

CRFP Spotlight

Congratulations to our CRFPs

Bill Jackson, CRFP — Facilities Project Manager, White Castle Christian Torres, CRFP — Facility Manager, Jack in the Box Inc.

What do you enjoy most about your job? Jackson: Two things: Every day is a new day with different challenges and working with different people. Secondly, seeing a project from the planning and budget process to opening for business. Torres: There is never a dull moment. Every day is different. No two phone calls are the same (and I get a lot of them). I enjoy solving problems and helping our team keep the doors open.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Jackson: None; I started at White Castle when I was 16, working behind the counter as a summer job. I then went into our facilities department as a service tech, moved to the Cleveland area as a service department supervisor, then moved back to Columbus to our home office to join our facilities and construction team. Torres: I have worked for Jack in the Box and Qdoba Mexican Eats. I've been working for Jack in the Box for the past seven years while also working for Qdoba for about three to four years. I have been a facility manager for three years. Before that, I was a lead service expeditor at the Jack in the Box Service Center in Phoenix.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world? Jackson: It is not just a bunch of people asking, "Would you like fries with that?" There are a lot of really smart, motivated, innovative people in this industry. Torres: How fast paced the operations in a restaurant needs to be and how much faster the facility side needs to move in order to maintain high guest satisfaction and product integrity.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? Jackson: I was asked to oversee a major project at one of our production facilities. I had years of restaurant experience but zero in a production facility setting. The terminology, equipment and processes were totally new to me. The code and sanitation restrictions in a food-processing plant are totally different than a restaurant. I suddenly went from the guy who had done a hundred of these to the new guy who people were looking at wondering if I knew what I was doing. It

reminded me of what it was like being a 25-year-old running my first project. I handled it in two ways: first, show no fear. Act like you know what you are doing even if you don't. That doesn't mean bully people or make uninformed decisions. It means using the same leadership and organizational skills you have developed on previous projects. They are just as effective on a project you have never done before as they are on a routine project. Second, it reminded me it is OK to ask contractors and vendors questions and use their expertise. They did not see it as a weakness or a lack of knowledge. They appreciated the opportunity to contribute their knowledge and ideas to the project. The project reminded me that a good leader does not have to know everything; just how to get the best out of those he or she is leading. Torres: I handled what started as a small drain-line dig up in one of our older restaurants. We ended up having to jackhammer 30 linear feet of dining room all the way to the sidewalk, chasing a good pipe to tie into. This was within my first year as a facility manager. Mid-repair, a massive amount of sewage ran into the restaurant's open sewer lines that we were repairing. It turned out our lines were tied into a Greyhound bus station behind our restaurant. Two buses full of people arrived and ... you get the picture. It took us about three days to get a proper tie-in, back fill, concrete and tile. Once the repair was done, we were able to get a big crew in there to sanitize the location.

What is your all-time favorite movie? Jackson: "True Grit." The original version. Torres: I love war movies, documentaries and series that are about real-life heroism: "American Sniper," "Lone Survivor," "Band of Brothers," etc. I love the "Sons of Anarchy" series.

What is your favorite work-related app? Jackson: It's not strictly work-related, but YouTube is a great resource. There is information on just about anything you will encounter. The trick is knowing if the video is showing you how to do something or how not to do something. Both perspectives are valuable. Torres: I love using Google Keep to create restaurant-specific checklists to plan capital, future repairs, opportunities, etc. I use Google Drive to create restaurant/category specific databases.

What is the best advice you ever received? Jackson: It is a quote from George Patton a friend shared with me: "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their ingenuity." Torres: 1. Never assume. 2. Don't be afraid of making decisions. 3. Don't burn down a restaurant.

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? Jackson: This may seem clichéd, but my father. He was hit by a drunk driver when he was 29 years old, which resulted in the loss of his left leg 6 inches below the hip. He lived the rest of his life in constant pain. But what I think made him

unique is that he never used the injury as an excuse. He did not get welfare or unemployment. He didn't whine or make excuses. He built his own house with just the help of my mother. He learned a trade he could do with his physical limitations, started his own business and was very successful. He didn't sit around feeling sorry for himself. He worked hard and enjoyed life to the fullest until he passed away in 2012. The accident may have taken his leg, but it did not crush his spirit. Torres: My dad. He went to school up to sixth grade, yet he could build a house and work on cars and trucks. He would walk to school barefoot, wash his feet at the school bathroom and then put his shoes on so that they would last him a long time. He taught me how to work hard, be truthful and always help other people in need.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? Jackson: I have been in the facilities and construction field for about 30 years. Having a good foundation made the process a little less challenging, but everyday experience does not always translate well to a written test. I studied the free materials provided by RFMA, and I studied a lot. I took the practice test at least six times. I used it as a guide to direct my study to areas that needed work. Torres: My boss, John Lolmaugh, offered me the opportunity to train to become a facility manager. He mentioned the CRFP modules and certification. From that day, getting my CRFP certification was a goal. I learned a lot from those modules and tests.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Jackson: I would strongly recommend obtaining your CRFP. When studying for the test, you will be surprised by how much you learn. Even if you already knew it, you will learn a better way to communicate it. Additionally, getting your CRFP will show colleagues and vendors you are serious about your career and you take pride in the work you do; this is not just a stopover to something else. On a more personal note, it gives you an idea of how you stack up against others in our profession. It is a way to see how your knowledge compares to your peers and discover your strengths and what areas need some improvement. Torres: Yes, I would. It's a great tool. Pick a module, look up additional related information and study it. Do that with all the modules and take the test. Chances are, you will be in a situation soon where you'll use the knowledge gained from the course.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Jackson: I enjoy spending time with my wife and family. Usually our activities are outdoor based. We enjoy riding ATVs and horses. Nothing is more relaxing and enjoyable to us than hitting some mud on our side-by-side or taking a relaxing horseback ride through the hills in Ohio or the mountains of Montana. Torres: I love to spend time with my wife, Adriana, and our three kids: Jacob, Aaliyah and my newborn daughter, Natalie. I like to mountain

bike, ride my motorcycle and work out. I wrench on my motorcycles and cars. My favorite sport to watch is UFC.

