas," says Castillo. "Our success is basically because we’re not just expanding. We’re achieving a controlled growth. We know where we want to be and where we’re successful, and we provide 100 percent assurance to our clients that we’re experts in what we do."

Indeed, Pillar Construction’s hundreds of projects, divided between high-rise apartment buildings and hotels, medical buildings, offices, retail, houses of worship, schools, and more, reflect the company’s unique expertise. Castillo takes particular pride in the $12 million restoration of Bella Vista Condos in Arlington, Virginia. The 30-story building was 20 years old and, due to its aging exterior skin, leaked water through doors and windows, and contained mold that upset tenants. Additionally, neighbors frequently objected to the building’s old and unappealing paint colors.

"Based on the recommendations of several inspectors and consultants," Castillo says, "we tore off the skin of the building, put new exterior sheeting, and waterproofed the entire structure. Pillar assisted the HOA in selecting the new color and look of the building. We took advantage of STO Studio, a service that is offered to architects and owners to visualize the color scheme of the property." This computerized rendering helps compare color options based on photography or computer generated 3-D models.

The process lasted an average of six months, during which 100 percent of the tenants still occupied the building. In the end, Castillo says, Pillar Construction added value to an entire neighborhood, and the building’s reviews have been exceptionally positive.

Another notable project Pillar undertook was the restoration of a Sheraton Hotel in South Padre Island, Texas. The Pillar Construction Texas team removed the exterior sheeting.

Photography by computer generated 3-D models.

"Weather, access, coworkers, subcontractors, and general contractors are all variables. In Boston for example, the temperatures are in the ‘40s six months of the year, whereas Texas and Florida are the exact opposite."

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

"But we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.

"WE CAN TRAIN [NEW EMPLOYEES] ON THE THINGS WE KNOW, BUT WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM TO HAVE PASSION FOR WHAT THEY DO, OR RESPONSIBILITY, OR HONESTY."

Gabriel Castillo, Estimator

Castillo admits that it takes a particular kind of person to excel at Pillar Construction.

"We can train new employees on the things we know, but we cannot train them to have passion for what they do, or responsibility, or honesty," he says. "If you’re smart and passionate and know what you’re doing, you’re at home here. Our turnover is almost zero percent; it’s not a revolving door."

Training and supervision, Castillo adds, are crucial to Pillar’s success. Most field workers average 15 years of experience, and all are OSHA-trained, certified.
this is a major indication that the company’s business strategy is working.

“Our focus right now is basically on the restoration of high-rise buildings and the high-rise commercial residential market,” he says. “We have also seen the need for a one-stop shop for contractors working on the sides of buildings.

That’s the niche we’re pursuing, while maintaining our standards of quality.”

Surety Bonding
We Live and Breathe It.

We know it’s tough out there. Competition is keen as are the challenges involved with bonding a project. Time and time again, The Barbour Group has come through for its customers. It takes a special kind of team to pursue the challenges of Surety Bonding. You must be trusted, flexible, and aggressive to get the bond through the process and approved.

As your strategic advocate, we stand by our work. The fact of the matter is, our customers trust us because we are confident we can make your construction company a success.

Karen Barbour, President of The Barbour Group

1.866.876.9160

www.thebarbourgroup.com

Dryvit Systems, Inc. Congratulates

Pillar Construction
For Excellence and Quality in EIFS Construction

www.dryvit.com

The Barbour Group
TRUSTED • FLEXIBLE • AGGRESSIVE

BEYOND BRICKS AND MORTAR
by Gina L. DiGioia

Not many affordable housing developments are built for high-end luxury communities, but this is common for Eden Housing’s developments. Celebrating its 40th year of operation, Eden Housing is a nonprofit organization that develops and manages affordable housing communities for low- and moderate-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

Although the company’s annual revenue stands at approximately $37 million, it is more accurate to describe Eden Housing as a labor of love than as a business venture. The company was begun in 1968 by a group of six volunteers passionate about providing fair housing in California. The group initially came together in support of a fair housing bill initiative, and when the initiative failed, the group decided to tackle the issue on its own. Initial efforts met with success, and thus was born Eden Housing.

According to Eden’s executive director, Linda Medelius, approximately half of Eden’s work is senior housing and half is family units. The company also does a small number