

## From Pete's Desk

Despite the pandemic, we start the New Year with everyone busy and fully challenged, a good backlog, and plenty of work to start to keep us that way for the rest of the year. Don't get me wrong. There is plenty of uncertainty out there, with price increases, labor shortages, an uncertain lending environment and increased health risks. And we are going to have to work hard to continue to earn our clients' business and make their projects work for them. But we can feel good about where we are after the roller coaster that was 2020. We begin 2021 not with "good riddance" to 2020, as many do, but almost with a thank you for testing us, making us better, and helping prove to ourselves that we can handle what comes at us. It is never easy in this business, but an organizational resilience and determination was evident in our people that will take us into the future, helping our clients and associates succeed. Thanks to all our associate partners for all that you did last year, and to our clients for your trust and confidence.

This is a time of very important "heavy lifting" in the company. Our accounting department is in the middle of doing its usual terrific job of closing out 2020, and opening up 2021. We have many administrative chores in addition to our usual work, like completing the all important performance evaluations and setting performance goals for 2021. And we are engaging on our 2021 strategic plan to get us off on the right foot. All the while fighting the weather up north. And it is all going fine. Manpower on jobs has recovered after the holidays to needed levels and we are on track with our administrative tasks. We are busy trying to complete two very large, complex projects in the next 45 days, and start two others.

Please join me in congratulating Dave Kelbley, who after one and a half years of studying on his own passed the CCIFP (Certified Construction Industry Financial Professional) test to become one of only two in northwest Ohio, 50 in the state and 1200 in the country! Also, join me in welcoming Andrew Best and Matt Upton to our LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Accelerated Development) program, Kaleb Velker as a new Project Coordinator in Ohio after multiple coops, Anette Plunkett as executive assistant in Toledo, and Drew Schelberger as a summer coop, also in Ohio. And congratulating Josie Ludwig as this month's core values winner.

*By Pete Douglas*



*welcome*

Anette Plunkett  
Executive Assistant

## Notes from Orlando

Happy New Year! 2021 is off to a roaring start. In preconstruction, we are currently firm pricing not one but two projects, both with high probabilities of starting the first half of the year. One is the Blue Heron addition for a repeat client and the other is a tax credit multi-family project located in Lakeland, FL for a new client. There are many economic unknowns for 2021 but our pipeline is strong and our sales and estimating department is focused on keeping prospective projects moving through the preconstruction process. Material pricing and availability appear to remain a challenge in 2021, possibly worse than 2020, but we're staying close to the markets so we can properly advise our clients of the potential risks and opportunities.

One of the primary focuses this year will be professional development and training of our associates with the goal of advancing people into the positions and responsibilities they seek. There is an abundance of opportunity in the Florida office so I'd like everybody to remain focused on their professional development throughout the year, which I know can become secondary to the tasks of the day, but it is important to the future growth of the our business.

January is one of the most important months of the year as it's the first month of achieving our end of year goals. As I have stated in a past article, good days make good weeks, good weeks make good months, and good months make for a great year! I look forward to working towards our short and long term goals with each and every one of you!

*By Jeremy Bartolovitch*



Kaleb Velker joined The Douglas Company in 2018 as a co-op and, after completing three full-terms, has now joined our team full-time as a Project Coordinator.

## Our Brand Promise

Boy, does “Best Price Solution” have new meaning after the last year! Our Brand Promise of providing the “Best Price Solution” is one with many layers. While price is a relatively linear thing - It’s either low or high, preferably the former - the way we control it is anything but that. Our clients are counting on us to control costs from conception to completion, which means always getting things to the lowest possible cost we can. That doesn’t mean that we only have one path of getting there. It’s easy to take this element of our brand promise to mean “Hire the low bidder,” or “Beat up the price.” While those things are necessary as part of this, they are services any contractor can and will provide. We have more than just a hammer in our tool belt here!

You may not realize it, but working at The Douglas Company is giving you expertise in the types of construction we do. That means we have a way of looking at things that others may not consider, and we take our client service to the exceptional level when we help our clients by taking advantage of our experience to solve complex pricing problems. So when a situation arises that requires pricing, be it the first estimate or last change request, consider some of these questions:

- Is what’s being proposed the right decision for the owner’s goals?
- Can we accomplish the owner’s goals with a different design or approach?
- Is it consistent with other designs we’ve seen? Or can we bring in alternate designs we know of to help?
- Is the manner in which something is constructed or detailed the best way to build it?
- Are there alternate materials or suppliers that we should be considering?
- Is there a better time to do the work or project that’s being proposed?
- Are we using the right trades for the work? Or can something be fabricated offsite?
- Can one of our subcontractor partners come up with a better way?
- If it’s a site issue - Can we use Design Services Company to have a second look?
- Will the owner ultimately benefit from the change in some way? If not, should the change even be made?

Just keep in mind when considering this element of our brand promise that there are many different ways to look at things, and we should be doing our best to get creative and thorough with the solutions we provide.

*By Bruce Douglas*

## Core Purpose

To contribute to the success of our Clients and Associates

## Core Values

- Great client relationships with high customer loyalty
- Integrity and professionalism in all we do
- Keeping our commitments through proactive attention to detail and execution
- Growth of our Associates and Business through learning, teamwork, and leadership

I nominate Josie Ludwig for the Core Value Award of “Growth of our associates and business through learning, teamwork, and leadership”. Josie, earlier in the year resumed responsibilities that had been passed on several years ago, since April has assisted with the ESPO process, currently is closing out the year, alongside her normal everyday workload. On top of all of her responsibilities, Josie has always been right there when a fellow coworker needed her assistance for them to continue to work productively. Anytime a fellow coworker found themselves in a rut and needed assistance, even if she didn’t know how to fix it, she would gladly jump in to help navigate through the issues, staying by your side to work through it with you, even though she had a plate of her own overflowing. She has taught me the true meaning of teamwork and leadership, without hesitation. Thank you for all you do for ALL of us.

*By Kim Heath*



# February

## Happy Work Anniversary!!

Brandon Tafelski - 1 Year  
Nikki Lopez - 5 Years  
Bob Ritter - 6 Years  
Micah Hoskinson - 7 Years

## Happy Birthday!!

Drew Schelberger (Co-op)- February 3  
Chris Vasel - February 7  
Dave Kelbley - February 22  
Alex Koch - February 25  
Brandon Tafelski - February 27