

# Green Sheet

RUPPERT LANDSCAPE NEWSLETTER

1ST QUARTER 2021

*The Greensheet is our quarterly newsletter, which allows us to share general company information, including safety practices, profiles of our key jobs and community service initiatives, as well as personal achievements, including employee marriages, new babies, promotions and training certifications, in the hopes that it will provide unique insight into our company, our practices and most importantly, our people.*

## Overcoming Challenges and Looking Ahead to a Bright Future

By Phil Key, President

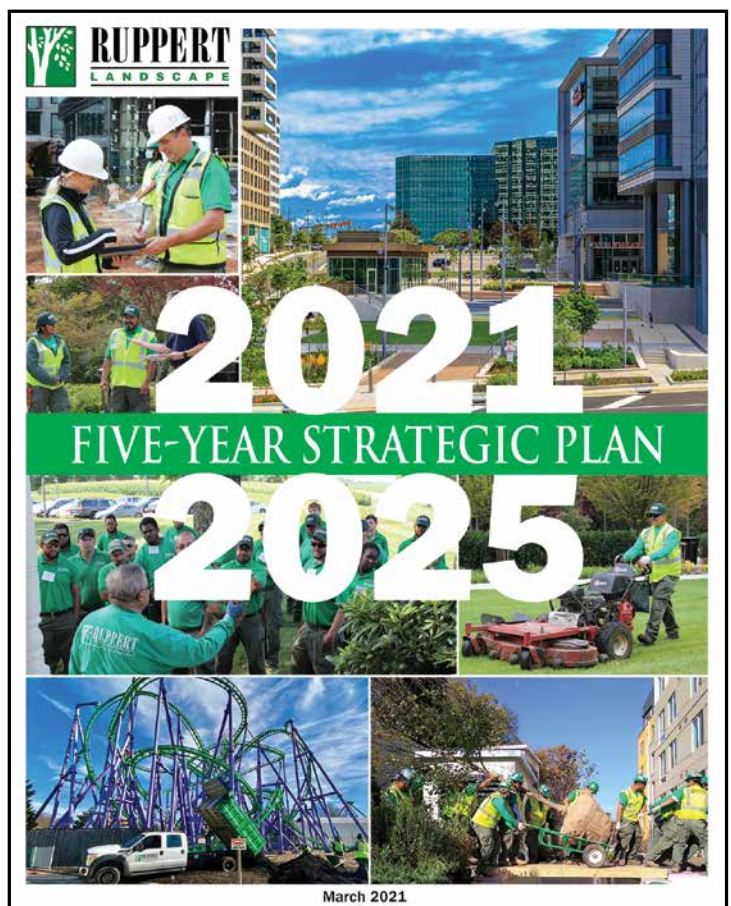


**W**hile this year's Management Development Day (MDD) and Awards Ceremony was different than years past, we didn't want to miss an opportunity to get together—at least virtually—to look back on our year, celebrate our accomplishments and align our plans for the future. Certainly, 2020 has been a year we will tell stories to our grandchildren about. We had to adapt to new safety protocols, commu-

nication challenges, ever-evolving customer concerns and labor shortages related to sick or quarantined employees. But even with those many obstacles, we've managed to stay the course, serve our customers and work with each other. I know I speak for the entire management team when I say how proud I am of our team. I am confident that whatever challenges lie ahead present us with an opportunity to learn, grow and expand. This past year reinforced that we are up to the challenge!

Our continued ability to adapt and adjust will play a pivotal role in achieving the goals that we have laid out in our Five-Year Plan (2020-2025). That means that we are constantly performing self-assessments, measuring ourselves against our plan, making adjustments based on market changes and internal suggestions received, and looking for new and improved ways we can meet or exceed the goals we've set. As we look to the next five years, we are planning for steady, conservative growth within both divisions: landscape construction at about 8.5% a year and landscape management at 10.5%.

With that growth comes the need for more branches and employees. Landscape construction will likely add two to three satellite locations to their existing five branches.



Satellite branches (the first of which was recently opened in Nashville, TN) will be supported by an established branch as they build a team that will live local. These will be run by an assistant branch manager, a position that has been recently added within the division. Our landscape management division, which currently has 21 branches, expects to add 10 new branches—most of which will be adjacent to existing

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## Recognizing Safety Company-Wide

By Dave Sanders, Director of Safety and Risk



First and foremost, we want to thank our team members throughout the company who have helped us create and maintain an excellent safety culture. As we know, safety is a team effort and it doesn't happen by accident. We build safety practices and principles into our everyday routines, hold ourselves accountable, and measure our success. To that end, we are proud to congratulate several employees and branches for excellent safety records in 2020. Thank you for making your workplace a safe environment for our people and for providing a quality, safe service for our customers!

### 2020 Field Manager Safety Awards

These employees met safety goals including a clean driving record, zero preventable incidents, and 100% of Tailgate Talks signed and returned.

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Luis Alvarado (LIM)      | • Rafael Lopez Perez (FOM)* |
| • Don Branch (VAL)         | • Chris Madden (BAM)        |
| • Joel Bravo (REM)         | • Bernard Markham (REM)     |
| • Charles Cassick (RIM)*   | • Angel Obando (LIM)        |
| • Augustin Cedillos (MDL)* | • Wilfredo Oquendo (LIM)    |
| • Will Charping (RAM)      | • Jeff Palmer (LIM)         |
| • Mark Doering (TXL)       | • Josue Rivas (BAM)         |
| • David Esquivel (GAL)     | • John Taylor (FRM)         |
| • Nelson Fuentes (ALM)     | • Adonis Vaughn (MAM)       |
| • Chris Gramley (LIM)      | • Felipe Zamora (NCL)       |
| • Chip Herring (GAL)       | • David Zeidler (NCL)       |

*\*These individuals have received this award for their second consecutive year.*

### 2020 Branch Safety Awards

These branches have the best overall safety record in their division.

DIVISION	BRANCH
Landscape Construction Division	Georgia
Landscape Management Division – North	Frederick
Landscape Management Division – South	Richmond East

### 2021 Branch Safety Representatives

These employees keep their branch safe by ensuring their branch is following all company policies and procedures related to safety. They do so through a variety of techniques including inspections, reporting, documenting, training, and making sure that the branch has all the proper tools and equipment in place for employees to work safely and efficiently.

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Bryson Berish (BAM)    | • Jonathan Leonard (NCL) |
| • Sean Campbell (VAL)    | • Eric Long (LAM)        |
| • Nick Cole (WHM)        | • Joe Mack (CAM)         |
| • Steve Dahowski (RIM)   | • Robert Micklis (CHM)   |
| • Alex Darnall (MDL)     | • Melissa Miller (LIM)   |
| • Matthew Davidson (FOM) | • Michael Moody (DCM)    |
| • Walt Dudovicz (FBM)    | • John Parsley (GAL)     |
| • Curtis Facemire (DEM)  | • Ryan Petroski (TXL)    |
| • William Funes (RSM)    | • Brian Petruska (GVM)   |
| • Jason Groff (TOM)      | • Robert Porter (DLM)    |
| • Tim Haines (FRM)       | • Jeff Sosa (DHM)        |
| • Greg Hardy (ALM)       | • Meg Specksgoor (REM)   |
| • Tyler Johnson (RAM)    | • Daniel Stutts (LIM)    |
| • Adrian Karver (KIM)    | • Jason Windley (WGM)    |
| • Brent Kelly (MAM)      |                          |

Congratulations to all of our safety award winners and thank you to our branch safety representatives for helping to keep safety top of mind as we go about our daily operations so that we all return home safely to our families each evening. Keep up the great work!



### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

For information about current career opportunities at Ruppert Landscape, please visit us at [www.ruppertlandscape.com/careers](http://www.ruppertlandscape.com/careers)



# Six Tips to Improve Communication

By Jason Dixon, Director of Business Development



**H**ave you ever been disappointed in the result of a conversation? Chances are you have, and the chance exists that it may have been your fault. Perhaps you're in a sales

or business development role and the prospect or client did something that you weren't expecting, such as not signing the contract with you or "going in another direction." Or, you're collaborating with someone else in your organization and they didn't follow your instructions and do the task that you expected them to do the way you wanted it done. It's easy to point the finger at the other party and chalk it up to them being a bad prospect or not paying attention to you. Instead, consider situations like this an opportunity to improve your own communication skills. Here are a few tips:

**1. Plan Ahead:** Whenever possible, prepare for a conversation

beforehand. Write out your plan, review the order in which you want to deliver the information and anticipate any questions that may arise. The more you're able to plan (especially for challenging conversations), the better your chances are that you'll deliver your message effectively.

**2. Pay attention:** When you are communicating with someone else, be completely focused on the conversation. Look for verbal and non-verbal clues about how the conversation may be going and don't get distracted with your mental to-do list—or worse yet, your phone. Being present and invested in your interactions can have a big impact on the outcome.

**3. Listen:** Listening skills allow you to make sense of and understand what another person is saying. In other words, it allows people to understand the meaning behind the words. Remember that many times people don't want an entertaining conversation partner, they just want someone to listen to them.

**4. Don't monopolize a conversation:** Find ways to communicate more succinctly with less fluff to ensure that people don't tune you out and miss the important things. Make it a point to pause and ask if the other person has any questions or requires any clarification—a gesture that can make people feel heard.

**5. Take cues from the other person:** Believe it or not, not everyone communicates in the same way you do. Some people are very visual and may be more focused on your body language. Others process information based more on sound, which might mean you'll need to be tuned into your speech cadence and volume of your voice. A good rule of thumb is to always match your style to the person you are communicating with.

**6. Follow Up:** When you've had a conversation with someone where there was a lot discussed, follow up in writing. There is a good chance that not every important thing you wanted to share will be remembered as you wanted it to be. By following up, you can reiterate the key points you discussed, and you can highlight any action items that came out of the meeting and list who is responsible for completing them. This adds a layer of accountability.

When it comes to communication, don't be afraid to look like you're trying too hard. More often than not, people will appreciate your preparation, courtesy and thoroughness. Being an effective communicator takes lots of practice and it doesn't always guarantee success. But the more intentional you are, the greater your chances are for achieving what you set out to accomplish—and making the other person feel valued in the process.





# Recruiting Season is in Full Swing

By Courtney Pohlit, Director of People & Recruiting



**A**s we gear up for a busy spring season, all of our branches are actively recruiting to make sure we have a full workforce to serve our customers. To help prepare for this, each branch in our landscape management division recently completed annual recruitment training and developed actions plans to attract new talent in our various locations. By focusing

more on our recruiting efforts year-round and having a solidified plan in place at the beginning of the year, we are better able to identify more opportunities to engage with potential applicants and ensure we have a smooth interview and onboarding process, especially as days get busier and focus is shifted to getting the job done.

Overall, the best source for bringing in new talent is always sphere of influence, regardless of geographic location. Holding regular discussions during weekly staff meetings helps to ensure all employees (especially crew members) are aware of current job openings and can provide referrals from their personal networks. Making the referral process into a competition can often spark great participation and involvement; have fun with it and offer up prizes or bonuses to the employee with the most referrals.

Some other key tips heard throughout branch training sessions include:

- Post flyers in local community centers, grocery stores, laundromats, church halls, apartment complexes, etc.
- Share Facebook job posts from our company page to your personal page to engage your network and encourage others to share on your behalf

- Engage with Vocational-Technical schools, local Jump Start programs, homeless shelters, and community colleges
- Join TurfNet and other online associations with job boards to reach targeted audiences interested in outdoor work and landscaping
- Host an open house at the branch to help people get to know our company and its culture (but be sure to hold it outside due to current COVID restrictions)

Another direction we've taken this year has been with the help of Pam Berrios, our director of multicultural training and development. With Pam's guidance, branches are becoming more active in local Facebook groups – specifically, where we can attract more diversified talent, utilizing our ads translated in Spanish for further reach. For example, when our Charlotte branch has a need for crew members, they could join a local Facebook group like Charlotte Job Hunters and share current openings to engage directly with job seekers in that area. If you need more guidance on utilizing social media channels, please reach out to Pam or marketing communications manager Camily Vernier for assistance.

Our branch teams face similar recruiting challenges every year, but with a more proactive approach followed by thorough onboarding and training, we can attract new employees who are a good fit for our culture and they will be more likely to have a long tenure, thereby improving our turnover rate and lessening the burden of staffing needs over time. If you have any other suggestions on how to spread the word, we would love to hear them—please reach out to your manager or to anyone in the HR/ Recruiting team!



*Our Raleigh, NC team held a socially distanced recruiting training earlier this year.*



# The De-Mulching Process on Trees

By **Chuck Whealton**, *Region Manager*



**H**ardwood mulch as a product, and mulching as a horticultural practice, has greatly evolved over the last fifty years, and not necessarily to the benefit of plants. The perceived value and purpose of mulching today is largely for the aesthetics. There has been a complete shift in the raw material, from bark to largely composted green waste and processed wood

mulch, which is mostly cellulose and has a slower rate of decomposition. In addition, commercial contracts routinely call for one or more annual applications of two inches or more of fresh mulch, without regard to the amount of mulch already present. All of this has resulted in an epidemic of over-mulched landscapes that pose a serious health risk to plants.

This is why, as contradictory as it sounds, de-mulching is a very necessary service we offer our customers.

## What is de-mulching?

De-mulching is the process of removing excess mulch, decomposed mulch and soil off of the tree saucer down to the root flare, which is the area at the base of a tree where the trunk transitions from trunk and bark tissues into root system tissues.

## Why is this an important and necessary process?

In short, over-mulch suffocates the plant. People hear that but are not really sure what it means, so I'll share a bit of plant biology to clarify. Root flare burial inhibits gas exchange and kills phloem cells, interfering with the downward movement of food to the root system, leading to root dieback, reduced water uptake and eventually the early death of the tree. A tree's vascular system is comprised of two types of tissue that transport food/energy, nutrients, and water: the xylem transports nutrients and water from roots to shoots, while the phloem transports food sugars from the shoots to the roots. In human terms, think of the xylem and phloem as the plant's veins and arteries.

## What are the visual signs of buried root flares and over-mulching of trees?

The obvious sign is not being able to visually locate the root flare. The first evidence that a buried root flare is negatively impacting tree health is a yellowing of the foliage and early leaf coloration and drop. Over time, symptoms include stunted leaf size, reduced rate of growth, and dieback in

the upper crown. This weakened state predisposes the tree to disease and a variety of other environmental factors.



*Over-Mulching*

Shallow-rooted trees such as maples, dogwoods, birch, ash, pin oak, spruce and eastern white pine are most susceptible to damage from root flare burial.

## What are the causes of root flare burial and things to avoid?

- Not tapering mulch to leave root flare exposed
- Applying mulch strictly for aesthetic purposes, in some cases multiple times per year
- Failure to cultivate and remove at least some amount of existing mulch. Trees should never have more than a total of three to four inches of mulch (old and new).
- Throwing edging debris into the tree saucer and covering it with extra mulch
- Not removing the soil saucer after establishment on a newly planted tree and instead, filling it in with soil or mulch.

## What should we keep in mind for a successful de-mulching?

- De-mulching should be performed for all trees that have a buried root flare. Trees in beds are not exempt from this process.
- This process is likely to be needed as a function of routine maintenance every five to seven years on average, assuming fresh mulching annually for aesthetics is a customer expectation and requirement.
- Original planting soil rings should be removed two to three years after initial planting.
- If addressed in time, declining trees will recover. Based on the severity of decline, trees may need monitoring and supplemental care.
- Mulching new plantings with hardwood mulch to aid initial establishment has been well documented as an accepted and specified horticultural practice, however, mulching existing landscapes more frequently, purely for the aesthetic value has presented new horticultural challenges.

You may be pleasantly surprised at the long-term benefits that this seemingly simple procedure can have on the overall health of your landscape. If you think your property is in need of a de-mulching treatment, contact your area manager to schedule an assessment.



## Planning Ahead Using A, B, C Time

By Ken Thompson, Director of Quality and Efficiency



**A**t the beginning of the year, we spend a lot of time planning for the year ahead – setting goals and implementing new practices to improve the quality of our

services. With spring just around the corner, how we approach our planning and tackle the inevitable time crunch that comes with the warmer weather will determine our success.

At Ruppert, we have found one that of the most effective ways to teach the importance of proper planning is to demonstrate **A, B, C time**:

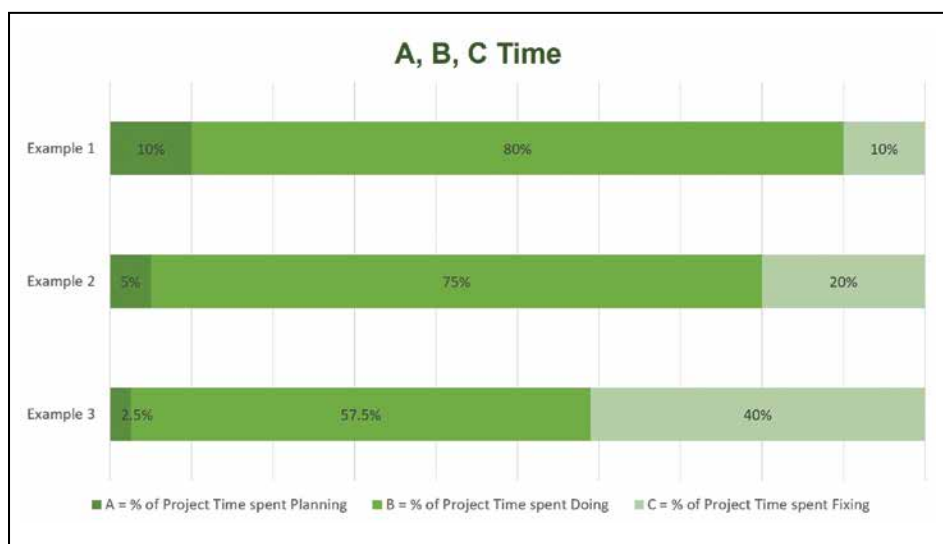
- **A time** represents planning which, while this occurs throughout the project, is most effective prior to starting the job
- **B time** is spent actually performing the work or completing a specific task
- **C time** is spent fixing and adjusting work performed or repairing any mishaps made along the way

Based on this premise, let's assume that in the world of contracting (both maintenance and construction jobs), ideally the planning phase should make up approximately 10% of the total time spent, while 80% should be spent performing work and 10% allocated for adjusting and fixing mistakes. This graph demonstrates that as we decrease planning (A time), the time spent fixing mistakes (C time) inevitably increases. Because our landscape maintenance division is so labor-intensive, mistakes are

often more visible and caught early on, but in landscape construction this can be especially deceptive as many mistakes may not be realized until the end of a project. For example, failure to double-check grading prior to pouring concrete could cost four to five times the initial cost to remove and repour, especially if the project is well underway and you then have to work around already completed structures and other trades on site.

you rush the planning, you almost guarantee that you will be fixing more mistakes on the back end of the job. This can reduce overall job quality, productivity and customer satisfaction and you are often left feeling disorganized and lacking control in your work and even your personal life, as you spend more time trying to catch up and fix mistakes.

By spending adequate time and energy planning ahead, we are able



As A time is initially cut in half from 10% to 5%, C time doubles from 10% to 20% and B time is thereby reduced from 80% to 75%. As planning time is further reduced to 2.5%, C time is again doubled to 40%, reducing B time to 57.5%. We refer to this as the Rule of 2.5: if you reduce A time by half, you will double C time.

Looking at it laid out this simply you might wonder, why would anyone want to reduce planning time? But thinking about the many concurrent projects we have on our plates, with a multitude of deadlines and customer expectations to meet, it's easy to understand how we may feel compelled to rush the planning phase and get straight to work. This is where we fall into the trap, because once

to strategize about the most effective ways to perform tasks and reduce the risk of errors, which enables us to spend our customer's money wisely and increases our profitability, which keeps us moving forward. Keep A, B, C time in mind as you start your next project so that we can continue providing value to our customers as we head into spring and beyond.



## Appreciate and Celebrate

Congratulations to our Enhancement Sales Contest winners: **Robbie Wallace (ALM)** for November, **Christa Bush (ALM)** for December, and **Matt Davidson (FOM)** for January. Enhancement sales are critical to our success because our customers routinely state that a significant way we can improve is by being more proactive in suggesting ways they can better maintain and improve their property. Our enhancement sales recognition contest awards each month's top performer with an engraved silver coin to be displayed in the branch (and one to keep) as well as a small bonus and company-wide recognition.



**Robbie Wallace (ALM)**



**Christa Bush (ALM)**



**Matt Davidson (FOM)**

Congratulations to **Christa Bush (ALM)**, **Matt Jones (RIM)**, **Daniel Stutts (LIM)** and **Robbie Wallace (ALM)** for each achieving over **\$1M in enhancement sales** for their branch in 2020. We thank them for helping us grow so that we can continue to improve our services for our new and existing clients and provide a great place to work for our team members! **Christa Bush** and **Robbie Wallace** are pictured above.



**Matt Jones (RIM)**



**Daniel Stutts (LIM)**

Congratulations to **Donavon Stout (TOM)** and **Jared Rothman (FOM)** for achieving over **\$1M in maintenance sales** for their branches in 2020.



**Donavon Stout (TOM)**



**Jared Rothman (FOM)**

**Ronnie Few (GAL)** attended the 2020 Excellence in Construction & Safety Awards Gala in December to represent Ruppert and receive The Platinum STEP (safety training evaluation process) Award. STEP was founded in 1989 as a safety benchmarking and improvement tool and has evolved into a world-class safety management system that dramatically improves safety performance among participants regardless of company size or type of work. Participating ABC member firms measure their safety processes and policies on 25 key components through a detailed questionnaire with the goal of implementing or enhancing safety programs that reduce jobsite incidents.







# Annual Awards Ceremony

**On February 19th, employees were recognized for outstanding achievement in 2020 during our virtual awards ceremony.**

Congratulations to **Michael Vispi (LIM)** who was honored with the **Clyde Vadner Merit Award** for demonstrating consistent hard work and dedication leading to exceptional contributions to the organization.



Congratulations to **Paul Pestun (CORP-LAND)** who was honored with the **Achievement Award** for demonstrating outstanding job execution and achieving high-quality results.



Congratulations to our **Accounting and Payroll** department, who were collectively honored with the **Distinction Award** for their dedication and devotion to the principles and ideals of our company.



**Back Row (L to R):**  
Miriam Brittle, Keisha Davillier, Lily Novakova, Lauren Dixon, Martin Penchev, Amanda Timmins  
**Front Row (L to R):**  
Michelle Miller, Edelmira Hernandez, Tina Holt, Jennifer Saah, Darren Woods, Hunter Thompson, Taylor Benoit, Jibran Misbah  
**Not Pictured:**  
Victoria Attwood, Ashley Heller, Faith Holloway, Angie Magnanelli

Congratulations to the employees who were honored as **Branch Impact Award** winners in their respective branches. Each was selected by their peers for their outstanding dedication and contributions that have made a positive impact on their branch.



**Tony Aliquo (MDL)**



**Erick Arias (NCL)**



**Joe Beretz III (TXL)**



**Ross Bretches (RSM)**



**Marvin Clermont (GAL)**



**Antoine Cooper (DCM)**

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# Annual Awards Ceremony



**Wendy De La O**  
(VAL)



**Walter Dudovicz**  
(FBM)



**Isabel Flores**  
(WHM)



**John Gregory**  
(LAM)



**Art Haggan**  
(MAM)



**Haley Jacobson**  
(ALM)



**Tyler Johnson**  
(RAM)



**José Javier Macias**  
(CAM)



**Jamie Martin**  
(REM)



**Robert Micklis**  
(CHM)



**Chris Moyer**  
(KIM)



**Billy Nichols**  
(WGM)



**Josh Nuckols**  
(RIM)



**Rad Petkov**  
(CORP)



**Jared Rothman**  
(FOM)



**Donavon Stout**  
(TOM)



**Daniel Stutts**  
(LIM)



**Dave Wakeling**  
(DEM)



**Tyler Wertz**  
(BAM)



**Jeff Williams**  
(GVM)



**Payton Zudal**  
(FRM)

# CONGRATULATIONS!

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# Annual Awards Ceremony

Congratulations to the employees who were honored as **Crewmembers of the Year** in their respective branches. Each was selected for their superior self-motivation and exceptional field production.



**Claudia Alvarado**  
(GVM)



**Luis Aparicio**  
(ALM)



**Antonio Bedolla  
Nuñez** (TOM)



**José G. Benjume-Ortiz**  
(LIM)



**Trevor Bradley**  
(NCL)



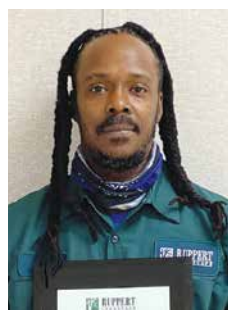
**José Canales**  
(DCM)



**Ricardo Chávez Perdomo**  
(LAM)



**Andrew Craig**  
(RSM)



**Tim Evans**  
(BAM)



**William Gray**  
(CHM)



**Heather Inman**  
(REM)



**Antonio Rafael López**  
(WHM)



**Delvin Maldonado**  
(FOM)



**Andrés Medina**  
(MAM)



**Jeffrey Eugene Molina**  
(RAM)



**Jesse Newman**  
(WGM)



**Allison Oppel**  
(DEM)



**Nathan Parker**  
(FBM)



**Bryan Robles**  
(KIM)



**Héctor Rodríguez**  
(GAL)

## Not Pictured:

Billy Gray (RIM), Kevin Henley (TXL),  
Francois Ortiz Marroquín (FRM),  
Santos Perdomo (MDL),  
José A. Reyes (CAM),  
Otman Urbina (VAL)

# CONGRATULATIONS!





# Employee Development

On January 18th - 20th and March 3rd - 5th, we held an Elevate Leadership Training course with the goal of building confidence and leadership skills for our Spanish-speaking employees so they can play a key role in serving our customers and leading our teams.



On February 23rd - 24th, we held New Field Manager Orientation (NFMO) at our corporate campus. This two-day program is designed to teach new managers the basic skills they need to succeed, along with the Ruppert quality standards that we hold ourselves to.



In January and February, each of our landscape management branches held Recruiting, Selecting and Retaining training sessions and worked with their team to develop action plans to attract new talent to our ranks.





# Celebrating Women in Construction

**W**omen in Construction Week (March 7th-13th) is aimed at highlighting women in the construction industry and raising awareness of the growing role and opportunities available for women in the industry. To help celebrate, we asked women working in our landscape construction division to share their experiences and their thoughts on the opportunities for women in the field of construction.

## Janelle Stewart (VAL)

*Project Manager*



"I have worked in the construction industry for 25 years. I started my career in miscellaneous and ornamental metals. I owned my own business for 15 years and worked for Ruppert as a

subcontractor for over 10 years before deciding to close my business for personal reasons. I applied to Ruppert because I really enjoyed working with Ruppert as a subcontractor and felt that the company's values and mission statement resonated with me personally. I love getting out in the field and figuring out how to build things intelligently, efficiently, and working with other subs to create beautiful projects.

There are more and more women working in construction. It's hard to answer a question like 'why more women should consider a career in construction' without making gender generalizations, but that being said, I believe that culturally women are predisposed to focusing on collaboration and organization which are skills that are indispensable to being successful in the construction industry."

## Brittany Bellison (MDL)

*Crew Member*



"I decided to come work for the construction division at Ruppert because I saw the amazing work that gets accomplished and the super friendly atmosphere in the working

field. What I love most about my job is the friendly co-workers and all the opportunities this job has to offer.

I believe more women should consider a career in the construction field because of all of the knowledge and opportunities that are found in this field of work. I have learned so many things that I use at and away from work."

## Madison Norton (TXL)

*Estimator*



"Construction is a science and an art; there's established means and methods on how to accomplish our work, but a true leader knows that it takes a bit of creativity to be the most successful. This

type of creativity and resourcefulness fits my personality and getting to work with a team of like-minded people is just a cherry on top.

I got my internship with Ruppert by lucky chance. Texas A&M requires an internship in order to graduate, and I ended up going to both career fairs offered. Ruppert was at the second career fair, and after talking to Mike Ward and Patrick Luzier in an interview,

I got the offer letter. My internship was the best experience in my college career and working with my team made it so. It was hard work, but it was the most rewarding when my team was successful.

Construction is not for the faint of heart. It's a tough job, with stressful situations on a daily, if not hourly, basis. But, in order to have the strongest, most successful team, you need diverse mindsets and creativities. Women are essential in creating that successful diverse team because of their unique experiences and creative problem-solving skills."

## Kat Lovell (GAL)

*Assistant Project Manager*



"There's a sense of accomplishment and competitive compensation for women in the construction industry. I'm passionate about the belief that women can add volumes to the success

of the industry, introducing new ideas and approaches that have yet to be explored. My personal mantra is "diversity drives innovation," and fresh new ideas come from that style of thinking.

I joined Ruppert in large part because it was an opportunity to learn new skills and improve myself, along with the stability and credibility that comes with working for a large successful company. I was personally looking for employment that encouraged a balance in my professional and personal life. Ruppert in my opinion gives the tools and support to obtain success and that balance."

*Continued on page 13*





# Celebrating Women in Construction

## Christina Ridings (NCL)

Contract Administrator



"My career with Ruppert started out at corporate (mainly the accounting department) and within five years I took a position working for the maintenance

division. A year or so later, I left the company for a short period of time when I moved to NC. I was ecstatic to hear the branch administrator position for the construction branch had become available, which is how I ended up on the construction side of the business. I took on the contract administrator role roughly two years after and can honestly say it is my favorite position yet! I love being involved in production, working closely with my branch manager and project manager teams, learning new things every day, facing

new challenges, and more importantly growing within my career and as an individual.

I think more women should consider careers in the construction industry because it gives you a sense of confidence, physical/mental strength, and achievement. There are limitless opportunities for growth professionally and personally as well as in the field or administratively. You'd be surprised how quick you can develop a passion within the construction Industry."

## Overcoming Challenges and Looking Ahead . . . Continued from page 1

branches which gives us better market presence, route density and close resources for support. In 2021, we are opening new offices in Durham (NC), Chantilly (VA) and relocating our West Grove, PA branch to Wilmington, DE.

On the employee side, we will continue our focus on training and development to ensure that our existing team is positioned to take on any new opportunities that arise. We will also be looking to expand our employee base, bringing our count up to 2700 by 2025 (nearly 1000 more people than we have today). This should provide good opportunities for our existing employees to grow their careers with the company. To backfill those positions and hire

the team we will need to support our growth, our goal is to be an employer of choice so that we can continue to attract and retain the best and the brightest.

Another positive offshoot of our growth will be our giving. By 2025, with our commitment to give back 5% of our profit, our charitable giving will increase to \$3.3M over the next five years, up from \$2.7M over these past five. These contributions, which are earned through your hard work, will have a huge impact in the communities where we work and live!

What was shared at our virtual Management Development Day and in this quick recap is just a sampling of some of our initiatives. There are many

more—so please ask your manager for details about our Five-Year Plan if you're interested. We are an open book company and our goal is to ensure that all employees are aware of the company's journey and can play an active role in its future growth. As we emerge from what has been a very challenging period, we can feel confident knowing that we have the resources and support of our team to overcome anything that may lie ahead. I have no doubt that together we have a promising future.

## Branch Abbreviations

**ALM** Alexandria Maintenance (VA)  
**BAM** Baltimore Maintenance (MD)  
**CAM** Camp Hill Maintenance (PA)  
**CHM** Charlotte Maintenance (NC)  
**CORP** Corporate Office (MD)  
**DCM** D.C. Maintenance (DC)  
**DEM** Delmarva Maintenance (DE)  
**DHM** Durham Maintenance (NC)  
**DLM** Dulles Maintenance (VA)  
**FBM** Fredericksburg Maintenance (VA)

**FOM** Forestville Maintenance (MD)  
**FRM** Frederick Maintenance (MD)  
**GAL** Georgia Landscape (GA)  
**GVM** Gainesville Maintenance (VA)  
**KIM** King of Prussia Maintenance (PA)  
**LAM** Laytonsville Maintenance (MD)  
**LIM** Lilburn Maintenance (GA)  
**MAM** Mableton Maintenance (GA)  
**MDL** Maryland Landscape (MD)  
**NBL** National Landscape (MD)

**NCL** North Carolina Landscape (NC)  
**RAM** Raleigh Maintenance (NC)  
**REM** Richmond East Maintenance (VA)  
**RIM** Richmond Maintenance (VA)  
**RSM** Richmond South Maintenance (VA)  
**TOM** Toughkenamon Maintenance (PA)  
**TXL** Texas Landscape (TX)  
**VAL** Virginia Landscape (VA)  
**WGM** Wilmington Maintenance (DE)  
**WHM** White Marsh Maintenance (MD)



# Movin' on Up



**William Brown (DEM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Marvin Clermont** promoted from ops. mgr. (GAL) to assc. branch mgr. (Nashville)



**Stephen DeWeese (LIM)** promoted from area mgr. to assc. branch mgr.



**Drew Dumann (RAM)** promoted from assc. branch mgr. to branch mgr.



**Dan Flake** promoted from production mgr. (VAL) to ops. mgr. (NCL)



**Tom Flint** promoted from assc. branch mgr. (LAM) to branch mgr. (DLM)



**Daniel Gilbert** promoted from asst. project mgr. (MDL) to area mgr. (LAM)



**Leo Gottgens (RIM)** promoted from field mgr. to bus. development mgr.



**Eric Hastings (DEM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Brandon Horne (MAM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Heather Inman (REM)** promoted from crew member to asst. field mgr.



**Preston Irving (DEM)** promoted from crew member to asst. field mgr.



**Brent Kelly (MAM)** promoted from area mgr. to assc. branch mgr.



**Brian Kinsella (KIM)** promoted from assc. branch mgr. to branch mgr.



**Luis LaBonte (VAL)** promoted from bus. developer to assc. branch mgr.



**Jamaal Lewis (MAM)** promoted from crew member to asst. field mgr.



**Zonia Lopez-Guerra** promoted from asst. branch admin. (GVM) to branch admin. (DLM)



**Michael Moody (DCM)** promoted from area mgr. to assc. branch mgr.



**Allison Oppel (DEM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Hunter Phelps (GAL)** promoted from intern to asst. field mgr.



**Kevin Rajk** promoted from field mgr. (LAM) to area mgr. (DCM)



**Ryan Seeley (DEM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Chris Southworth** promoted from sr. estimator (TXL) to assc. branch mgr. (NCL)



**Kim Tovar** promoted from field mgr. (RAM) to purchaser (NCL)



**Brad Ulco (CAM)** promoted from field mgr. to area mgr.



**Donte Walker (MAM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Dakota Williams (MAM)** promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.

## Not Pictured:

**Jeff Bodine (LAM)** promoted from field mgr. to area mgr.







# Major Milestones

*A hearty congratulations and best wishes to:*

## RECENTLY ENGAGED/MARRIED

**Scott Hurst (RIM)** married his wife, Hannah, on April 18, 2020.



**Travis Roberson (RIM)** married his wife, Jamie, on November 20, 2020.



## PROUD PARENTS

**Marvin Clermont (GAL)** and his wife, Mia, welcomed a girl, Malia Paige, on February 24th.



**Emil Saweros (CORP-MAINT)** and his wife, Sherin, welcomed a girl, Rachel, on January 7th.



## NEW HOMEOWNERS

**Zachary Johnson (REM)** bought a new house in New Kent, VA



Area manager, Chris White, hands Zachary a house warming gift.

## OVER-ACHIEVERS

**Lily Novakova (CORP-ACCT)** earned her U.S. Citizenship on January 22nd.



## Movin' Sideways

**Calvin Kom (GAL)** transferred from asst. project mgr. to estimator



**Caroline Ianni** transferred from area mgr. (GVM) to business developer (DLM)

**Sam Wells** transferred from (RAM) to (DHM) as branch manager





## New Faces

*We welcome the following new employees to Ruppert's growing ranks:*



**Kody Barbour  
(RAM)**  
Area Mgr.



**Darren Bass  
(GAL)**  
Project Mgr.



**Josh Buskirk  
(GAL)**  
Project Mgr.



**Katelynn Cone  
(NCL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.



**Jerry Davis  
(LIM)**  
Field Mgr.



**Dennis Dewitt  
(RAM)**  
Field Mgr.



**Josh Escue  
(GAL)**  
Project Mgr.



**Nathan Frazer  
(MAM)**  
Area Mgr.



**Jim Rall  
(KIM)**  
Area Mgr.



**Wyatt Hall  
(GAL)**  
Intern



**Daniel Hernández  
(LIM)**  
Asst. Field Mgr.



**Keith Hollister  
(TXL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.



**Michael Kramer  
(TXL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.



**Jack Kulp  
(LIM)**  
Asst. Field Mgr.



**Cullen O'Neill  
(NCL)**  
Field Mgr.



**Marcus Rivera  
(TXL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.



**Chris Rock-Andre  
(GAL)**  
Project Mgr.

### Not Pictured:

**Stacey Hicks  
(NCL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.



**And welcome to our new and returning crew members!**