

Performance Services

Breaking Ground and Giving Back

By Symone C. Skrzycki

Cancun, here we come!

At Performance Services, staff and guests are treated to a Mexican vacation if ambitious annual goals (revenue and sales) are met.

“It’s a great break for our employees who work really hard,” asserts Tim Thoman, president and CEO of the integrated design and delivery engineering company. “Often their spouses have to pick up the slack if our people are working long nights, so it’s a way to thank them for their contribution.

“It also creates these strong relationships. We have a ball together. I’ll play literally five hours of volleyball with the team and the stories that come from that (are priceless).”

On this unseasonably pleasant March afternoon, one doesn’t have to venture far to experience the warmth at Performance Services, which specializes in constructing and renovating municipal, health care and education facilities.

Sunlight pours into Thoman’s office, which overlooks an iridescent lake where employees explore their aquatic side via kayaks (courtesy of the firm) during lunch

breaks or on weekends with their families.

Roman art, a gift to Thoman from his wife, catches the eye.

“I thought it was kind of cool,” he reveals, noting that he’s traveled to Rome twice. “The history – both religious and cultural – is amazing.”

Those very traits, faith and culture, lay the foundation at Performance Services.

Guided by integrity

Thoman founded the organization in 1998. Today, it employs approximately 115 and spans multiple states: Indiana (where it’s headquartered), Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Texas and Wisconsin.

“Most (of the employees) are based in Indiana. We decided for culture reasons not to buy existing firms, but to grow organically,” he explains. “We try to find a key person to build the office around, someone who shares our way of treating customers and of functioning. That makes it easier to instill our culture.”

Performance Services achieved the top spot on the Best Places to Work in Indiana list in 2009 (small/medium, before those categories were broken into separate classifications). But it didn’t participate again until 2016.

“For a long time, we were just too busy and were growing really quickly,” Thoman confides. “You can’t do it all.”

Why apply now?

“We hired a director of talent acquisition and human resources, so we have more capacity,” he notes. “And the other piece is: Employees want to know if a company is a great place to work. That matters.”

Marketing director Arlene Gavin joined the team in 2008. “I was employee No. 42,” she declares as we plop down on a plush couch in a room equipped with a big-screen television, periodicals and a peaceful ambiance.

Gavin delights in Performance Services’ reputation as a firm of high integrity.

“Tim is the same man on the day he wins a job as he is on the day he loses a job,” she contends. “There’s no compromise in terms of how customers are treated, how partners are treated and how employees are treated. Everybody can count on that.”

West Point graduate Scott Zigmond, vice president of sales and marketing, seconds that when articulating his own leadership method.

“I trust people implicitly,” he remarks. “From an integrity standpoint, I start there. My style, because of how spread out we are (operating in seven states), is that we give



A beaming Tim Thoman, president of Performance Services, walks hand-in-hand with Haitian children while on a mission trip.

them (employees) some guidance. We've hired great people, so my job is to remove obstacles and to let them flourish.

"It's setting clear expectations. It's holding people accountable. And it's being a resource for them."

Vim and vigor

Gavin scales a set of stairs leading to a remodeled employee workout room, which contains individual showers and private changing areas. Pointing to a large screen and an indoor trainer, she raves about access to Zwift, which harnesses innovative technology to simulate an outdoor cycling experience.

Integrating online gaming with three-dimensional visuals, it enables cyclists across the globe to interact, compete and behold a variety of breathtaking landscapes.

"I can bring my bike here, set it up on the trainer (and start cycling!) in the winter," Gavin relates. Spring and summer months provide sightseeing opportunities of their own as colleagues gather for lunchtime rides.

Additional wellness offerings include (to name a few) twice-weekly visits from a nurse and dietician, financial incentives and subsidized health club memberships.

Heeding a calling

Anti-bullying and assisting the underprivileged are among initiatives employees rally around.

Partnering in the *Reject* documentary, which examines the profound impact of social rejection, the firm is working to spread the word to K-12 schools.

"A lot of what we do is to create optimal learning environments in schools," Gavin comments, adding that part of that commitment is to help promote "a healthy, psychological environment."

In addition, Performance Services has transformed lives with mission trips to Haiti where a delegation built critical infrastructure. Examples include villages with hurricane-resistant homes, a fishing village with solar-powered refrigeration, sea-worthy boats and a school.

Gavin is clearly touched recalling time spent at a Fort Wayne event for Samaritan's Feet International, through which volunteers wash impoverished children's feet and equip

them with new shoes.

"To go out to a school and have a bucket of water and soap and towels, and to go face to face with a child that needs a new pair of shoes is so amazing," she conveys. "That's something that in a work environment, you don't typically have the experience to do and even in a volunteer capacity, when it's heart to heart and soul to soul."

Gavin shares a closing thought: "The people who work here are really passionate about what they do. It's not just a job; it's a big part of their lives. To work in an environment where everybody loves to come to work, are very professional, and are great people who bring it every day and do a wonderful job – you trust in that."



Visiting an orphanage to wash children's feet and provide them with new shoes is a powerful gesture.

RESOURCE: Performance Services at www.performanceservices.com