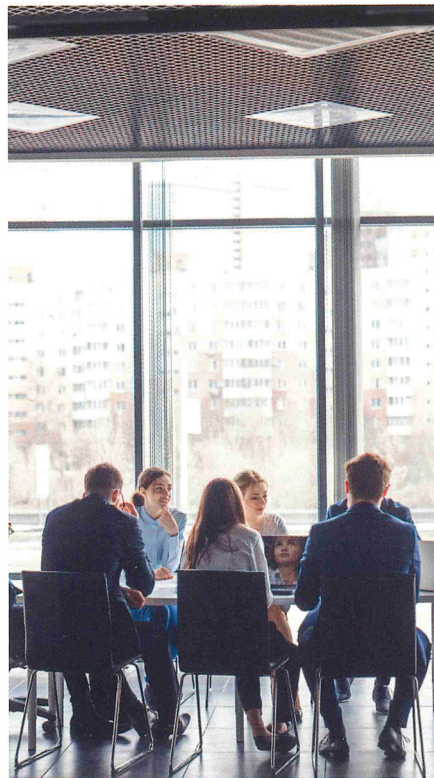
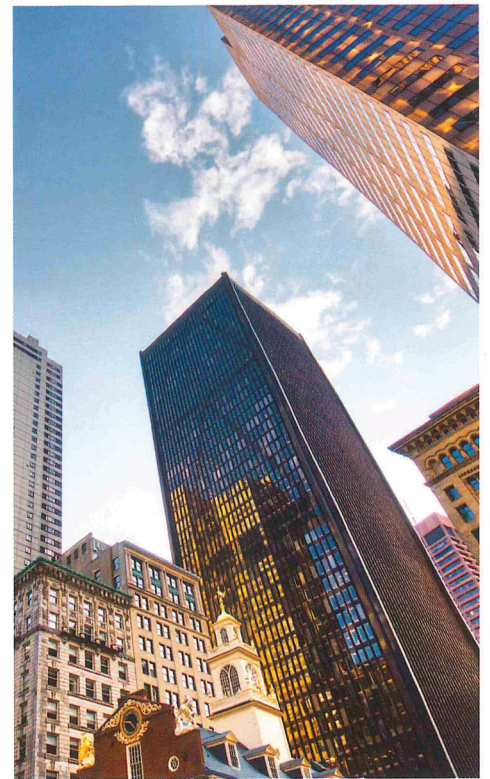


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INTRODUCING THE BUILDERS OF THE FUTURE:

Interns from Cal Poly making the grade at Harris Construction

PHOTO: Cal Poly Construction Management student, Steven Zheng; an intern for Harris Construction. Background: Project site for Dana Elementary School (Lucia Mar Unified School District) in Nipomo, California.



Harris Construction is one of the largest builders of schools and civic facilities in Central California. The Company started in 1914 in Fresno, and is owned and operated by the Spencer

Family. The company builds substantial projects for public and private entities throughout Central and Coastal California.

Construction Management interns are a crucial part of Harris Construction's work flow helping train students while they receive valuable on-the-job training. With years of successful Fresno State interns coming up through the ranks at Harris Construction, it has now added Construction Management interns from Cal Poly as well, starting last summer (2020). With projects and offices in both the Central Valley and on the coast, finding interns with roots to the Valley - and yet going to Cal Poly - is a great fit for Harris. The Cal Poly interns can work full-time in the summer on projects in both locations, and then work part-time on Harris projects on the Central Coast when school is back in session.

Harris Construction has a legacy connection with Cal Poly as well, having built its Residence Halls and Health Center in the late 1950s and is proud to be working with the University again through its Construction Management program.

Harris' Central Coast office is in San Luis Obispo and is working on a project for Dana Elementary School (Lucia Mar Unified School District) in Nipomo. This project has three Cal Poly Interns from its College of Construction Management (CM) on the payroll: Steven Zheng, Marcos Martinez, and Leo Dickson. Their supervisor at Harris, Senior Project Manager Geno James, is very impressed with all three Cal Poly students.

Geno said, "Harris Construction appreciates having such a

Harris is proud to employ CM interns from both Fresno State & Cal Poly.

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great pool of quality Construction Management students in the San Luis/Coastal area for our Internship Program. We are expanding our client base further down the coast, and having resources like these Cal Poly students is a great fit. They are really well educated and very helpful on our projects. They are all currently local to the coast, close to both Cal Poly and to the jobsite which is great. I've been on their campus and met their Construction Management Department Head and Professor, Dr. Woo, and I am very impressed. When I went to college, we didn't have a 'real' construction project to work on in school - unless we volunteered to work for Habitat for Humanity, but at Cal Poly, they require a Senior Project where the student(s) run an actual construction project. That's a great experience for these kids.

"At the end of each summer, we evaluate all of our summer interns to see who has potential and is a good fit to stay on with us. We are proud to announce that ALL of our Cal Poly interns have made the cut and stayed on with us as employees. They are not afraid to ask questions. They say to us, 'Help me understand this.' They WANT TO LEARN! When their professors teach them something new in the classroom, then we teach them why it's important on the job. They learn it and we help them apply it. As I've said before, I am very impressed with our Cal Poly interns, and the entire Cal Poly Construction Management program."

Geno shares an example of when an intern recently asked about a particular activity on the jobsite, wondering what would happen if a subcontractor had a delay or took an extra day to complete its task. Geno showed the intern the project's very detailed daily schedule that goes through to the completion of the project. He showed them that if that subcontractor is a day late, or uses an additional day to do his work more than he had

been contracted and scheduled to do, then it could impact the entire rest of the schedule possibly causing delays for all of the other subcontractors. The lesson was a real eye opener for the intern to see how important each day's activities are. Harris is an on-time, on-budget builder, so any delay – not even a one-day delay – is 100% unacceptable in order to keep the entire project going as planned. It is one thing to read about project schedules in class, but it's another to see a real schedule on a live jobsite. The daily schedule on each Harris jobsite is significant and critical to the successful completion of that job.

Geno enjoys helping the interns apply what they are learning in books to a real-world project. "At Harris, not only do we teach our interns the industry standards and WHY we do certain things a certain way, but we also teach them the higher standards of Harris. Plus we expose them to so many aspects of a wide variety of projects across the state that they are getting far more construction experience as interns for Harris Construction."



Project by Harris Construction: Justin Garza High School (Central Unified School District). Phase 1 was completed in August for the opening of the 2021/2022 school year.

The Cal Poly intern that has been with Harris the longest is **Steven Zheng**. He is studying (and working!) to become a Project Engineer (and ultimately work his way up the Project Management Track), although construction wasn't his original idea for a career. Steven spent his Junior year of high school in the southeast Asian nation of Myanmar (formerly Burma), first teaching English, and then doing carpentry; building desks and chairs by using traditional woodworking methods and joinery such as dowels and dovetails – no screws or nails! He had also helped his father with remodeling work when he was growing up.

Steven's senior project at Cal Poly was to plan, design, draw the plans, get permits, find a subcontractor, install rebar and electrical conduit, saw-cut control joints, and work with inspectors (with a fellow student) to install a 4,000 sq. ft. concrete slab around the CAED (College of Architecture & Environmental Design) Support Shop on the Cal Poly Campus. They worked tirelessly earlier this year researching and learning many new skills, doing most of the work themselves.

"We learned so much on my Senior Project at Cal Poly," said Steven. "About project and schedule coordination, problem solving, communication (and that what you say is clear), being responsible, hitting deadlines, staying on top of those who may not be as responsible. We had to finish the project by September when school started – and we did."

Steven's skill set also includes good communication,

accountability, responsibility, and hard working all at the same time being respectful... to subcontractors, project owners, architects, any stakeholder on the project, and keeping that connection together. He strives to keep all of those relationships good – during a project and for future projects. He worked in the Harris Estimating Department during the summer of 2020, and on the Justin Garza High School project (Central Unified School District) in Fresno this summer. Steven enjoys working at Harris and said, "I like what I do and I'm learning a lot."

Another Cal Poly Construction Management Student Intern at Harris is **Marcos Martinez**. Marcos knew early on that he didn't like being stuck in an office; he instead prefers to get out, use his muscles, working, building, exercising – actually DOING THE WORK.

Marcos' father is someone who likes to work hard, too - a working foreman in the Ag industry running field crews. Marcos took in his dad's leadership skills and the importance of getting things done. He soon found that the actual construction - and being on an active jobsite - was a good fit for him.

Marcos said, "Now that I am at Harris as a Field Engineer Intern, it's showing me a lot – guiding me through things, how you go through the construction process to get things done. It's different in a classroom vs. the real world which is much more complex. Once I am on a project, then I realize, 'Oh, this is what we learned!' Harris employees also challenge me and I like that. They'll have me figure something out or analyze a situation, and then we review my findings. It's helping me to think critically to get these problems solved."

Marcos is working his way up the Superintendent track, and spent much of his summer this year working on a Harris project in West Fresno: the future Career Technical Center for State Center Community College District. The multi-story project has lots of opportunities for Marcos to help, learn, and expand his jobsite experience. He also found that he likes to know the project drawings by heart, even though the entire set of plans are just a



Harris Construction intern Marcos Martinez, studying Construction Management at Cal Poly.

Harris Construction & Cal Poly (continued)



Project by Harris Construction: Sanger Ed Center (Sanger Unified School District). Photo during construction of Phase 1, a 124,404 sq. ft. middle school complex. The project is now in Phase 2, a 125,290 sq. ft. high school project.

touch away in his iPad. He understands that knowing the plans inside and out is a big part of his job, and helps him and the other staff get the job done on time.

Marcos said, "Harris is showing me a lot, guiding me through things – how you go through the process to get things done. We are all working together to have each project done on time, under budget, and have a happy project owner."

The third Cal Poly intern at Harris is **Leo Dickson**. Like Steven Zheng, Leo is also a Project Engineer Intern.

Leo is on jobsites, learning about Harris' safety



Cal Poly Construction Management student, Leo Dickson; an intern for Harris Construction in its Central Coast office in San Luis Obispo.

procedures, the etiquette of project engineering, working with other employees, and getting his first taste of the ever-critical pre-construction phase of a project. Leo is also a member of the Association of General Contractors club, and is proud to be getting into Project Management. At Harris, he is getting first-hand experience with creating submittals, RFIs, change orders, creating schedules and more.

Leo said, "Now at Harris, I'm working with architects, inspectors, sitting in on weekly meetings with the project team and owners, meeting with all of the parties included. Working with Geno is great, too. He walks the project site with me, and he expects a lot of me – a good push to be productive. I like his method and how he works with the project owner and the entire project team."

Leo has realized since going into Construction Management at Cal Poly and working at Harris that 'you get out what you put in.' He said, "You've got to understand it; look at plans, talk to people, and adhere to the schedule. You're not

going to GET better unless you TRY to get better. Leo has completed his OSHA 10 Certification and built a shed project in one of his labs. Now he is helping Harris and will get to build schools, civic facilities and more.

Leo has strong organizational skills, attention to detail and stays on top of his work. He and the other Harris/Cal Poly interns all expect to graduate over the next year or so, ready and able to join the construction industry full time with a lot of jobsite experience under their belts.

Geno said, "I hope we can hire more Cal Poly Construction Management students for our future projects. They help us, we help them – it's really a great deal for everyone involved. It's always exciting to see these new young people coming into the profession with the right mentality and skill set to really succeed in this industry. Can't wait to see them grow with Harris and succeed in the Industry."

In addition to the Dana Elementary School project in Nipomo (Lucia Mar Unified School District), some of Harris' other recent and current projects include:

- **Matilda Torres High School** (Madera USD)
- **Sanger Education Center Phase 1 & 2** (Sanger USD)
- **Justin Garza High School** (Central USD)
- **Dry Creek Elementary's new 21st Learning Center** (Clovis USD)
- **A variety of projects for Fresno State** (ongoing TOCA projects)
- **Career Technical Center in West Fresno** (State Center Community College District)
- **A three-story Hall of Justice campus for the County of Madera**

Harris Construction is also in the early stages of preconstruction for the new **Terry Bradley Educational Center** for Clovis Unified School District - which will include both an intermediate school and a high school on the same property in southeast Fresno, to be completed by Fall 2027.

Harris Construction is really doing something that no other company is doing – hiring Construction Management students from both - CSU Fresno to work locally all year (if they make the cut!), and local area students attending Cal Poly (who also make the cut) - so the students can gain both experience on Central Valley construction projects during the summers, and on coastal projects during the school year. Harris Construction appreciates having such a talented pool of interns from which to draw at both Fresno State and Cal Poly's Construction Management programs.



Project by Harris Construction: Matilda Torres High School (Madera Unified School District). Project contained 277,000 sq. ft. of facility space, including a theatre, gymnasium, aquatics center, performing arts complex, and 2-story academic and administration buildings.