

# Leon D. DeMatteis Construction Corp.



## Zeroing in on the Future of Education

Leon D. DeMatteis Construction Corp. is building one of the first 'net-zero' schools east of the Mississippi River. PS 62 will be located in New York City's Staten Island borough.

**N**ormally one would not associate a century-old, third-generation family business with leading the United States in innovation, but that is exactly what is happening with the Leon D. DeMatteis Construction Corp. as it builds one of the first net-zero energy-efficient schools east of the Mississippi River in New York City's borough of Staten Island. The term "net-zero" means the school will produce as much energy as it consumes.

Leon D. DeMatteis has a long term year history of excellence in construction, real estate development and property management. The company operates as a vertically

integrated, full-service enterprise with resources and experiences covering the full spectrum of construction and real estate development, as well as property management and finance.

"Like many family-owned businesses we are more hands-on and our clients receive the benefit of interaction with the owner on a weekly basis," says Scott Dale, project manager for Leon D. DeMatteis. "We really care about our employees, clients and subcontractors. We feel like we are all part of the same family. Most importantly, the firm's lean management organization structure is designed to create more value for our customers. Our project man-

by *Rodric J. Bradford*

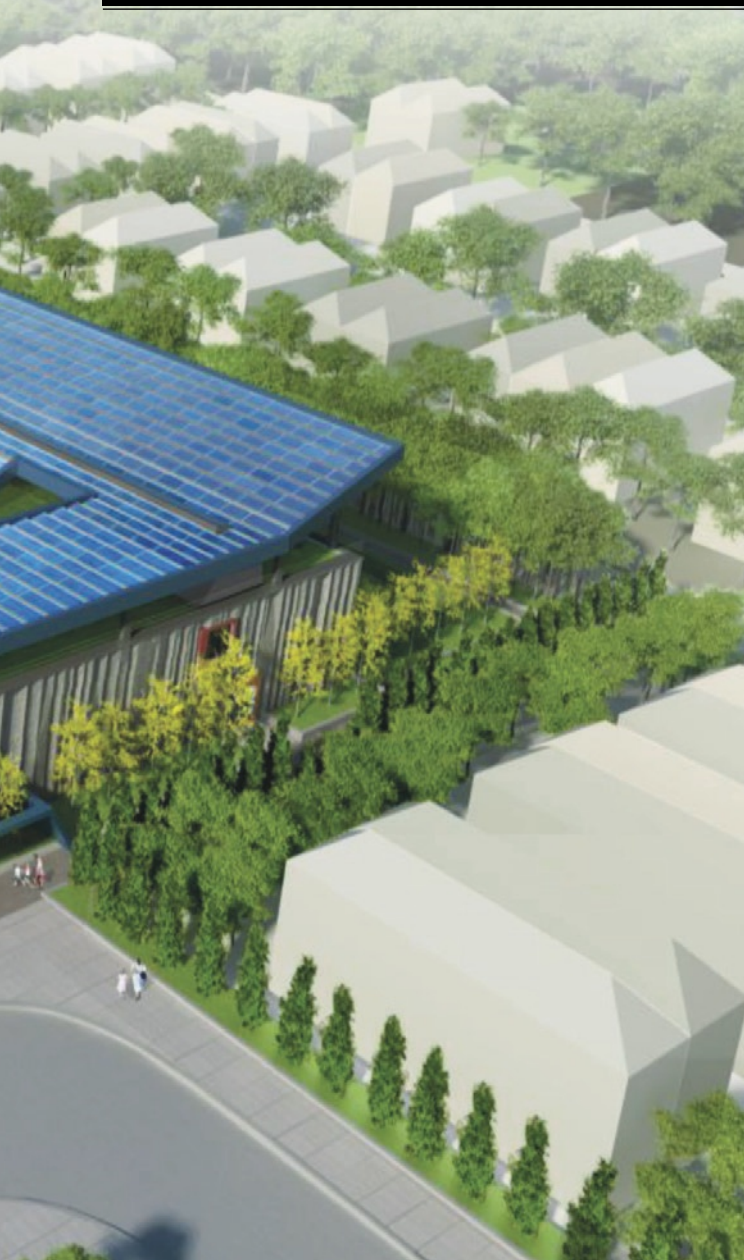


Photo Courtesy of: SKIDMORE, OWINGS &amp; MERRILL LLP

voltaic panels, and a green roof. Central to the design is the careful siting of the school structure which maximizes the passive solar orientation and 2,500 photovoltaic panels covering the entire roof, a portion of the main building and the parking garage. Each of these design features is setting the standards for net-zero practices.

The project is constructed under a design/bid/build delivery method where Leon D. DeMatteis was the low bidder to the SCA. Leon D. DeMatteis' ability to offer the SCA competitive pricing is facilitated by the long-term, quality relationships with its subcontractors and institutional knowledge developed from previous projects.

"There are a lot of unknowns and different design issues you encounter with complex school projects such as PS 62, which is the first of its kind for the SCA," says Steve Tartaro, vice president, construction services for Leon D. DeMatteis. "Our trade subcontractors and the SCA know we will work through design issues with them in a collaborative way and come to a mutual agreement that will work for everybody."

Leon D. DeMatteis collaborated closely with architect Skidmore, Owings and Merrill to ensure that maximum energy efficiency was achieved.

"The greatest challenge for us to overcome was the project requirement to build from the outside in," Tartaro says. "The exterior envelope of the building had to be completed and tested before we could commence with any core and interior work, which is opposite of standard operating procedure.

"After completing the exterior cold formed framing, Dens Glass, vapor barrier system, curtain wall and windows, the envelope had to be commissioned for air leakage to achieve the net-zero criteria," Tartaro adds. "After sign off of the commissioning, a precast rain screen was installed over and around these finished products. The coordination required to achieve this was the result of many hours of intense collaboration between all the various trades. From that point on we commenced with the interior construction."

The project is 75 percent complete and remains on schedule for September 2015 completion date because of a strong performance by the subcontractors.

"We wanted to put together a top-quality group of contractors, especially in our mechanical systems," Dale says. "Delivering on the net-zero promise we utilized the 'A' team of trade subcontractors. Their performance has fulfilled all of our expectations."

Making life easier for Leon D. DeMatteis and its trade subcontractors is the positive working relationship they have established with the SCA

agers are empowered to make decisions and have direct access to the company's leadership which facilitates an effective decision making process."

These experiences and resources built the foundation for their relationship with New York City's School Construction Authority (SCA). For the last 15 years, Leon D. DeMatteis has been one of the most prolific constructors of K-12 school facilities in the New York City metro area. With nearly \$2 billion of new, ground-up construction, DeMatteis has been an instrumental player in the transformation of the education landscape.

Building on that success, Leon D. DeMatteis is currently constructing PS 62, the \$70 million net-zero school which includes several unique design and construction features. Innovations include a high performance envelope, geothermal mechanical systems, solar thermal and photo-


leadership and the project delivery team. Unlike many public sector agencies, the SCA is an efficient organization with clear decision-makers, rules and processes.

“It is a streamlined agency where things get done and you work with people who know how to finish the job,” Tartaro says. “All of the feedback we have received from both the SCA and our subcontractor community has been extremely positive. There has been a lot of firsts incorporated in this building, so it truly has been a team effort.

“We have a high comfort level with each other and we can speak to people who can react and do something about the matter at hand,” Tartaro adds.

Judging by the status of the net-zero elementary school, it looks as if it will be another 15 years of productive partnering between Leon D. DeMatteis, its subcontractors and the SCA.

“Everyone has been tremendous working together,” Tartaro says. “We

are extremely proud to have been part of this and bring such an important project to its conclusion. It will benefit our children and the environment, both of which are the foundation of our future.” 

THE TRIUMPH CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION was incorporated by Penny Jackson and Carlo Cuzzi in 2000. In 2003 they approached what was then the Bronx Initiative Corporation (BIC) to assist them with purchasing a building in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. During that time Triumph had two locations, an office in Mt Vernon and a parking space for their trucks in the Bronx.

Triumph Construction provides concrete, excavation, utility and site work in and around the New York metropolitan area. The purchase of the property located at Seneca Avenue allowed the company to consolidate their operations. The building purchased is also located in the Bronx Empowerment Zone and the NYC Empire Zone, which will allow Triumph Construction Corp. to reap the benefits of both zones. In 2004, BIC and GE Capital approved and closed on the loans to purchase the new building and that same year Triumph Construction moved into the Bronx.


At the time of closing in 2004, Triumph Construction employed 44 individuals and had an annual sales of \$9 million. As of 2014, Triumph Construction continues to expand with over 250 employees and sales reaching the \$60 million mark. As they continue to grow the Business Initiative Corporation in New York (BIC) will be there to assist them in their journey.



**We have been one of the N.Y. Tri-State areas largest & most reliable painting firms for over 25 years.**

- Wallcovering • Epoxy Coatings
- Specialty/Faux Finishes • Electrostatic Application
- Scuffmaster • Kaydex/Covercoat • Polomyx/Zolatone
- Venetian Plaster • Intumescent Coatings • Water Repellants
- Anti-Graffiti Coating • SCA Approved • OSHA 30 Certified
- Lead Removal Certified

1850 Pond Road | Ronkonkoma, NY 11779  
 PH: 631-285-7112 | FAX: 631-285-7116 | keith@kporganization.com



**BUILDING SCIENCE – BUILDING SOLUTIONS**

**SYSTEMHOUSE.com**  
 Dallas - Houston - Austin  
 972.504.6800