

# Executive Magazine



# Cawley Architects



Paul Devers Cawley Architects

herman Cawley founded Cawley Architects in 1991 and it has since evolved the company from the owner-user/build-to-suit arena to a complete traditional services practice. Cawley, along with Paul Devers, partner, has grown the firm into a team-driven staff of 27 members. The firm offers a comprehensive suite of planning, architectural and interiors services for clients in commercial and specialty product types.

#### **CEM:** How did you get into the industry?

PD: I have always been intrigued by ancient and classical buildings. They fed my imagination and created a desire to learn more about the people who designed and built these structures. Once I understood the process, I chose architecture as my profession because it begins with the idea developed on paper and evolves into a tangible, three-dimensional building. This creative problem solving is exciting and has provided a very gratifying and exciting career.

#### **CEM:** How has business been this year?

PD: Business for us and the entire industrial market has been dynamic and will continue to thrive. We are in the market for which we have been waiting. The driving force of e-commerce, compounded by the pandemic and coupled with a diversifying, multi-nodal economic base for the Valley, has created a dynamic real estate environment. The massive demand for industrial projects has created the perfect environment for secondary and tertiary markets such as the ones in which we prosper to come into their own and provide wider opportunities for investors and

businesses. As a result, the industry is flourishing at all levels, and our firm is having its best year ever.

#### **CEM:** What challenges have you overcome?

PD: The current challenge is finding qualified staff to fill newly created positions. We continue to grow and cannot rely on traditional advertising and placement service resources that are "tapped out." We have enlisted firms to proactively search for qualified candidates that aren't available through traditional resources. We have also learned to be patient and hire equally for personal values and qualities, as well as experience.

### CEM: What makes Cawley different from other firms?

PD: Cawley Architects is dedicated to overcoming many of the shortcomings inherent in the delivery of traditional architectural services. Our extensive design-build experience sets us apart from other offices. We do not initiate the intense engineering phase of any project without soliciting the participation of a qualified contractor to provide a reliable budget based upon a detailed drawing package. We have developed extensive procedures to anticipate every contingency in our complicated industry and have the entire



Cawley Architects excels in the industrial, commercial, and non-profit architectural markets in the Valley. We design and deliver projects primarily in the 10,000-square-foot to 500,000-square-foot arenas. Projects such as the non-profit Phoenix Rescue Mission's Life Recovery Building (above), and Felix Construction (right), are recent examples of completed projects. We are also active in manufacturing, distribution, education, healthcare, retail, multifamily, office, automotive and transportation services, and redevelopment.

staff constantly contributing to these procedures and standards. The bottom line for us is incorporating all construction-related items through our QA/QC team into our ever-evolving practices. We also train – religiously – on these same issues. "Nobody does that," says one staff member.

## **CEM:** What goals does Cawley want to accomplish in the near future?

PD: We recently introduced our Cawley Design Studio Interiors department. This service has been well-received, and it gives us the ability to deliver the entire building design integrated aesthetically and technically. We are thrilled with the exciting designs our team has developed, most recently the Felix Construction project.

#### **CEM: What's next for Cawley?**

PD: Over the past seven years, we have added a deep bench of very talented architects and professionals that form



the nucleus of our future leadership team. Four have become partners, and three have been named associates. Our talented team will continue to grow to fill roles we have identified in our strategic growth plan for the next few years. These efforts have become pieces in a transition plan that Sherm and I have been actively developing. Soon we will announce that I will be filing the role of president, and Sherm will semi-retire as the founder. As a result, I will be spending more of my time working "on the business" rather than "in the business." Sherm will spend his time working on our company's growth as we look ahead to the next 25 years.