



MOORE & BRUGGINK IS PROVIDING CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR A NEW 346,000-SQUARE-FOOT FEDEX DISTRIBUTION CENTER LOCATED ON A 60-ACRE PARCEL IN WALKER, MICHIGAN. THE PROJECT BEGAN IN NOVEMBER 2015 AND IS ANTICIPATED TO BE COMPLETED IN FEBRUARY 2017.

60 Years in the Making

Michigan PE attributes firm's longevity to strong client, community connections.



NSPE member Robert Bruggink, P.E., got his first taste of the engineering life while building dams and bridges by a creek behind his childhood home in Grand Rapids,

Michigan. He also developed a love for engineering by watching his father build up Moore & Bruggink Inc. Consulting Engineers, which provides professional engineering and surveying services.

With Robert Bruggink now serving as CEO, Moore & Bruggink is celebrating 60 years of service with a corporate culture that focuses on building close ties with clients and the local community. The firm was started with just five employees in 1956 and has expanded to 45 employees. "A significant number of our clients have been with us for 60 years," says the University of Michigan graduate. "Our corporate culture makes you feel like you're part of the family, whether you're a staff member or a client."



Brian Hannon, P.E., who serves as a vice president, believes that the firm's commitment to consistent service and a set of core values remain critical parts of main-

taining its client base. "They trust that we know their infrastructure and we're going to provide them with good service at a fair price," he says.

After surviving the most recent economic downturn, the firm has experienced steady growth over the last two years with a goal to double revenues over the next five to six years, says Bruggink. During the recession, firm leaders continued to develop client relationships to stay afloat and refused to cut staff. "This left us in a good position, when the economy came back, to provide even better service to our clients," he says.

Hannon adds, "When the economy recovered, the firm was able to capture some opportunities that we may not have been able

to if we had been solely focused on profits and not the people side of the business."

The firm also extends that "people side" to the Grand Rapids community by providing in-kind engineering services for projects at the Veterans Home Grotto Park, the Betty Van Andel Opera Center (the country's first LEED-certified opera rehearsal hall), and with Habitat for Humanity.

Rewarding Projects

Moore & Bruggink's recent projects have included a City of Zeeland Clean Water Plant expansion project, a retail and residential development project in the Village of Ada (Envision Ada), and development of a FedEx regional distribution center.

Bruggink describes an expansion and renovation project for the City of Grandville Clean Water Plant as the firm's most interesting and rewarding project to date. The project involved introducing the state's first egg-shaped anaerobic digester system, which requires lower maintenance and produces biogas to provide 1.6 million BTUs

an hour of process heat for supporting treatment operations. It also provides renewable power generation for the site. "We delivered a project that has sustainable energy components with some combined heat and power," he says. "The city is saving over \$100,000 a year by generating its own energy."

The project was recognized as one of the top projects in the nation by the American Council of Engineering Companies in 2013. "It's cool to see such a successful and innovative project give our client wonderful benefits," says Bruggink.

Growing Leadership

Bruggink had opportunities to work for various construction companies, but he knew that carrying on his father's legacy in West Michigan was his true calling. "I started out here in 1979 dumping waste baskets. There aren't too many engineers who started here that can say they did that," he recalls with a laugh. "Choosing to be at this firm has been the best decision for my career."

Bruggink believes that growing leadership from within has been essential to the firm's longevity. Hannon started with the firm in 2008 as a project engineer. In less than 10 years, he has been able to advance to vice president. "This firm allows you the opportunity to try new things and be a go-getter within a really good framework," says the University of Kansas mechanical engineering graduate. "The firm consistently rewards performance, and it also has a nice family environment."

As people move on in their careers or retire, the firm wants to ensure that clients never see a drop off in services, says Hannon. Every project involves younger engineers to help them learn how to interact with clients. "We want to make sure that we are growing the quality of leaders that have the same core values that our current leaders have," he says.

All staff members are encouraged to get a part of their leadership training outside of the firm by volunteering to serve on nonprofit and public service boards. "It's important to have those external leadership experiences to help you grow and see what types of decisions are faced by decision-makers and other stakeholders in the community," says Bruggink. "This will help [employees] to make a better transition into the senior leadership ranks."

Bruggink often shares with his staff the importance of good listening and communications skills for successful leadership. Young professional engineers who want to have successful careers and move into the firm's leadership positions are also advised to follow what Bruggink calls "the four BEs": (1) Be relevant in your role; (2) Be current and stay trained in the tools and direction of the industry; (3) Be informed on what's important to your profession and your community; and (4) Be actively involved in your professional and technical societies.



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MOORE & BRUGGINK PROVIDED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR A MAJOR CLEAN WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE FOR THE CITY OF GRANDVILLE. THE PLANT INCORPORATES THE STATE'S FIRST EGG-SHAPED ANAEROBIC DIGESTER AND BIOGAS COGENERATION SYSTEM, WHICH WILL CREATE HEAT AND POWER FOR THE PLANT TO OFFSET ENERGY REQUIREMENTS AND SAVE MONEY.