

Nick Brinkman

Written by: Kira Gangbin



Nick is an alumni who graduated in December of 2005. He majored in Construction Management with a Management Specialty.

Kira Gangbin: What have you enjoyed most about the Construction Management Program?

Nick Brinkman: It's continued growth and connection with the industry before and after I graduated.

Kira: What experiences, knowledge, or skills have you learned/ been able to apply in professional work setting coming from this department?

Nick: Scheduling, hands down, has been the most important. Two weeks into that class, I knew it was going to be an area of high interest for me. It has continued for me years later as almost a daily task within my current position.

Kira: What is your favorite memory from the Construction Management Program?

Nick: Pretty much my “senior year” in its entirety was the most memorable. I was the last of my group of friends to graduate from the department, being a December graduate. The funniest memory I have is putting in my application for SLX my senior year. I’d finally come around and started helping out and getting more involved with events late my Junior year, but had never officially become a member of SLX, so when I finally did, the look and responses I got from the officers and professors was pretty priceless. The events were the best though. Between the Hog’s Breath, the Cal Poly/FS CM department softball game and Dr. Spring’s auctions at the Banquet, it’s hard to pick just one.

Kira: What’s your favorite Construction Management event each year? What would you say about this event that would entice other alumni to attend?

Nick: The Hog’s Breath tail-gate because it’s a much more laid-back setting.

Kira: Have you pursued a Master's degree, or plan to?

Nick: No, but I plan to eventually, hopefully through Fresno State.

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

Nick: I began as a Field Manager II/Assistant Superintendent for Woodside Homes of Fresno.

Kira: How far has your career grown?

Nick: After making it through the recession in residential construction for 6-1/2 years, I decided it was time for something new. I got into commercial construction as a project engineer where I stayed for almost 5 years, then got pulled back to residential as a Product Development/Production Manager for about a year and a half before returning to commercial with Bernards.

Kira: Who inspired you to pursue this career and why?

Nick: My grandfather was a carpenter and cabinet-maker and the gene skipped to me. Because of him and growing up always building one thing or another, I just followed what I enjoyed. My family has always supported me in progressing toward my interests.

Kira: How have you seen Construction Management grow?

Nick: When I graduated in 2005, BIM didn't really exist to my knowledge and anything beyond CAD plans was incredibly high-end and cutting edge. Moving into a digital world over the last almost 15 years has been an incredible and welcomed change and I hope it continues to improve. It has improved leaps and bounds in such a short time. I am so glad I rarely have to listen to someone say "I didn't get your fax" anymore!

Kira: Where do you think Construction Management will be in the next 10 years?

Nick: It's hard to say because if you told me 15 years ago I'd be walking around with a set of plans on my phone, I'd of told you probably not in my career, but yet, here we are! Digital evolution will continue though, that's for certain. I believe augmented reality will become even more integrated within the industry as technology continues to grow.

Kira: What's your favorite part of the job?

Nick: Being in the field and watching a set of drawings come to life. A close second would be the relationships you build and the comradery that develops with others as you build a project. Lastly would be the independence. You have to think outside the box. Construction, with a few exceptions, is very accepting of trying new ways and not just going about things "because that's how we've always done it". By integrating new

technology (in my case drone imagery) and BIM to new products, materials and methods and doing things that no one has ever done before and then turning it around and teaching it to others is what keeps me going.

Kira: Are you a father? How do you manage your work-life balance?

Nick: I just became a father March 27th this year to my son, Cody Reid after getting married to my wife Ashley in March 2016. I'm a little new to balancing, but will say having family, a team and company that supports you outside of work as much as they do at work, is priceless. Always make time for yourself and family. The job will be there!

Kira: Is there anything about your Fresno State experience that makes you stand out?

Nick: I came to Fresno State as a transfer from COS in Visalia after completing my A.S./Certificate in Construction Technology. That degree allowed me to actually swing a hammer and provide that hands-on and basic understanding of how things work and go together within construction. This provided an excellent base for continuing my education to the management side of the business. Those degrees together have been nothing short of a total asset to me as I've progressed through my career. I can see "both sides of the fence" and have gained respect for the ability to do so and would highly recommend it to anyone coming through the department.