

WALL TO WALL EXCELLENCE

Glaser Construction LLC earns reputation for quality stucco installations

by C. Grant Jackson

More than 30 years of experience in installing synthetic stucco in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and a passion for quality and excellence have made *Glaser Construction LLC* (Glaser) highly sought after.

Because of its reputation, the company negotiates about 80% of its work, rather than bidding for jobs, says Chris Glaser, President and Co-Owner of Glaser. "That enables us to personally focus on every project—from the wall design to the sealant application—and ensure that it's beautiful and will last," he says.

"What has always made my business different from anybody else is my personal passion for the field. The field is where the stuff gets constructed, and that's where most work goes to hell," Chris says. "We visit pretty much every job site three or four times a week, walk through the entire thing and go over everything. Our crew has worked for us for over 20 years, and they know what we want. They are the top guys in D.C. They are the best."

That combination enables Glaser to do "top-notch work that nobody can hold a candle to," he says. "Because of that, we really enjoy not having to bid our work." He started the business in 1988 as Glaser LLC and reformed it in 2017 as Glaser Construction LLC when his son, Caleb, came on board as Vice President and Project Manager.

The Blue Book Network® is a must for Glaser in helping find new work and making new industry contacts, Chris says. Companies will see Glaser in The Blue Book. "We've established ourselves over the years through so many of these different companies. And when guys split off and go to other companies, they'll get back in touch," he says.



Chris Glaser (left) and his son Caleb are Co-Owners of Glaser Construction LLC.

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Above & right: Glaser Construction LLC applied synthetic stucco to this commercial storefront in Bethesda, Maryland.

With experience in handling a variety of stucco systems, Glaser offers Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS), Direct-Applied Exterior Finish Systems (DEFS) and cement-board stucco systems, as well as traditional stucco applications. About 90% of the company's work is commercial. Occasionally, the company will do repair or patch work for stucco on single-family residences.

Because of its location in Kensington, Maryland, the company has done work for many federal agencies, as well as state, county and local governments, including at the Pentagon, Joint Base Andrews, Fort George G. Meade, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, the U.S. Naval Observatory, and the FBI's Northern Virginia Resident Agency.

BUILT ON RELATIONSHIPS

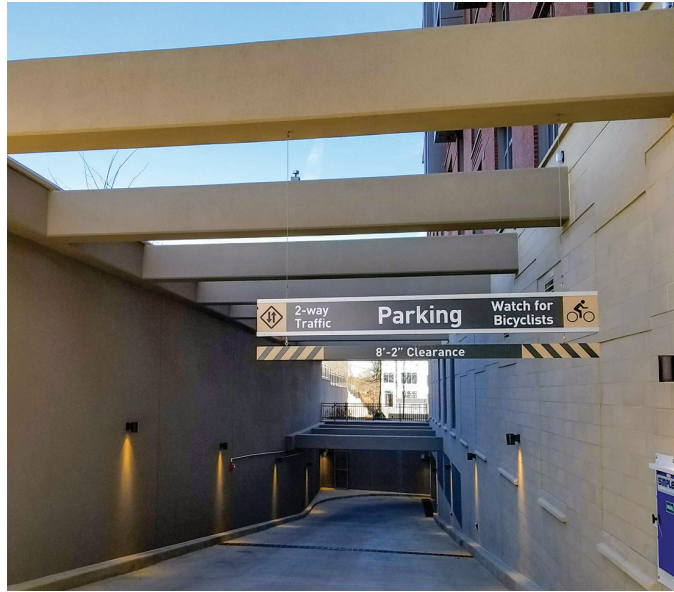
The bulk of the company's work is EIFS synthetic stucco. "That is our bread and butter," says Caleb, who jointly owns the business with his father. "I would say there is no one in the area that knows more about EIFS and its application than Chris and me—and no one with more experience in installing these EIFS systems than our guys."



In addition to the team's exceptional product knowledge and skills, the company relies on the value of the father-son relationship, Caleb says. "Yes, we are both intelligent and competent in this field, and Chris is obviously much more knowledgeable than I am," he says, "but what it comes down to is our relationship."

The proof is in the contracts. "We have tripled in size over the last two years and tripled in volume," he says.

Caleb, 28, grew up on his father's job sites. Chris tells a story of putting Caleb, at age 2, and Caleb's older brother, 4, to work stacking material out of a trailer. "I was so impressed, I said, 'Come on, we're going out for ice cream,'" Chris recalls.



Before (left) and after: Upon seeing the beautiful direct-applied stucco on its Chevy Chase Lake garage ramp retaining wall, the developer, EYA, also requested that stucco be added to the structure's raw concrete horizontal support beams.

As an adult, Caleb initially chose a different career path, becoming a teacher and an administrator at a Catholic school. But he realized that he could make more money in construction, and his dad was not going to let him work for anyone else.

"When he came on two years ago, I kind of thought it was going to be like the veteran mentoring the son," says Chris, 54. "It wasn't like that at all. It was like another me. He was giving me suggestions that I hadn't thought of, and I was asking him questions as much as he was asking me."

When Caleb came on, Glaser was a smaller operation, doing just enough business to keep things running. He says, "So we just got together and tried to reorganize things and grow the business. It took a while, but we are in a pretty good position right now. It's been cool to build it and see it evolve and to work together. It's been a lot of work, but it's fun. You barely notice how hard you are working because it is kind of a blast."

QUALITY RESTORATION

Chris and Caleb are particularly proud of the Pentagon Ridge condominiums restoration project that was completed this year in Arlington, Virginia.

That was the first project in which Glaser Construction acted as a general contractor. "We got our Virginia state contracting license just largely for this project," Chris says. "We put a lot of thought and time into this."

The eight-story apartment building was built in 1974 by the East German government as housing for its embassy staff. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the building, which is half a mile from the Pentagon, was sold and converted into condos. Traditional stucco originally used on the building's exterior had begun to deteriorate, and hunks of the material were falling off.

Glaser dealt with the logistics of working in an occupied space and the safety of ingress and egress of the homeowners, as well as the scheduling, which is always crucial,

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Caleb Glaser, Vice President, Glaser Construction LLC



Before (inset) and after: Glaser Construction LLC, as general contractor, restored the stucco on this Pentagon Ridge condominium project in Arlington, Virginia.

Chris says. The project also required demolition and working with a 135-foot boom lift and swing scaffolding.

"The job just went so well, and not only from our perspective, but the client absolutely loved it. They were so happy with our work and with everything about it," Chris says. "They were so pleased that the chair of the board offered to do a video testimonial with us."

PASSION FOR PEOPLE

Helping people, such as the residents of Pentagon Ridge, is a large part of the work at Glaser Construction—and that shows up outside the job site, including helping countless stranded motorists.

"Whenever a car is stopped on the side of the road and we are in our work van with all our tools, we will stop and help out," Chris says. "We have done it a bunch of times. Normally, it is changing tires or jump-starting the vehicle. We have helped a lot of people get back home."

Those small but crucial gestures aren't surprising given the team's passion for people. "It's indicative of the kind of help we give, but it is also indicative of who we are as a company," Chris says. "Everything we do is meant to have quality in mind, have longevity in mind and have people in mind. What are these buildings for—they are for people. We want people to have good, sturdy buildings that will look beautiful for years to come." 🦉

C. Grant Jackson is an adjunct professor who retired from newspaper journalism after a 40-year career. He enjoys writing for The Who's Who family of magazines and other leading publications.