

The Lehigh Way

A photograph of three construction workers in a professional setting, likely a construction site or office. They are wearing hard hats and safety glasses. The worker in the foreground is wearing a black Studson hard hat and safety glasses, looking down at a set of blueprints. The worker in the middle is wearing a white hard hat and safety glasses, also looking at the blueprints. The worker in the background is wearing a white hard hat and safety glasses, looking at the blueprints. They are all wearing blue shirts. The worker in the foreground is also wearing a yellow safety vest. The blueprints are spread out on a table. The text "How Our Supers Make The Difference for Clients" is overlaid on the right side of the image. The text "pg. 5" is overlaid at the bottom right of the image.

*How Our
Supers Make
The Difference
for Clients*

pg. 5



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This issue of *The Lehigh Way* includes stories that highlight vital components of our business strategy: valued employees and long-term client relationships.

The cover story shines a spotlight on the company leaders who are at the forefront of relationship building — our superintendents. We are blessed to have an outstanding team, many of whom have spent almost their entire careers with Lehigh.

One of our very important long-term clients is KeyBank — the region's second largest financial institution. KeyBank operates a Buffalo office headquarters, 70 branches and 20 stand-alone ATMs that are serviced by the Lehigh PRO service team.

This is the first issue managed by Jill Pawlik, our new marketing and communications director, following the retirement of Doug Eberhardt. Jill is learning 42 years of Lehigh history and operations, and a large part of that is our partnership with Scheid Architectural. Jill writes about her initial impressions of our design-build collaboration and what surprised her as she discovered more during her first six months here.

We also introduce a new section — Contractor Connections — to call out our partners who go the extra mile to help us deliver for our customers. If you have a story or anecdote like that, please send it to jpawlik@lehighconstructiongroup.com.

Our Ask the Expert is with Steve Rakvica, director of design services at Encorus. Steve talks about typical challenges and solutions at local industrial facilities, why engineering and construction teams should collaborate during the assessment and planning phases, and how Encorus is positioned to help industrial operators succeed.

Please enjoy this 29th issue of *The Lehigh Way* and the rest of your summer.

My best,

David E. Knauss

President

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FROM THE GROUND UP

How Our Superintendents Make the Difference for Clients

by Jill Pawlik

When superintendent Russ Bauer looks back on 36 years with Lehigh, he recalls the historically sensitive jobs at some of the region's most storied properties where his carpentry skills and preservation knowledge could shine. They include restoring and converting Asbury Church in downtown Buffalo into a destination known as Babeville, complete with offices, a concert hall, event venue and the Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center; renovating and preserving the Roycroft Inn,

Guest House and Copper Shop in East Aurora; and restoring Crag Burn Golf Club after a fire last year.

"I'm drawn to something that needs a lot of help," Russ said. "It's satisfying to do that type of work — to figure out how to incorporate the new pieces into the old so they go together and everything looks like it's always been there."

Russ is one of 13 superintendents who bring a combined 423 years of experience to Lehigh's clients.

Deep Bench

Clients depend on superintendents to keep projects moving forward despite obstacles. Lehigh's roster answers that call. With an average of 36 years in the industry, Lehigh's supers likely bring more depth than any other local construction firm in Western New York.

Construction encompasses infinite details, and the super oversees them all: translating plans into completed work, managing subcontractors and vendors, enforcing Lehigh's strict safety and

quality standards, and informing every stakeholder. That depth starts with a strong foundation: field mechanics in the Lehigh PRO service division who self-perform repairs, maintenance and small construction jobs all day, every day. That experience creates a feeder system for job leaders, foremen and superintendents. More than half of Lehigh's supers worked up through PRO.

"They've all been hands-on in the field and that is what we want," said Nick Sabal, an owner and manager of superintendents. "We've found the ones who are thinking ahead, engaged, learning, problem-solving, tech-savvy, communicate well and who are here for a career, and they've grown into experienced and dedicated supers."

Longevity

Mark Glomb has spent 41 years at Lehigh. He learned the trade as a field mechanic beside company co-founder and brother, Tom Glomb. Over time,

he became a leadman and then a site superintendent at some of the area's biggest industrial facilities. Since 2015, he has been stationed at DuPont handling all maintenance, repair and construction requests. He plans to retire soon and has been training his replacement. He's been with DuPont so long that he admits it's hard to let go.

"I'll go home and sit in my yard and wonder what's going on at DuPont," he chuckled.

Mark and Russ are members of a special group — they are among seven superintendents whose career spans at least 30 years at Lehigh. So, what's the secret?

"They treat people well, the work mostly stays local and they've done a great job with projects, so they've always had a good reputation, and that means a lot," said superintendent Joe Krol, who joined Lehigh in 1993.

Others say Lehigh's "family atmosphere" and the clients they select are reasons to build a career here. Superintendent John Kasper started at Lehigh in 1989, worked elsewhere for seven years and was welcomed back in 2016. He's grateful for his tenure.

"They treat us like family — good pay, benefits and they show they care about you personally, too," John said.

Field Experience

Longtime project manager John Rupp, who works on the Upstate Dairy plant expansion in West Seneca with Joe, praises Lehigh's construction management team.

"From an experience standpoint, our supers have way more hands-on field experience than others, and that is unique to Lehigh," he said.

Superintendent Tom Terhart manages the expansion of Fox Run at Orchard

QUALITIES OF A LEHIGH SUPER

- Good Listener and Communicator
- Relationship Builder
- Knowledgeable
- Critical Thinker
- Problem-Solver
- Calm Demeanor
- Mediator





BEHIND THE NUMBERS

- 13 Superintendents
- 423 Total Years of Experience
- 36 Average Years of Industry Experience
- 26 Average Years of Lehigh Experience

Park — one of Lehigh's most complex active projects. Fox Run is running four simultaneous builds: extensive interior renovations and additions of common areas and offices, 63 independent living apartments across three buildings and eight luxury patio homes. It takes a six-person site crew spanning two generations to manage it all, and that range is an asset.

"This one is very unique because I have people of different calibers, and so, we learn from each other," Terhart said. "We all work great together because that's The Lehigh Way — the type of people they attract — and we always protect Lehigh's interests and take care of the clients' needs first."

William Wlodarczyk is chief executive officer of Fox Run at Orchard Park, a premier Continuing Care Retirement Community in Orchard Park. He works with all Lehigh construction site personnel.

"Each superintendent has years of experience in a variety of spaces, and it shows. Some superintendents are particularly talented at the project coordination aspects of this expansion, looking out for the best interest of their workers, teaching residents and staff about various aspects of this project and building a connection with interested residents," Wlodarczyk said. "They also seem to have a good handle on what information needs to be shared with whom and on what timeline."

A New Generation

The same instinct that drives Lehigh's client relationships drives how it grows leaders: invest early, develop consistently and the results follow. That process starts in the PRO service division, where mechanics trained alongside veteran superintendents to backfill those positions open due to retirement.

Lehigh PRO's Kyle Whelan, a first-time foreman at Fox Run, oversees construction of the patio homes and is grateful for the veterans around him.

"Being able to learn from them every day has been invaluable. I haven't yet met a Lehigh employee who wasn't willing to answer a question or help out," Kyle said.

Three other Lehigh PRO mechanics are either running jobs or training on large projects with veterans — proof that Lehigh is building its bench.

What separates Lehigh from other contractors isn't just the quality of the work — it's the people overseeing it. Thirteen superintendents averaging 36 years in the field represent a depth of experience that's genuinely rare in Western New York. They carry experience, deep client relationships, a mentoring philosophy, and a shared commitment to getting it right. Clients benefit from that every day. And with a new generation already running jobs and training alongside veterans, Lehigh isn't just proud of that bench — it's actively building the next one.



A PROVEN SOLUTION

Decades of Trust Between KeyBank and Lehigh PRO

by Jill Pawlik



For decades when KeyBank needs a fast, reliable solution — be it repairs, renovations or emergency response — they call the Lehigh PRO service team.

KeyBank is the second largest financial services institution in Western New York, operating its Northeast Regional Headquarters in Buffalo, an administrative office and support center in Amherst, 70 branches and 20 stand-alone ATMs across the eight-county region.



Thomas McCormick, vice president and regional facilities manager of Great Lakes Region, oversees those properties and assets, in addition

to the KeyBank portfolio in Northern Ohio, Indiana and Michigan for a total of 240 locations. His job is essential for maintaining operational efficiency, ensuring compliance and enhancing customer experience. In Buffalo, Tom calls Lehigh PRO.

History

KeyBank and Lehigh have worked together since the 1990s when Tom's predecessor, John Burmaster, began the relationship. John informed Tom that he would be in good hands.

"He reiterated that Lehigh was a well-trusted partner that we could rely on for anything the bank may need," Tom recalled. "John was right, as always, and I couldn't thank him enough for forging the ongoing relationship that KeyBank has with Lehigh."

John and Lehigh PRO Manager Jon Wilcox established a partnership wherein Lehigh could perform any job and, if not, they would find someone that could. Jobs range from structural repairs, audio-visual installations and cosmetic improvements to bollards, fencing and signage replacements.

"Our longstanding relationship with KeyBank has been built on transparency, trust and responsiveness," Jon said.

Scalable Solutions

In 2016, that partnership faced a true pressure test when Lehigh rebranded 30 ATMs in just 48 hours — a timeline that required precision, coordination and round-the-clock execution. That moment proved Lehigh wasn't just a vendor — it was a scalable solution under pressure.

“As always, the response was awesome,” Tom said. “Anytime the bank has an acquisition, the timeframes are tight and a huge number of resources are brought to bear on the project, and Lehigh can always be counted on.”

While Tom has on-site maintenance teams for day-to-day operations, he refers jobs to Lehigh that require coordination with multiple trades, have an extended schedule, are planned capital projects or are emergencies.

Rapid Response

A common work order is for repairs to ATMs, drive-up lanes and the canopy due to damage from vehicles. Occasionally, a vehicle strikes the

building and breaches the interior. When this occurs during the bank's business hours, Lehigh moves crews to respond within an hour to stabilize the structure.

“Emergencies that arise are also a strong suit of Lehigh's since they have the manpower, expertise and additional resources to help the bank when needed most,” Tom said.

Lehigh PRO is also accustomed to scheduling work after business hours to avoid customer interruptions, and has a team of technicians who work evenings and overnights. In the last decade, Lehigh PRO has handled more than 500 jobs for KeyBank to help the institution operate optimally. Tom said he “looks forward to the next 500 jobs since Lehigh helps me succeed at my job every day.”

Alex Czarnecki, KeyBank's PRO service manager in recent years, said the bank's team is easy to work with.

“We've built strong working relationships at many of their

locations, and our familiarity with many of those sites helps us respond more efficiently and keep everything running smoothly,” Alex said. “Our PRO mechanics enjoy working there because they're treated well and valued by the team.”

A Relationship Built on Solutions

Tom said Lehigh remains the right call after all these years because of the “great people, timely responses and [they] are always fair and open with costs.”

“All of [their] crews are professional and courteous, very knowledgeable and always willing to make sure a solution is found for any problems that arise while they're on site,” Tom said. “Working with Jon and Alex over the years has been a pleasure. They have a great understanding of the bank's needs and operations, so projects always run smoothly, and I don't need to micromanage in any way.”

Lehigh PRO proudly delivers property solutions for KeyBank and stands ready for the next 500 jobs.



KeyBank
+



FROM THE INSIDE

What I Didn't Know About Lehigh and Scheid

by Jill Pawlik

I Thought I Already Knew

Before I joined Lehigh Construction Group (Lehigh), I had a pretty good sense of the company, thanks to friendships with my predecessor and a principal at Scheid Architectural. I knew Lehigh and Scheid were design-build partners. What I soon came to realize was the sheer volume and importance of what these two firms had built together, and how quietly they had done it.

When I looked at the Lehigh-Scheid project history, I was surprised. Not just by the volume — nearly 400 projects in four decades — but at the customers: Bank of America, Nissha Graphic Controls, Morton Salt, DuPont, Praxair/Linde, Rosina Foods and Try-It Distributing to name a few. Big names in Western New York's economy. And in many cases, clients had returned again and again. I had no idea, and that's not a knock against my predecessors. Because when a partnership works this well, it doesn't need to be loud. But it does deserve a closer look.

A Relationship Built on a Cold Call

The story starts simply enough. Dave Knauss cold-called McGard about a project in Lehigh's very first month of business in 1984. McGard requested what we now know as a design-build project, which meant Dave needed an architect and fast. An industry recommendation led him to an equally young associate named Doug Scheid.

Dave called Doug. Something clicked. Doug eventually founded Scheid Architectural, and more than 40 years later, the partnership is still going strong. This is remarkable — most blind dates don't go this well.

What strikes me now, after having spent time with both teams, is how much they genuinely enjoy working together. There's a congenial atmosphere when Lehigh and Scheid people are in the room. No posturing, no turf protection — just two groups of professionals who have learned, over a long time, to trust each other completely.

Built to Prevent Problems

That trust shapes how the work gets done. It doesn't matter how the lead came in; each team trusts the other to drive the client relationship and pull them in at the right time. A design-build service is a win-win for clients because they don't have to shop for a designer and a builder; they get both at once. The team of Lehigh-Scheid brings deep experience in the market's industrial sector, especially with manufacturing facilities, and equal experience with office buildouts. Because of this, they can quickly shift from working on a project at Steuben Foods to the new

Empower Federal Credit Union offices. The process is all about collaboration between the client, Lehigh and Scheid. Done right, DB saves time and money. When contractors are involved in the design process, they can red-flag potential issues, find solutions and avoid change orders later. Scheid architects don't hand off drawings and disappear — they stay active through construction, showing up in the field alongside Lehigh's team.

The Proof Is In Relationships

McGard has been a Lehigh client since day one and has grown its campus to 325,000 square feet over the decades. That kind of continuity doesn't come from a low bid. It comes from two teams who work as one, and from trust and results earned one project at a time.

What I've come to understand these last few months is that this strategic partnership is less a business arrangement than a shared philosophy. Both organizations are here to serve — to understand a client's operation, identify what they need and deliver it on time, on budget and built to last. The work is the proof. And the fact that so many clients keep coming back is the most honest measure of success there is.





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Ask the Expert: **Steve Rakvica**

Director of Design Services at Encorus Group

This issue's expert is Steve Rakvica, director of design services at Encorus Group. Steve joined Encorus in early 2020 as manager of the Project Management Office, overseeing project managers and million-dollar contracts with the Department of Energy. After being impressed with the Lehigh team on an industrial project 15 years ago, Steve and his team have continued collaborating with us time and again.

Q: Tell us about Encorus Group — how did the company get started, and what was the vision behind it from the beginning?

A: Encorus Group was founded by Robert J. Runge, PE, in 1996 as a small civil and structural engineering firm in Springville, New York, with a vision to deliver practical, high-quality solutions to local clients. The company has expanded across the country to include civil materials testing, non-destructive examination, mechanical integrity and regulated building materials services. In 2017, the firm rebranded as Encorus Group and has been a 100 percent employee-owned company (ESOP) since 2025.

Q: Encorus has grown significantly and is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. How has it grown to include the core services — architecture, engineering, testing, inspection and regulated building materials?

A: The increased core services go hand in hand with our growth. As Encorus strives to provide the best solutions for our federal, state and private clients across the United States, we needed a greater offering of capabilities and professional certifications across the Design Team and the Inspection & Testing Team. The growth of the company and the individuals in it has been awesome.

Q: Industrial new builds and facility repairs come with their own set of complications. How does your approach to problem-solving differ between a ground-up project and an emergency

repair situation where a manufacturer's production line is down?

A: A ground-up project allows for more time to investigate, brainstorm and design. An emergency repair needs engineers and construction services in the field immediately working together to solve the problem. The design solution needs to use available materials, equipment and labor. Encorus has enjoyed working with Lehigh on these emergency situations because Lehigh is able to pull together those resources even when it requires work around the clock.

Q: You work closely with manufacturers across Western New York. What is the most common recurring engineering problem you see at these facilities and how do you suggest it is solved?

A: The most common challenge is the quality of information. It is difficult to design a solution correctly and quickly when current drawings and documentation are not accurate or available. Facilities want an engineer to simply walk around and visually make any required observations. In these situations, it is important to have a construction team assist the engineer. The construction team is able to provide lifts, confined space monitoring, access under foundations or behind walls, assist with collecting measurements and the like. It would be awesome if facilities would proactively update the site drawings and then keep them current when alterations are made. Encorus and Lehigh can absolutely provide this service.



Q: What does a successful project look like to you — not just technically, but in terms of the client relationship and the outcome for their operation?

A: A project truly feels successful when the construction and commissioning are completed on schedule and on budget. Then, the client feels like they paid for a worthwhile effort and begins to trust the relationship. The first time that client calls back for more work, it feels great! We want the client to know we are an extension of their team and will be there when they need us.

Q: Looking at the next five to 10 years, how do you see the engineering needs of Western New York's industrial and manufacturing sector changing — and how is Encorus positioning itself to meet that?

A: Encorus believes that facilities will need more qualified support from consultants and construction services. Encorus is focused on growing our field engineering, inspection and testing services to be able to provide quick, turnkey services. Encorus is increasing its efforts to grow relationships with fabricators, vendors and contractors like Lehigh, which can provide a wide range of solutions and general contracting management. These relationships are critical to provide a fast response time and qualified teams.

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