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FASTEST GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES

Unique projects build Bleeker & Vigesaa's success

BY QUIBIAN SALAZAR-MORENO
SPECIAL TO THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Bleeker & Vigesaa Inc. attributes its fast growth and success in its three and a half years to building lasting relationships.

"Relationships are really important, not just with subcontractors but with the owners, the clients, with the permit people and the various jurisdictions that we work in," said Cindy Vigesaa, business development director at Bleeker & Vigesaa, and the wife of founder James Vigesaa. "We also provide very professional scheduling and professional management. I think that's the reason why we're so successful."

Four years ago, James Vigesaa thought it was time to launch his own company. For most of his life, from his summers in high school to college to a full-time job, he'd worked in the construction industry.

He partnered with Cory Bleeker, who had been running a small construction company, to open Bleeker & Vigesaa. With Bleeker's in-the-field experience and James' project management, estimation and business development experience, it proved to be a winning combination. They concentrated on commercial construction.

One of their first clients was Ted's Montana Grill, the restaurant chain launched by cable mogul Ted Turner and restaurateur George McKerrow Jr. They've built most of the Ted's restaurants in the Denver area, plus one in Illinois.

According to Cindy Vigesaa, "James and Cory kind of got lucky and got in the door the first time, and now they're working on their sixth restaurant for them." And it led to more business.

"We get a lot of referrals from clients," Cindy Vigesaa said. "One developer we work a lot with is Coughlin & Company, and they referred a lot of people to us."

"We get referred by architects; we might get a different client, but the [same] architect we've worked with before. The reason we get those referrals is



Bleeker & Vigesaa Inc.
Officers: Cory Bleeker, James Vigesaa
Location: Brighton
Industry: Construction
Web site: www.bleekervigesaa.com
Phone: 303-637-0981
No. of employees: 12
Revenue growth: From \$1 million to \$5 million; 400 percent

They also rebuilt and expanded the front-desk area and renovated the locker-room showers.

Now they're involved in another interesting project.

"It's not our biggest numbers wise, but maybe our most interesting project right now is we're building the Octopus Racing Slide for Hylands Recreation District at Water World," Cindy Vigesaa said. "We're actually building the foundation, the ramps, the walkways, the refreshment building. The slide itself is actually fiberglass and made in Canada, then shipped here and put together on-site and installed on our foundation. It's going to be the one of the biggest water slides in the United States."

The company started out small, working on projects worth about \$50,000. But now, Bleeker & Vigesaa handles projects worth several hundred thousand dollars up to \$1 million.

because we perform, we meet the schedule, we meet the budget, and also because Cory and James in their previous lives, they worked for big construction companies. They did big projects that were like \$5-\$15 million, and they bring the skills that they learned working in those big projects and apply them to these small projects."

Bleeker & Vigesaa's reputation was enhanced after completion of the Brighton Recreation Center expansion project. They renovated the recreation center, expanded the child care area and added two multi-use rooms.



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James Vigesaa and Cory Bleeker at Water World near the new ride they are constructing.

It's just hired a new project manager to handle the growth. Cindy Vigesaa said they also may launch consulting services for new franchises.

"We actually see a big need for franchise construction," so they need a lot of help getting it up and getting it done she said. "People that are buying franchises, they buy a system to start a Subway sandwich shop or a spa or whatever. But what they need a lot of help as far as construction.

"They may be given a prototype to build by the franchisor, but they don't have any experience with construction, so they need a lot of help getting it up and getting it done quickly. Ultimately, they want to get their business open and start making some money, and we can help."

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