

MCDP® Spotlight: A Green World Construction Company

Alexandra Topole has always had an interest in construction and now, with the help of the SFAA and DOT Bonding Education Program, has the opportunity to see her construction company grow and succeed. Alexandra's interest first led her to obtain a B.A. degree in Accounting and Construction Management from Florida International University and start her own construction company in the 1980s. However, the competing demands of marriage and family, along with running a construction company, were difficult, and after eight years as a business owner, Alexandra worked as a project administrator, accountant, and construction consultant for several firms in the Miami area. In 2006, she accepted a position as lead project manager with Thornton Construction, and over the next five years she served as project manager for a number of large commercial projects, including several medical facilities. In 2010, as the recession began to take its toll, particularly in the construction industry, Alexandra felt that there was little job security with Thornton and decided to again strike out on her own by establishing A Green World Construction Co., Inc., a Miami, FL-based general contracting firm whose name reflects

her awareness of and care for the environmental implications of her work. As a LEED AP (Accredited Professional for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), Alexandra established A Green World Construction Co., Inc. with the intent of becoming involved in the design, construction, and operation of green buildings/green building certification. The company name also may reflect her desire for financial success.

Alexandra has been acutely aware of the importance of training in making her a successful contractor and businesswoman. In 2011 she enrolled in the Turner School of Construction Management Training Course, co-sponsored by the Miami-Dade County Department of Small Business Development and Turner Construction Company. While completing this course, she received an e-mail announcement from the Florida DOT about the Bonding Education Program, a joint effort of The Surety & Fidelity Association of America (SFAA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation. Begun in 2010, the BEP now has been launched in more than 20 cities and features a series of educational workshops and bond readiness activities in which participants learn how surety bonding

relates to all aspects of their business operations and specific approaches and techniques that result in a successful bond application. A Green World Construction Company



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had a small bond line but was having difficulty in increasing that bond line in order to bid on larger jobs. Therefore, Alexandra jumped at the opportunity to participate in the BEP in Miami.

As part of her participation, Alexandra was mentored by David Satine, a bond producer for Alter Surety Group, who had volunteered to work with the contractors in the program. As a result of his efforts, A Green World Construction now has a bond line of \$1 million through Capitol Indemnity Corporation and recently was awarded a bonded contract from the Miami-Dade Transit Authority for \$414,000 to replace the air compressors in its central bus facility, putting her current overall bonded work at more than \$800,000. With the successful completion of this work, even larger jobs will be available, and she hopes to double her bonding capacity in the upcoming year. She also has expressed an interest in getting back into the construction of medical facilities, something she had done while at Thornton.

Alexandra is extremely grateful to the BEP for helping her move her company forward. "I found the BEP to be very informative," says Alexandra. "Although I want to grow my company, I am trying not to grow too big too fast. The BEP, with its workshops and other information, not only provided me with increased bonding, it made me better understand what I needed to do in order to be comfortable with my pace of growth."