



COMMITMENT TO OPPORTUNITY

For nearly 100 years, English Construction has been a unique organization, led by devout Christians and effective leaders who strongly believe in sharing opportunities with others.

At English, opportunity never ceases. It's part of our culture. We understand that success in construction is built on relationships. We treat people as we want to be treated.

The relationships form a circle that grows wider today and strengthens partnerships that create opportunities for employees and subcontractors to grow and advance.

Hiring and promoting employees and assisting subcontractors are part of the culture at English. Race, color or creed is not a factor. When we identify employees and subcontractors who prove themselves and demonstrate a desire to reach their potential, we want to nurture and help them.

For many years we have been committed to developing opportunities for minorities to advance in our organization. Some we have helped become qualified subcontractors. Today, approximately 40 percent of our employees are classified as minorities – women, African Americans, Mexicans and Native Americans. Their advancement is reflected in the growth of our “on the job” training program.

English was the first and only contractor that volunteered to partner with the Virginia Department of Transportation in its Mentor-Protégé program for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). English has worked alongside the management of the Department of Transportation to maintain the program even though it has floundered.

English's retired Director of Human Resources, Max Guggenheimer, Jr., was the natural choice to lead the company's Mentor-Protégé program. A graduate of VMI who served in Vietnam, Guggenheimer believes that all people should have equal opportunity.

At English, Guggenheimer became an outspoken advocate for employees and their opportunities to advance in the company. He was adept at recognizing skills and knowledge in employees and creating opportunities for them.

One example of the many English employees that Guggenheimer nurtured is Jose Rico. He joined our company as a laborer on a highway contract in 1985 in Durham, NC. Today, Rico is one of our most valued superintendents.

In 1982, Guggenheimer became a consultant for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program for the North Carolina Department of Transportation. In 1989, he was named co-chairman of the Commissioner's DBE Advisory Committee of the Virginia Department of Transportation. He has served as Chairman of the Governor's Virginia Council on Human Rights and as a member of the Governor's Task Force on Workforce Development in the Construction Industry.

When he retired from English in 2003, Guggenheimer was succeeded by Kathy Dowdy, one of the few females to hold an executive position at a large construction company. Ms. Dowdy began working full-time for a contractor in Lynchburg at the age of 21 while attending community college. She resumed her education while working for the Virginia Department of Transportation. Ms. Dowdy transferred to Randolph-Macon Womens' College, taking advantage of an opportunity to work part-time at English. After earning her degree, she began working full-time at English, ending a remarkable 24-year span of working, studying and rearing a child.

The story of commitment by a company committed to helping others is growing stronger as it reaches a century of service.