

# Matthew McLaughlin Spotlight

*Written by Briana Rosiles*

Matthew McLaughlin graduated in 2009 with a major in Construction Management here at Fresno State and later received his M.B.A. at the University of Maryland College.



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MATTHEW MCLAUGHLIN

**Briana Rosiles:** What did you enjoy most about the Construction Management program?

**Matthew McLaughlin:** Wow, has it already been 10 years? Looking back, I appreciate all of the support I received from the student clubs, the contractor lunch presentations and interviews, and the scholarship opportunities from the local industry groups and professionals. This large network of people from different aspects of construction provided exposure to all the different career opportunities related to being a builder.

**Briana:** What experience, knowledge, and skills have you been able to apply in a professional work setting coming from this department?

**Matthew:** The different internship opportunities available through the Construction Management program provided valuable hands-on knowledge of what was taught in the classes. School exposed me to scheduling software, structural and mechanical calculations, and construction drawings. Internship took the experiences at school and made them real world construction management experiences.

**Briana:** What advice would you give students?

**Matthew:** I would advise current students to take advantage of the opportunities to develop relationships with the industry leaders that support the construction management program. Attend every company presentation and interview. Go on the jobsite tours. Participate in the ASC competition. Enjoy the golf tournament, Hogs Breath, and annual banquet.

**Briana:** Who was your favorite professor?

**Matthew:** Wow, geomatics engineering was a lot of math for a construction guy, but I would say Dr. Crossfield! The lab experience out at the range was an amazing hands-on experience. It paid off in dividends. The class inspired me to be involved in all aspects of construction control and layout. It provided technical experiences that assisted in the installation of complex piping systems for an ethanol plant, critical MEP systems compressed into the ceiling of healthcare buildings, and coordination of architectural concrete with high end exterior finishes that mirrored the design concepts of the Saulk Institute (Jonas Saulk; polio vaccine; architect Louis Kahn; La Jolla, CA, J. Craig Venter Institute).

**Briana:** What was your job title when first starting your Construction Management career?

**Matthew:** My first job title was “intern” with W.M. Lyles Co. at the Calgren Renewable Fuels/Pixley Ethanol Plant. It was a great experience and introduction to the corporate construction world. I quickly learned how demanding concrete construction is.

My last job title was Assistant Superintendent at the Scripps Clinic, John R. Anderson V Medical Pavilion. The jobsite was awarded Best Healthcare Project – Southern California for Engineering News-Record (ENR) California’s Best Projects 2016.

**Briana:** Who inspired you to pursue your career and why?

**Matthew:** My father inspired my interest in the construction industry. He was a loan officer and now executive of a bank. While growing up, he would talk about different business owners that he serviced, their projects, and his reviews of the projects’ finances. I thought that I wanted to be a land developer. My best friend and college roommate, Nathan Long, introduced me to the Construction Management program at Fresno State. From there, I was inspired by different industry professionals that exposed me to heavy civil, commercial, education, and healthcare projects. That is when I discovered that I wanted to be a builder.

**Briana:** How have you seen Construction Management grow? Where do you think it will be in the next 10 years?

**Matthew:** In 10 years, I think the construction industry is going to continue to improve on the different project delivery methods and partnerships between owners, designers, and builders in order to improve the customer’s experience and return on investment. Contractors who develop pre-construction services that partner with architects, engineers, and design/build subcontractors will gain a market advantage. These contractors will be able to respond quicker than their competitors to the owner’s needs for realizing their project’s true impacts, cost, and potential for success. This service will allow for increased margins, bring forth repeat work, and improve reputation.

**Briana:** What has been your favorite part of the job?

**Matthew:** I love seeing a dirt field become an ethanol plant, a hospital, a school, a DNA research lab. The complexities of integrating all of the different building systems, within schedule and budget, across all of the different entities (owners, A/E, subcontractors, inspectors, suppliers) is addicting.

**Briana:** How do you manage your work-life balance in this industry?

**Matthew:** Work-life balance is difficult. The first 5 years will be a grind. So, plan for it. Work smart and hard. Learn to delegate, track progress, and see all of your tasks to completion. Consistently look several steps ahead while tackling your problems that are hidden in the weeds. Communicate with your family members. Discuss your responsibilities, your jobsite schedule ramp ups and ramp downs. Be organized at work and at home. Then, you will be able to take advantage of opportunities to spend time with your family.