

# TITAN EYES CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

## ARCO Design/Build

By Anthony Schoettle

Reaching the pinnacle in any endeavor is an arduous task. Staying there can be even more daunting. With the grit and determination of a champion and the compassion of a firm that cares about its employees, customers and communities, ARCO Design/Build has mastered both of those feats.

One of the leading design-build construction companies in the United States – and with an office in Indianapolis – ARCO has made the Best Places to Work in Indiana list six times. The last two years, it has perched atop the rankings for major companies, those with 1,000 or more employees. *BizVoice*® recently sat down with Ben Titus, ARCO’s divisional president, to discuss the secret to the firm’s continuing success.

**BV: You have spent several years climbing to the top of the Best Places to Work in Indiana mountain. How do you remain there and even improve on where ARCO is – and is that as difficult as the initial climb?**

**Ben Titus:** “It’s like a lot of things in life. With the climb, you’ve got a goal that you’re looking at and you’re going to fight hard to get there. Once we hit No. 1 last year, you set the all-time bar for yourself and that’s hard to maintain. We walked away from that feeling very excited and proud. Now the challenge is on to look at how we maintain that high bar that we set and certainly think that is much harder to do than the initial climb. We’re very intentional about this. We’re obviously doing well, but thankfully we have a lot of really passionate smart people on our team who are always thinking of ways to do more.”

**BV: Last year you were quoted as saying you don’t want to have culture**

**just merely be something you talk about as a catchphrase. How do you make it real at ARCO?**

**BT:** “It’s the little things here and there that we keep doing and we keep doing well. It’s a people-first mindset and we’re really focused on that. It’s anything from special events on Fridays, lunches and other special interactions within the office and things outside of the office. We do what we can to put people first. We don’t even mention the word ‘culture’ in the office. It is just one of those natural habitats that we’ve created and we live every day. Once your team has bought into that, they just reinforce it. It’s not leadership anymore that has to hammer that on down. Everybody has bought into that, and they’re a part of it and they bring ideas to the table. So, I think once you have everybody bought in, it really starts to foster itself.”

**BV: The pandemic dramatically changed workplace dynamics in many ways. What have you learned from that period and what changes has ARCO**

**made in the wake of the pandemic?**

**BT:** “We’re a people-first company, and when we were out of the office during the pandemic, it started to erode that. One of the biggest things we learned is that people are social beings and we like to be together, interact in the business that we’re in. (That’s) everything from just checking in on each other, making sure everybody’s OK to the training, the education, the back-checking of each other’s work, helping to avoid mistakes and continuing to put a new work product out there.

“The pandemic took everybody away from that. We really can feel it. And we’re not the only ones. A lot of people felt that impact. I think you’re seeing quite a shift in the workplace these days. There’s a push to get people back (in the office) because I think a lot of businesses have realized that we’re better together. The separation and the isolation of people – not only does it hurt your culture, but it almost makes it impossible to have a culture. And I think it starts to erode the work product, which ultimately affects your clients.”



ARCO Design/Build leaders never stop thinking of innovative ways to bring its team members together, including a day-long float – with family and friends – down a lazy river.

**RESOURCE:** ARCO Design/Build at [www.arcodb.com](http://www.arcodb.com)