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Hamilton Stern Construction, LLC finds new, permanent home in Pittsford, N.Y.

New, young construction management and general contracting firm goes from leased space to the purchase and renovation of a permanent office/warehouse

It took 12 years, but the dream that Justin Hamilton and Chris Stern had when they were civil engineering students together at Rochester Institute of Technology has come true: the formation of Hamilton Stern Construction, LLC in 2010 and the move from leased office facilities to a permanent and newly renovated office/warehouse facility in Pittsford, N.Y.

Initially working out of leased space on Humboldt Street in Rochester, the firm made the move to purchase its own facility in late 2011 and finished a major renovation in March of 2012, creating 5,000 sq. feet of offices, reception area and conference room as well a storage/shop area.

Their new building and location - 3850 Monroe Ave. (next to the Sutherland Service Center) in Pittsford, N.Y. 14534 - used to be The Three Crowns custom gift shop. Their web site is www.hamiltonstern.com and the phone number is (585) 586-8101.

The newly formed firm – which specializes in commercial, healthcare, higher education, industrial and specialized residential construction – already has a number of major projects completed or in progress in the Rochester area and elsewhere. These include:

Maplewood Nursing Home (Webster) - dining room & lounge renovation

RG&E Headquarters (Rochester) – restroom renovation

Niagara Falls Air Force Base (Niagara Falls) - building renovations

Tire World Auto Service Center of Webster (Webster) – 7,000 square foot addition and renovation to existing automotive care facility

Dynalab (Rochester) - 50,000 square foot office/production/warehouse renovation

Drapery Industries (Rochester) – build out of corporate offices and production areas

Finger Lakes Health (Geneva) – renovation of multiple medical suites

Branch Acupuncture (Pittsford) - office renovation

Cayuga Centers (Rochester) - 15,000 square foot transformation of warehouse space into a medical facility

Chaintreuil Jensen Stark Architects (Rochester) – build-out of corporate offices

ROC Brewing (Rochester) – retail space

DeWalt Stanley Black & Decker (Henrietta) – build-out of retail store

Savers (Henrietta) – 36,000 square foot build-out of retail facility

Among the residential projects they manage are additions, entire house remodels, home theatres, wine cellar/cigar rooms, high-end kitchens, elaborate basement renovations, and master suites.

As construction managers, Hamilton Stern provides a number of key services to its clients, including budgeting, estimating and cost control; project planning, phasing and scheduling; design-build construction; project management and supervision; and vendor and materials management. They can take a project from site selection and feasibility, to the creation and supervision of the design-build team, to the final furnishings. Their projects range in size from \$25,000 residential projects to \$5 million commercial projects.

From the Abstract to the Concrete

Hamilton Stern Construction was a dream back in 1998, when Justin came to Rochester from the Albany/Schenectady area and Chris came from Orchard Park to enroll as undergraduates at R.I.T. As they got to know each other, they found themselves in the same classes and having similar career interests. They became roommates, played on the R.I.T. men’s basketball team together, and dreamt of the day they would not only work together but form and run their own company.

As with the start of many new companies, founders first gain experience working for other, established companies, sometimes for many years before branching out on their own.

After several RIT co-op assignments and graduation in 2003, Justin served as a project engineer with MLB Construction Services in Malta, NY (north of Albany, near Saratoga Lake); in 2004 he joined Mazzarella & Cannan, LLC/Humboldt Street Properties in Rochester as a project manager/superintendent. His experience there encompasses residential, commercial and educational construction.

Chris completed several RIT co-op assignments, including work on the \$750 million Cooper River Bridge in South Carolina. After graduation and a stint as a project engineer for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, he and Justin worked together at MLB Construction. In 2007, Chris returned to Rochester as a senior project manager for LeCesse Construction. He earned a master's degree in business administration in 2009 via RIT's Executive MBA Program. Chris's engineering and management experience encompasses all phases of design and construction in health care, educational, residential and retail applications.

All Hands on Deck

Their 2003 undergraduate degrees in civil engineering and construction management are similar and Chris and Justin both take hands-on, out-in-the-field roles for their clients. Justin is known for his creative approach to solving construction and engineering problems as they occur out in the field. In addition to his direct client responsibilities, Chris has taken on a number of office and administrative duties, such as estimates, billing, accounts payable, permits, etc.

Brothers in Arms

It is no understatement to say their professional partnership is a blast. "When I come to work each day, I'm working with my best friend," says Chris. "We work hard and love what we do, and that enables us to give excellent value to our clients."

"We have similar trains of thought," says Justin. "And while we may focus on different details of any particular project, our philosophical basis of honesty and integrity is the same."

Another result of their friendship: Chris met his future wife, Courtney, in 2006 at Justin's wedding to Sheena.

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Editors: Chris Stern is from Orchard Park; he attended Orchard Park High School
Justin Hamilton is from Schenectady; he attended Schalmont High School.
Both are residents of Pittsford, N.Y.