

# Renovia

## Striving to Light the Way

By Symone C. Skrzycki

Heavy rain beats down as I dash into Renovia, a commercial construction company specializing in coatings and repairs.

“Did you need a rowboat to get in?” quips Paul Strack, national director of sales and marketing.

The bright, warm interior is a contrast to the storm outside. Fittingly, Renovia’s corporate purpose is “to be a light.”

Images of lighthouses along a hallway adorn a “Be a Light” wall. Poignant photos of beaming employees with loved ones illuminate another.

Established in 1999, the Indianapolis-based business has additional offices in Nashville, Tennessee, and Tampa. The bulk of its 44-member team works at its headquarters. Customers represent industries such as national retail, health care, hospitality, storage and apartments.

“We’re a Christian-based organization. What that means is, we try to make decisions based on biblical principles and not the secular world,” shares president and partner Matt Rolfsen. “We have a lot of non-believers that work in the organization and we have believers. It’s not part of your career path by any means. But I think for some of us, it’s part of ‘doing life together.’”

Doing life together allows “Renovians”



Building houses in Tijuana, Mexico, with Homes of Hope at the 2018 company kickoff meeting.

to blend their spiritual, family/personal and business worlds.

“As an employee,” Strack asserts, “it’s the best environment of all three. To mix them and grow them and be able to share it with your peers is really cool.”

Company values – Kaizen (Japanese for “improvement”), Serve First and Uncompromised Character – are showcased on a conference room wall.

Caleb Archer has one year with Renovia under his belt. The office jokester, who calls himself the Sheriff (referencing humorous antics at a recent company kickoff meeting), appreciates how everyone gets along.

“If we have questions, we can deal with it,” he relates. “If we have conflict, we can

deal with it. It’s not awkward. We’re all on the same page. We work well together. That’s what makes it a nice, strong company.”

### Chipping in for a cause

Volunteering with charities that serve the hungry and assist people with special needs are among Renovia’s community contributions.

One effort produced 25,000-plus meals for the Million Meal Movement. Even the smallest of helpers lent a hand.

Office manager Jessie Sears’ three young daughters – the youngest nearly 2 and the oldest 9 – participated.

“On a Saturday, no one wants to come in without their families – or at least I don’t,” Rolfsen comments. “We really want to provide opportunities where we can bring our kids and they can come to learn what it is to be a servant.”

Strack relishes mission trips. He took his first one five years ago as a new hire.

“The bond I created with the people from Renovia on that international trip – it will last for years and years to come,” he declares. “It’s inspired me to go on other mission trips with the company since then.”

### Huddle up

Corporate-wide Monday morning huddles connect colleagues on-site and remotely. Leaders share a Bible verse, recite core values, disclose updates and pump up excitement about a new game, The Pursuit.



There’s a powerful level of trust and rapport among members of the Renovia team. Pictured are Caleb Archer and Jessie Sears.

Created by Renovia’s engagement council, The Pursuit is a personal and professional development program. Employees earn points and ascend tiers by completing activities in the categories of self, career and service. There are over 100 options (reading a book, listening to a podcast) spanning health and wellness, leadership, spirituality and more.

Sears stops by a new employee’s desk (she’s prepared it for his upcoming arrival) and picks up The Pursuit icon.

“We chose a pyramid because it’s the strongest geometrical shape,” she reveals. “We chose the pressed wood because we like to say that we all have our own stories and we’re forged together. And we chose this circle here, because we always want you to pursue professional and personal growth. We don’t ever want you to think it’s complete.”

**Dedicated to development**

A success profile, biweekly goal setting and review process, and annual performance appraisal shape each employee’s individual development plan.

Renovia has four business areas: estimator, project manager, sales and foundation (e.g., accounting, HR, etc.).

“(Onboarding includes) a culture school as well as getting competencies in any position so they have more of a 360 perspective of the organization,” Rolfsen explains. “When they’re doing their role, they understand how it affects their teammate on the other side.”

Kolten Everts and Bryan Cook, collaborating on a job, exemplify that dynamic. The latter is a nine-year veteran at Renovia.

“We were a much smaller family nine years ago,” he notes. “It feels like family. What’s the word I’m looking for? We do life together.”

Estimator Everts chimes in: “We have a culture of always learning here.” Like Strack and Sears, Everts is a member of the engagement council. “He was a big part of (starting) The Pursuit as well,” according to Sears. “He’s actually won our Estimator of the Year (award) two years in a row and he’s only been here for two years.”

“Overachiever!” a colleague playfully exclaims.

**‘Believing in us’**

Sears is one of six female employees. She recalls that during her job interview with Rolfsen, she asked a lot of hard questions.

“Matt was authentic (and in the years since) I’ve never felt left out. I’ve never felt unempowered. I just went to a roundtable on having male allies and I could list a minimum of 10 here. ... I have not felt that in my past positions. I had a lot of trust issues from that. I’ve had to break the glass ceiling at my old position and it’s very scarring. I have a map in place (here) that I feel invested in.”

She also recounts how three months after being hired, “They sent me back to school on a track for a different role. That was believing in me with barely knowing me. And that’s honestly a huge part of Renovia.”

In May, accounts receivable specialist Kelly McGee celebrates her 10th anniversary. Renovia is covering education expenses as she trains to become a paralegal.

“I’ve never been to college. I’m six weeks in!” she declares, with tears of gratitude in her eyes.

“Knowing that you have a team behind you that supports you and holds you accountable and (that) Tim Jones (her supervisor) went out on a big limb for me – I can’t put that into words.”

**RESOURCE:** Renovia at [www.renovia.com](http://www.renovia.com)