

2012 BEST PLACE TO WORK FINALIST
BUSH CONSTRUCTION CO.



Larry Fisher/QUAD-CITY TIMES

A.J. Loss is president of Bush Construction.

The new kids on the block

Just four years old itself, Bush Construction Co. is one of the new kids on the block, which might help explain its young and energetic culture.

Part of the McCarthy Bush Corp.'s family of companies, Bush Construction is the commercial building division of 115-year-old Davenport company.

"I think we've got a culture that is pretty open to giving employees the latitude to make decisions," said Bush Construction President A.J. Loss.

With nearly half its work force younger than 40, including Loss, he said the company empowers its younger employees but also gives them the right tools to prepare them.

"We've got some folks who are very well-established in the industry — who are not part of the young professionals. So we like to team them up with folks we think are the up and coming leaders of the company."

But the youngest members of the team will need to be quick studies, because this is a company on a fast growth track. Founded in 2008, Bush Construction anticipates \$30 million in revenues this year. It employs more than 30 people.

The general contractor, design-builder and professional construction manager has been behind some large Quad-City construction

projects recently, including the new Western Illinois University-Quad-Cities Riverfront Campus in Moline and the Jackson Square housing complex in downtown Rock Island. Its current projects include a St. Ambrose University dorm and new dealerships for Zimmerman Honda and Green Hyundai.

Erica Sellnau-Allen, the company's pre-construction coordinator and one of its first employees, nominated Bush Construction for Best Place to Work award. She said the work schedule flexibility and the work environment are inviting to young professionals.

"We do a team building activity once a month, where we go hang out and relax, and get to know each other and our spouses," she said, adding that they also close the office once a month for a working lunch. "The superintendents can talk about the projects so we all get an update of what's going on out in the field."

The company also offers an in-house gym at McCarthy Bush's headquarters, where Bush Construction operates.

"In our industry, it's been a requirement that you have to be in a chair a certain number of years to achieve a certain position," Loss said. "I don't necessarily believe that."

— Jennifer DeWitt