

CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS YOU CAN USE

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A Message from Carina

It is a privilege to serve as the Executive Director of the Public Building Commission of Chicago, the agency responsible for building and renovating public facilities and infrastructure throughout our great City and County.

I am proud to say that over the past six years as Executive Director, our remarkable team of dedicated public servants has improved policies and procedures that have directly contributed to the PBC's measurable success.

As I welcome you to the 2023 edition of Constructive News You Can Use, I would like to remind you that the PBC remains focused on our excellent record of exemplary cost and schedule performance. At the PBC, we implement a strong project delivery approach with established performance metrics and controls, with the end goal of delivering projects on-time and on-budget.

In addition, because we know how important it is to bring opportunities to our neighborhoods, we also continue to strengthen our commitment to our communities. Through increased community outreach efforts, we continue to work to promote and educate all on the PBC contract provisions and our bid incentives that encourage Minority- and Women-owned businesses participation as well as a local diverse workforce.

In 2023, the PBC plans to continue the good work of bringing public facilities and infrastructure to Chicago's neighborhoods. The controls and efficiencies are firmly in place, and we will advance our efforts and our advocacy to find new ways to make necessary investments in our communities.

We hope that you enjoy our newsletter.

Sincerely,



Carina E. Sánchez
PBC Executive Director



Lifelong Community Organizer Joins PBC's Board of Commissioners

Twenty plus years of community engagement and social service experience has prepared Joyce Chapman to help shape Chicago's built environment as the newest member of the Public Building Commission of Chicago's (PBC) Board of Commissioners. With her Board appointment, Ms. Chapman becomes a part of a governing body that advises the PBC on the construction and renovation of municipal buildings, facilities and infrastructure in Chicago.

Serving as a member of the Chicago Board of Education, the Far South Community Action Council, CAPS Facilitator, Chicago Police Community Policing Advisory Panel, Gately Park Advisory Council and Neighborhood Housing Services Advisory Board, Ms. Chapman has dedicated her life to ensuring that all children and their families receive a quality education, enhanced public safety and adequate housing.

"The PBC is uniquely structured to plan, design construct and manage facilities and infrastructure projects for entities across the Chicago metropolitan region," Chapman said. "I am grateful for this appointment and look forward to continuing the important and excellent work of the PBC as they deliver valuable public amenities in a way that illustrates excellent stewardship of the public funds, all while affording every Chicagoan an opportunity to enjoy these facilities and the services they provide."

Chapman also founded the Woman Empowered Civic Engagement group, which has been recognized for challenging and championing the

task of women's involvement in city, county, state and federal legislation. In addition, Chapman served as the Vice President of the National Community Based Organization Network who focuses on involving, engaging and empowering community organizations.

"Commissioners serve as representatives of various government entities or serve because of their recognized expertise in development, finance, commerce or community," Carina E. Sanchez, PBC Executive Director, said. "We are honored that Ms. Chapman has agreed to add her skills and expertise to serve on the PBC's Board of Commissioners and join the other business and civic leaders who dedicates their time and expertise to public infrastructure improvements that shape our communities and our future."





First Generation America Transforming Architecture and Engineering in Chicago

Santiago Garcia

President | CEO of HOH Group, Inc., Architects | Engineers

Santiago Garcia, a first-generation American, is the President and CEO of HOH Group, Inc., Architects | Engineers. He previously had a thriving career in environmental sampling before acquiring The HOH Group in 2019. This full-service architecture and engineering firm specializes in architecture, construction management, and civil, structural, and MEP design.

Under Garcia’s leadership, the HOH Group has expanded its team and implemented mentorship programs to support career advancement for others. The PBC had the opportunity to talk to Santiago and received insightful answers to a series of questions, which we’re excited to share with readers of Constructed News You Can Use.

Why did you choose this field after environmental sampling and materials testing?

As the owner of an Environmental sampling and materials testing business, I observed a lack of

minority firms in the industry. While more Hispanic-owned businesses started to emerge over time, I realized that there were still very few true A & E firms that were minority-owned. With a strong belief in my ability to provide additional services in this area, I made the decision to acquire the HOH Group in 2019. This acquisition was significant because it marked one of the first instances of a minority-owned company purchasing a non-minority-owned prime.

You started your company in 2019, how many employees do you have at HOH Group?

We are now proudly over 50 and still growing.

Tell me some of the challenges and/or advantages of being a small or minority led firm?

We prioritize providing exceptional service and establishing the company as a reputable minority-

valuable partnership to clients, not simply to fulfill diversity quotas. The company’s minority-owned status also presents opportunities to partner with large national firms. However, the challenges of managing finances and cash flow are ever-present when operating in the public sector. Another critical obstacle is attracting and retaining top-tier Architects and Engineers, which remains a competitive task for the company.

How can the industry increase representation for minorities at all levels in architecture?

It’s important to create avenues for minority-owned architectural firms to offer end-to-end services on projects. Building a successful portfolio of full project completion can enable these firms to pursue similar projects in the future. Public agencies are an ideal starting point to provide such opportunities and empower minority-owned architectural firms

How do you find out about prime or subcontracting opportunities to sustain your business?

We subscribe to all government agency notification lists and attend industrial organization seminars and conferences to keep our name in front of people and find opportunities to bid on. This is a numbers game so you need to submit as many proposals as possible.

You have worked in several genres of “construction” please tell me how has that experience helped you to be the first minority owner to acquire a majority firm?

There is limited types of services that many minority firms provide. I learned that I needed to expand my services. The A&E firms have the ability to provide services from inception through final construction.

Explain your role on the current PBC projects and how you have incorporated the work ethic you learned from your parents into your

business today?

My parents came from Mexico without any education, they did not know the culture or the language. They had high expectations for me and my siblings and emphasized education, hard work and commitment in whatever we do, this was the foundation on which they raised us.

Last year we were given an opportunity to work for PBC on the rehabilitation and upgrading of two buildings. I met with my team and explained how important it is to understand and learn the PBC process, commit to the agreed upon scope and to work hard at making a first project a success.

How have you helped the next generation of small or minority architecture firms get a foothold into the industry?

We are constantly mentoring smaller firms and recommending them to our current partner firms that we feel provide excellent services.

What changes would you like to see in the industry that will further help small or minority led architecture firms prosper?

I would like to see minority firms given percentages of projects that have a significant role in the overall development of the project. It allows the firm to really learn how a project is set up and monitored throughout.

PBC Completes New Building for Belmont-Cragin Elementary School

The Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC), Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Chicago Public School leaders join parents, teachers and students for a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly constructed 83,000 square foot Belmont-Cragin Elementary School and Early Childhood Center. The new building, located on Fullerton and Meade Avenues, offers students access to a black box theater, a music room, a library, an art room, and 32 modern classrooms with scenic views of Riis Park.

“The school community has long argued that a new building is necessary because the existing school was overcrowded, falling apart and couldn’t meet the demands of the neighborhood,” Ald. Ariel Reboyras (30th Ward) said. “The ribbon cutting for the official opening of the newly constructed Belmont-Cragin

Elementary School was a culmination of several years of persistence on the parts of parents, teachers, administrators and advocates.”

The PBC oversaw the construction of the school’s new, three-story building which will accommodate approximately 500 students in preschool through eighth grade, with room to accept more. The \$44 million building houses a number of classrooms, as well as science labs, a computer lab, an art room, a library and a gymnasium with a stage. An adjoining community center offers social and emotional learning workshops, dual-language instruction, and supportive services for immigrant families.

tremendous benefits to the surrounding neighborhood,” Carina E. Sanchez, PBC’s Executive Director said. “With direct connection to the adjacent Chicago Park District Fieldhouse, the new building promotes community integration and synergy with shared-use programmatic features.”

The placement of the school’s site on the Park District’s Riis Park has triggered renovations within the fieldhouse. The shared-use gymnasium will be accessible to Park District patrons within the school after-hours, weekends and summers. However, circulation to the fieldhouse’s three levels remain independent from the school with lockable doors between the separate entities to meet Public Schools’ security standards during school hours.

The Belmont-Cragin Elementary School project achieved an 11.45% community hiring and exceed expectations for the hiring of minority and female journeyworkers, apprentices, laborers.

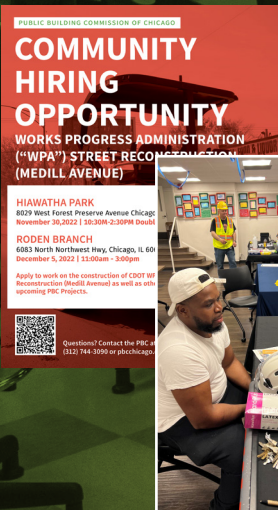
“Since 2013, this community has been advocating for a new school building that would hold space to bring all of the students together in one place, not fragmented in multiple different buildings. And guess what folks? Today, you got it done,” Mayor Lightfoot said.





PBC Participates in the 2023 Construction Summit

The PBC participated in the 2023 annual Construction Summit. This event provides residents and business owners an unparalleled opportunity to network and gain information about upcoming construction and construction-related projects in the City of Chicago. In addition, attendees could meet with 80 exhibitors representing all levels of government, City of Chicago Assist Agencies, and other anchor organizations in the business industry. The Summit also provided an opportunity to participate in the Business-to-Business matchmaking experience and engage with industry leaders, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and other businesspeople that influence the construction industry's future in the City of Chicago.



Community Hiring Intake

In 2022, the PBC hosted ten Community Hiring Intake Sessions in various Chicago neighborhoods. During these intake sessions, all interested and qualified candidates applied for hiring opportunities on active as well as upcoming PBC projects. In 2023, the PBC will host a series of virtual community hiring intake sessions. For more information on project hiring opportunities please see our website <https://pbcchicago.com/doing-business/community-hiring-events/>

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