

The Lehigh Way

Banking on Lehigh

Lehigh Construction Group's Long History
of Serving the Financial Sector

SEE PAGE 4



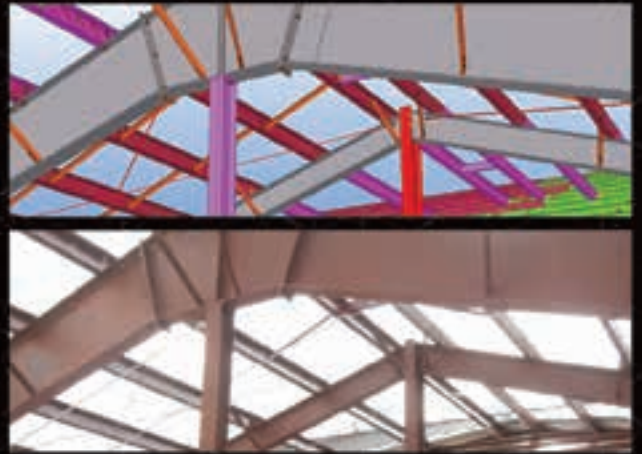
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The Lehigh Way

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Welcome to The Lehigh Way



As we settle into fall, Lehigh leaves behind another successful summer of completed projects and Lehigh PRO service work. In this issue, our featured article highlights Lehigh's involvement in the financial sector. "Bank jobs" have been a part of our workload every week throughout our 32 years in business.

Did you know about a third of Lehigh's employees have been with the company for 20 years or more? Copying an idea from one of our best clients, we started the "Lehigh 20+ Club" back in 2012, and we feature this group of tenured employees starting on page 10.

We have always relied on strong relationships with subcontractors to deliver projects for our clients, but increasingly our subcontractors are calling on Lehigh PRO for assistance on their jobs. So through Lehigh PRO, Lehigh can be a sub to our subs! This issue features an article on the services we offer and testimonials from our subs on the benefit of referring Lehigh PRO to their clients.

Lastly, thank you to our subcontractors, partners and suppliers that placed advertisements in this publication. Year after year you have provided us with your support and we would not be able to produce this magazine without you.

With appreciation,

David E. Knauss
President

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ON THE COVER: First Niagara Bank, James Cavanaugh Photography

Banking on Lehigh

Lehigh Construction Group's Long History of Serving the Financial Sector

by Erin Pinkerton



People trust their banks with their money — their college savings, their home mortgages, their retirement accounts, their safety nets. Those same banks trust their buildings to Lehigh Construction Group, and have been doing so for more than 30 years. In fact, Lehigh has been doing construction and repair work for the financial sector nearly every day since the company started, and it will continue. You can bank on it.

The first job Lehigh ever did was for a bank. In 1984, Liberty National Bank was looking for a contractor to do some work at one of its brand-new branches. A younger Dave Knauss, president of Lehigh Construction Group, was looking

for work as a new contractor. Knauss' father, also a contractor, had a friend who was an architect and happened to be familiar with the bank's vice president, Ben Kinney. The architect mentioned Lehigh to Kinney, saying he knew the

principals and this fledgling company was worth taking a chance on.

Funny enough, while working on that first Liberty National Bank project, Tom Glomb, vice president at Lehigh

Lehigh Knows Banks

Financial sector jobs account for **20 percent** of Lehigh's business in any given year in both project and PRO divisions.

Lehigh completes about **nine** bank jobs in any given week.

Over the years, Lehigh has completed **thousands** of financial sector projects, including those at branch banks, banking service centers and credit unions.

Bank of America, Lehigh's largest bank client, has had **65** branches in western New York over the years, and Lehigh has worked in every one of them.

Construction Group, recalled asking a man smoking a cigarette and wearing a suit and tie to get off the worksite. The man then handed over his business card, which read, "Ben Kinney, vice president of Liberty National Bank." Glomb had not met Kinney prior to starting the work at the bank and Kinney went on to tell the story of getting thrown off his own jobsite for years to come. *Editor's note: For a full account of the event, watch "The First Job" on The Lehigh 30 video series at lehighconstructiongroup.com/lehigh30.*

Despite having its vice president asked to leave his own project, Liberty National Bank called on Lehigh for many more jobs. Years later, after multiple ownership and name changes, Liberty National Bank has become Bank of America, which is Lehigh's largest bank client. "What started out with a relationship with Liberty National Bank in '84 is still a thriving relationship with Bank of America in 2016," Knauss said. "It's largely due to our knowledge, experience and history."

A particularly memorable bank project was in 2007 when Lehigh built Bank of America's brand-new Elmwood branch. This highly visible ground-up construction project was completed on a busy city street in the middle of winter. The size of the lot was about the size of the building, and the Lehigh Construction team didn't have much room even to lay

down materials, Knauss said. Despite the weather and location challenges, the project took 24 weeks from start to finish.

Lehigh shares credit for completing the Elmwood branch in less than six months with longtime strategic partner Scheid Architectural, based in Buffalo, New York. "They have a very good understanding of how branch banks get put together, how back office operations work," Knauss said. Lehigh and Scheid have completed dozens of design-build projects for banks and credit unions. "The



design-build method has worked because we've been able to deliver projects very quickly from conception to turnover," Knauss stated.

Another recent bank project for Lehigh was First Niagara Bank's administrative building. Over a year, Lehigh renovated the two-story, back-office building, revamping 80,000 square feet of space mostly after hours, from 5 p.m. to 6 a.m. The project was certified LEED Silver, meaning the building uses less water and energy, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification is unique because many businesses choose not to actively seek the certification due to the additional cost.

In addition to large-scale renovations and ground-up construction, Lehigh has done repair and maintenance projects for banks as well as credit unions, such as Boulevard Federal Credit Union and Empower Federal Credit Union. The internal operations of banks and credit unions may differ, but the construction and maintenance aspects are largely the same, Knauss noted. "I don't know that there's anything within a bank or branch bank or the bank system that we haven't had some experience with. It's literally thousands of jobs over the course of our history," he said.

Lehigh's smaller financial sector projects include the installation, repair and replacement of interior finishes, doors, ATMs, drive-thru facilities, stand-alone kiosk facilities, teller lines, check desks, and all levels of automation within the bank, among other things. These smaller jobs are usually completed by Lehigh PRO after hours or on weekends. "The idea is that the financial institution or the retail branch of a bank needs to be up and running each morning, and we have to be invisible," said Mike Glomb, PRO service manager at Lehigh Construction Group.

Recently, one of Lehigh's most common bank jobs is making facilities compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, especially branches that were built 20 or more years ago. Lehigh has built concrete ramps and widened doors for wheelchairs, as well as made other parts



A unique job Lehigh completed for a bank was installing these murals on the exterior walls of this Bank of America branch in Hamburg, New York.

“I don’t know that there’s anything within a bank or branch bank or the bank system that we haven’t had some experience with. It’s literally thousands of jobs over the course of our history.”

– Dave Knauss, president of Lehigh Construction Group



of the bank, such as the teller stations, handicap-accessible.

Another typical job for Lehigh PRO is decommissioning and recommissioning banks. “In our area, there’s been a lot of mergers, consolidations and takeovers, and as a result of that, there has been a lot of either decommissioning or very, very fast conversions from one corporate name to another,” Knauss explained. “HSBC had a huge presence in Western New York. Now they have virtually no branch bank presence, and all of their branches were either shuttered or sold to other banks. We were working with taking HSBC out of commission on a Friday afternoon, and they’re back open as a bank branch with somebody else’s name on Monday morning.” On occasion, Lehigh has been hired by both the bank going out of business and the one taking over.

When one bank replaces another, the work consists primarily of replacing indoor and outdoor signage. However, decommissioning a branch bank without an incoming bank tenant can be a “pretty

big operation,” according to Glomb. It can consist of checking and removing all cash drawers and vaults, among other things, as well as debranding. With the rise of online banking, brand-new bank branches are increasingly rare, so most of Lehigh’s work is the maintenance and decommissioning of current branches, Glomb said.

In the early years, Lehigh dealt directly with bank managers, but now most of Lehigh’s scheduling, estimates and other communications, especially for larger financial institutions like Bank of America, go through national property managers, like CBRE, JLL and Trammell Crow. About 95 percent of scheduling is done through property managers, Glomb said. These property managers have sophisticated web-based work order management systems, which have made the administrative aspect of jobs more efficient. “We’re a relatively small cog in a pretty big wheel, so we just have to adapt to their systems,” Knauss said. “That’s more of the paperwork, coordination, scheduling side of it. The actual work itself that takes place at branches really hasn’t changed at all.”



Over the last 32 years, Lehigh’s work and reputation in the financial sector have weathered the changes in banks’ marketing and accessibility standards, the addition of property management firms and their work order systems, and the banks’ buyouts and mergers. Lehigh’s very first client, although by another name, is still a client today. “Our response time and our customer service with them is the reason they keep coming back to us. We are a good fit. We have the capabilities, the manpower, the tools and the know-how,” Glomb said. “When they need it done, we’ve always gotten it done. That’s why they keep calling us.”

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The 20+ Club:

A Family Matter

by Adrienne Vittoe



One of the attributes making Lehigh Construction Group so exceptional is how loyal its employees are. This has become such a trend for the company, in fact, there is now a term for those employees who have served Lehigh for 20 years or more: the 20+ Club.

Aside from owners Tom Glomb and Dave Knauss, Tom's brother, Mark Glomb, has worked for Lehigh longer than any other employee — 31 of the 32 years the company has been in business. Currently, there are 16 other members of the 20+ Club. Together, these 19 people comprise a total of 30 percent of the Lehigh workforce. All departments are represented by 20+ Club members, with the most coming from Lehigh's superintendent team. These

superintendents are among the best in western New York and continuously set the company apart from the competition.

"I've been with Lehigh from day one," owner Glomb shared. "I feel there has been a positive environment established since the very beginning, treating people like you would like to be treated. A team of caring individuals certainly makes coming to work every day worthwhile and rewarding."

Jack Bouquin, site superintendent and 26-year employee of Lehigh, agreed, mentioning the company provides an opportunity to work with some really good people.

Josie Stockweather, manager of human resources, said she feels much the same way.

"I think our employees feel good about working for a company that provides an atmosphere of being part of a 'family'."

that takes care of you and offers you opportunities to grow,” she said. “I can’t imagine what life would be like without being part of Lehigh and having the opportunity to communicate with everyone in person or on the phone on a regular basis.”

Stockweather, who has been with the company for 29 years, went on to explain there is more to being a member of the Lehigh family than one might expect. “Our ‘family’ is not just employees; it extends to spouses, children and grandchildren. We’ve seen employees marry, have children, seen children grow up and marry.”

But why do so many employees stay on with Lehigh for multiple decades?

“I believe the longevity is a credit to everyone working together with a common goal,” Glomb said.

Again, Stockweather agreed. “It’s a great feeling to know that so many of our employees have reached the 20+ Club, and I know that number will continue to grow,” she said. “This can be attributed to not only our feeling of everyone being part of a ‘family’ but also to our various benefits and commitment to safety.”

Safety

Lehigh strives to send all employees home safely to their families at the

Thank you to the following 20+ Club members for your years of service:

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John C, Ralph D, Jim F,
Mark G, Glenn H, Damon H,
Marty K, Joe K, Ed M,
Joe M, Jody P, Chris R,
Bill S, Josie S, Tom G, Dave K.

end of the day. The employees take ownership over the company’s safety program, and they have built a culture of safety which encourages and aids new people joining the Lehigh team.

Benefits

Lehigh’s family-centeredness is also evident through its wellness program — employees’ spouses are included. “We offer our employees and spouses the opportunity to participate in an annual wellness screening where they can receive an incentive toward their

annual health insurance contribution,” Stockweather explained. “We also have different wellness initiatives during the year that employees can participate in to promote wellness.”

Work-Autonomy

Along with great benefits and safety initiatives, employees at Lehigh have freedom in their workday to complete the tasks they need to in the best way they know how. What works best for some is not always best for others, and that is recognized at Lehigh. From project managers and the way they run their large projects to PRO service technicians and the way they have their Lehigh PRO vans set up inside, variances are allowed and encouraged as they enhance job performance.

Added Bonuses

Sometimes it just comes down to the little things — like being told you can have an extra casual day in the work week or having breakfast during early morning safety training. Things like providing safety t-shirts and tickets to games at the local ballpark are added benefits that can really make the difference to some employees.

It’s easy to understand why so many Lehigh employees have stuck around for so long. Coupled with a supportive atmosphere and benefits package, Lehigh has built a family-like culture from the ground up.



No Substitute for PRO Service

Subcontractors Rely on Lehigh PRO

by Erin Pinkerton

Since Lehigh PRO can perform almost any repair, maintenance or other small job, its list of clients is extensive. Clients come from sectors as varied as financial and manufacturing, pharmaceutical and retail. Lehigh PRO even does work for subcontractors in the construction industry.

“We’ve always had PRO clients that are subcontractors of ours. They work for us on larger projects, and we like for them to call us when they need our services as well, which is kind of unique in the contracting world,” said Dave Knauss, president of Lehigh Construction Group. “Usually general contractors hire subcontractors, and that’s how it works. It’s really unusual that subcontractors turn around and hire the contractor, in this case, which is Lehigh PRO.”

Many Lehigh PRO subcontractor clients are mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) subcontractors. “Their needs for Lehigh PRO tend to be what we refer to as cutting and patching. Electricians run conduit and pull cable. They don’t

necessarily drill through walls or floors. And once you put a hole through the floor, you have to patch it back again, once the pipe has been through there,” Knauss explained.

Lehigh PRO also pours concrete transformer and generator pads for electricians, and concrete equipment pads for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) contractors. Lehigh PRO has also built the steel frame for mechanical and electrical equipment needing to be installed on a roof. “Those are the main type of things that we do. It’s cutting and patching. It’s concrete work. It’s masonry. It’s steel work that they have a need for to get their projects done,” Knauss said.

Lehigh PRO has worked for more than 100 subcontractors, with a handful calling regularly and using PRO services multiple times each month. Some notable Lehigh PRO subcontractor clients include Ferguson Electric Construction Company, MJ Mechanical Services Inc. and MLP Plumbing & Mechanical, Inc.

While the majority of the PRO team’s work for subcontractors is for MEP subcontractors, other types of subcontractors, such as painters, refer Lehigh PRO to their clients as well. “We have seen over the years working with them on their projects that their people know how to build a building or put an addition



on a plant or office the right way,” said Neal Choops, president of N. Choops Painting, Inc., based in Lancaster, New York. Whenever Choops needs smaller jobs or repairs completed, he calls Lehigh PRO. “I call one of their reps and, in most cases, meet with them the same day to go over the job, and I tell them to just do it and send me a bill. The job gets done — done quickly and done right. And they send me an itemized bill that is fair,” he stated.

At some point, every business needs a touch-up, or maybe a whole new look, so the owner or manager may call in a painting or flooring contractor to add some new color and texture to the building. Lehigh relies on those contractors to refer clients to Lehigh PRO for other maintenance and repair work. Jeff Friedman, vice president of Heritage Contract Flooring, based in Buffalo, New York, also recommends Lehigh PRO to his clients. “Knowing and working with Lehigh Construction Group for 25 years, I recommend Lehigh PRO to my clients when they have a job that needs to be completed in a timely and professional manner,” he said.

Referrals from subcontractors are a great boost to PRO business and are always appreciated. For any owner or manager considering working with Lehigh PRO, the PRO team offers the Lehigh PRO roadshow, which involves all decision-makers and team members in learning about the PRO team’s capabilities. “Some of our PRO personnel come in with a carafe of coffee and a box of doughnuts, and we get everybody around a table

“Some of our PRO personnel come in with a carafe of coffee and a box of doughnuts, and we get everybody around a table and have a conversation about what Lehigh PRO can do for them individually.”

– Dave Knauss, president of Lehigh Construction Group

and have a conversation about what Lehigh PRO can do for them individually,” Knauss said. “It’s just a way for us to create awareness in companies.” If you are interested in having the Lehigh PRO team visit your office, contact Lehigh’s office or a PRO service manager to schedule.

Subcontractors do a lot for Lehigh, and Lehigh PRO can do a lot for those subcontractors in return. “Retain us directly to do the work that you need done on your project,” Knauss said, “and keep us in mind when you’re out there working directly for your own clients that are in need of the type of services PRO can provide.”



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Ask the Expert: **John Monson, Senior Consultant** *at Quality Risk Solutions, LLC*

Lehigh has been working with John Monson from QRS for the last five years, and we like to think of him as an extension of Lehigh's safety team. He has helped us bring our safety program to another level over the years. We wanted to give others an opportunity to hear a little from John Monson about the types of companies he works with and the services Quality Risk Solutions (QRS) offers.

Q: Was there a particular event or influence in your life that steered you towards your career path in safety?

A: Actually both. While in college I thought my career path was going to be in law enforcement or working for an environmental firm. Although I was a member of my local fire department and worked in school for the Department of Public Safety, safety as a career path never really crossed my mind. The year before my graduation my father started a consulting business that focused on engineering, maintenance, and safety for ammonia refrigeration process facilities. Right before I graduated he asked if I wanted to work for the company as a safety technician. I said yes. A little less than two years later, my father asked me if I liked safety. He knew the answer. I loved it and had a passion for it. It was then he gave me the best advice. He told me that I needed to go work for a company and learn how safety relates to business, productivity, cost, quality and people. He knew I needed to do and experience the things so many companies struggle with when it comes to safety and risk. So, I did, and 22 years later I still have that love and passion for what I do.

Q: Most people may not realize safety training is just a part of what you do at QRS. What other services can you provide for your clients?

A: We provide a wide range of services to our clients. The services provided by QRS are often customized to the client's

needs and not just a "canned" program or service. We believe this offers the best value. Some examples of the services we provide beyond training include, but are not limited to, safety management system audits, management/frontline leadership consulting, goal and measure



development, risk consulting including fleet and general liability, worker compensation management consulting, project safety pre-planning consulting, facility and project site inspections, industrial hygiene sampling, program development, and more. We perform these services for the construction, industrial and municipal clients locally and throughout the United States.

Q: If a company approached you about training and asked you to choose one topic you felt was the most important to cover, what would you choose?

A: That’s a great question with some different answers. It really depends on the company and what they do. For example, a company in the construction trades that works at height, the answer is almost always fall prevention/protection, where a company that operates machinery in a factory, the answer is typically lock out/tag out. For construction there are four event categories that make up approximately 80 percent of severe injuries and deaths each year. They are falls, electrical, struck by, and caught between. Every construction company should look at how their work falls into these categories and prioritize their training accordingly.

Q: What is your opinion on training versus job inspections?

A: I believe they both add value and both are part of the foundation for a sound safety process. Good training can offer a foundation for employees to help make the right choice when it comes to safety and risk. Job site inspections are also important as they help identify conditions and behaviors that need to be addressed. The problem with focusing on job site inspections as a prevention tool is that your “snap shot” is when the hazard or poor choice (behavior) are already in play. If the inspector finds them, then someone is not doing anything about them. When resources are put into the right training for employees, the training should help employees recognize and address conditions and behaviors before they are put at risk. This is the foundation to a sound pre-planning process. The challenge for both training and job site inspections for many companies is keeping them fresh and using them as part of a

continuous improvement tool. At QRS we have been challenging many of our clients to think outside of the box when it comes to both training and inspections. Many successful companies are finding that there is a real value add when they reinforce training with coaching of employees and subcontractors in the field.

Q: What is your opinion on Lehigh’s safety culture?

A: Lehigh’s safety culture is continually moving forward on the continuous improvement scale. Their culture starts with values and leadership at the top. They know band aids don’t fix things and to get where they want to go takes time and effort. Lehigh management believes that safety needs to be a constant throughout everything Lehigh does. Safety is not any one manager’s responsibility nor is it a safety manager or director’s responsibility. Ultimately every employee holds some level of accountability and responsibility when it comes to the safety process. The company does not measure overall success on EMR, OSHA rates and other lagging indicators. Although they recognize these are important indicators of what is going right and wrong, they also know the training, education, awareness and front line leadership skills related to their team is what will continue to drive them towards their vision of world class safety.

John A. Monson, Senior Safety Consultant — John has over 20 years of experience developing results-oriented safety and loss control processes in the construction, general industry and municipal sectors. He has a passion for safety and risk management. John is a senior consultant with Quality Risk Solutions (QRS) and is responsible for developing and implementing safety and risk management processes for a wide range of clients. He has spoken before many groups on risk management, safety, fire prevention, fleet safety and insurance related topics.

John is a graduate of Buffalo State College with a BS degree in Environmental Geoscience. He is a recipient of the 2009 Niagara Frontier American Society of Safety Engineers (NFA SSE) Safety Professional of the Year award. He is a former President of the NFA SSE chapter, former chairman of the NFA SSE construction section, an Emergency Medical Technician, and an assistant chief with the Union Volunteer Fire Company in West Seneca.



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How Can Lehigh IT Help You?

If you would like help determining your company's technology needs, let a known and trusted Western New York business come to your aid.

This division of Lehigh Construction Group, Inc. specializes in technology solutions for companies in the Buffalo-Niagara region. Founded in 2000, Lehigh IT has more than a decade of experience and expertise in network service and support.



Solutions for Your Business Needs

Many organizations have a hard time with technology planning and upgrades. Lehigh IT can be a full-service solution or simply provide consulting to make the most out of your budget.

Services Offered

- Microsoft Enterprise solutions
- Existing network stabilization
- Local Area Network/Internet consulting
- Network security consulting
- "Start-to-finish" installations with ongoing maintenance
- Portable device integration
- PC hardware repairs, upgrades and support
- Standard and custom designed equipment sales



Contact Us

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