

ENR

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THE TOP 25 NEWSMAKERS

Many people serve to improve the construction industry every day. Each year since 1964, the editors of Engineering News-Record have reviewed the stories that appeared during the year and selected individuals for special recognition. The ENR Newsmakers are chosen for their innovations and achievements, for giving back to the industry and the public, and for going beyond their day-to-day jobs. These stories were covered in the print and web pages of ENR's national and regional editions and on ENR.com. All the winners will be honored at a gala in New York City on April 18. One ENR Newsmaker already has been chosen to win our highest honor, the Award of Excellence, and will be the subject of a cover story in the April 22 issue. In the pages that follow, we salute this year's ENR Newsmakers.

PROTECTING WORKERS BY ACHIEVING BUY-IN ON SAFETY



CHARLES A. BACON III
Pittsburgh
ENR 10/15/12 p.52

His innovative safety program cut claims dramatically but also makes sure his workers return safely to their families at the end of their shifts.

Charlie Bacon knows about workplace hazards. His grandfather lost eight fingers to metal shears on his first day on a new job. His father saw a coworker die after falling into a batch plant. Charlie himself saw a coworker crushed by a falling elevator counterweight on a high-rise project.

But after hiring Indianapolis-based safety consultant JMJ Associates, he recognized that accidents were not inevitable if the entire team adopts the concept of zero incidents and injuries. He took this concept to Pittsburgh-based mechanical contractor Limbach Facility Services when he was named CEO in 2004.

Bacon notes, "We can't babysit every worker all the time. You have to make the workers understand that you want them

to stay safe and return home to their families at the end of their shift."

To achieve this, Bacon has used some unusual methods. Once, to underline the idea that managers are responsible for worker safety, the managers' spouses were invited to safety training. Now, workers write letters to their families to say goodbye in case they are killed on the job. "It is amazing to see macho guys break down in tears over the letter. This makes it clear to them that their safety affects their loved ones, too," he says.

Bacon also requires an analysis of every incident and near-miss. These reports are circulated throughout the company for review. "The lawyers warned these reports would be subject to discovery in case

of a lawsuit, but the lessons learned help us improve working conditions," he says.

The program is working: Injury claims are down substantially over the past eight years. Also, Limbach was named the 2012 Grand Champion in Workers' Comp Risk Management by National Underwriters' Property & Casualty magazine.

Bacon's crusade has spread beyond Limbach. He is a founding member of the Incident and Injury-Free CEO's Forum, where CEOs of contractors such as Skanska USA, Gilbane and Jacobs discuss safety issues. "I have learned a lot from my fellow CEOs. I just hope more people join the crusade to ensure their people come home safely every night," he says. ■

By Gary J. Tulacz

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*Editor's Note: Correction - JMJ Associates is a global management consultancy specializing in workplace safety. JMJ is headquartered in Austin, Texas.