



THE CONNECTION

MARCH 2022



ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES @ AJK

There are many career paths in construction industry and AJK strives to offer growth and opportunities for everyone to transition into any role they set their mind to.

"DON'T WAIT FOR THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY: CREATE IT."
- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Pete Mendiola started as an installer in 2003, then became a service technician until 2010. Then he transitioned into the office as Service Manager and has been managing the service department since 2010.
"Good work ethic, honesty, and the willingness to learn new things will get you far"

Manny Chavarin started in 2003 as an apprentice, then studied and worked his way to become a journeyman. He was promoted a foreman and then transitioned into the role of a labor manager in 2017.
"I'm all about being an example to the younger generation that thru resilience & hard work they can achieve their goals. Especially here @ Kirkwood since the company is focused on promoting within."

Eric Tissel began his as an apprentice in 2004. After becoming a journeyman, he worked his way to become a lead man and now a foreman.
"You need to have good attendance and punctuality, learn the code, work hard, take notes, and have a good attitude at work. This will ultimately propel you to the next level."

Sean LaCommare was 17 years old when started at AJK in 2002 as an apprentice. After receiving his journeyman license, he was lead man on multiple jobs. He started his first hi-rise in 2014 at 8th & Hope (24-stories) and was in charge of the units. A year later, he became a foreman on his first job, 8305 Sunset. Since 2017, he's been the foreman on 3 high rises and leadman on 2 others. He's currently the foreman for 520 Mateo which is his 6th hi-rise he's been involved with.
"Working fast is great and all but getting the job done 100% correct the first time is the best goal."



Welcome Taggart Roberts as a Project Manager to Team 6!

Taggart has made the transition from foreman to the office as Project Manager. Congratulations and we all look forward to working with you!

TRANSITIONING FROM THE FIELD TO THE OFFICE

ANGELA MA

Current Position: Service Project Engineer

Previous Position: Apprentice Electrician

Years in the trade: 5+ years, I started with AJK in October of 2016

Biggest Achievement since starting in the trade with AJK?

Winning the ABC Craft Championship for the LA/Ventura Chapter.



What was your biggest challenge entering the trade?

There were two challenges. The first was convincing my family that being an electrician was a great career. My parents are from China and Vietnam. When they came to the United States they never envisioned their daughter working in a blue-collar industry. They were opposed to me working with my hands. They wanted me to go the traditional 4-year university route and then end up in the medical field. My parents wanted me to be a nurse. The other challenge was dealing with the misconception about women in the field. Women are tough and smart; we can hang in any environment. But there are stereotypes and in construction guys will razz you, whistle at you and for me the best way to overcome that was to stand up for myself . I developed thick skin and a sharp tongue. The guys here at AJK were great, they looked after me at the jobsite. Brett Vanderweerd was very accepting of me from day one.

What would you say to a girl in HS or a young female looking to get into the trade?

I would encourage them to do it. I would be as open and honest as possible about some of the issues that they could face. I would let them know about the pitfalls that I dealt with and how I learned to navigate those waters. The upside is that you can go anywhere in this industry. You can be a Foreman, Project Manager, Project Executive, COO or CEO. The opportunities are limitless.

What do your parents think of your career choice now?

They are super excited that I am in the office. It is a much easier pill for them to swallow.

As an apprentice that transitioned to an office position, what are some tips and advice you can give someone transitioning into the office?

The best advice I could give for anyone considering transitioning from the field to the office is, to be honest with yourself and your supervisor, and don't give up if the first try doesn't work. If you're an active person, be honest with yourself on whether or not being confined to a desk will be okay for you, physically and mentally. Be honest with your supervisor about things that bother you regarding the position in the office, and about tasks being overwhelming. If things aren't working out after a month, don't give up. Instead, try different things to make it work. It's almost been a year since transitioning into the office, and I just barely feel like I'm adjusted. Another tip is to put as much effort into your personal life, as you do for your professional life because it can make up the difference if one isn't always fulfilling. For example, I had a hard time dealing with the stress of adjusting to my new position in the office. So I started doing paint-by-numbers to relax when I got home, and I got a cat to keep me company. I'm pretty happy now.

CONGRATULATIONS MANNY CHAVARIN JR.!

Congratulations to Manny Chavarin Jr. on passing his **Engineer-In-Training (EIT) Exam**. Achieving this certification is the first step required under California law towards becoming a licensed Professional Engineer.

EIT certification applicants must have:

- 3 or more years of post-secondary (college-level) engineering education
- OR
- 3 years or more of engineering-related work experience
- OR
- a combination of postsecondary education and engineering-related work experience totaling 3 years
- AND previously passed the NCEES Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam



We are so proud and are excited to see what he will continue to accomplish in his career!



EMPLOYEE SHOUT-OUT

TRENT STOUVENEL

As CAD/BIM Manager, Trent works hard and is extremely dedicated to get the job done. You can see him working early in the morning before everyone gets here, staying late, and often dedicating time on the weekends. Thank you for all that you do for AJK, Trent.

"Trent always has my back and wants to see everyone in the department grow in skills and knowledge. A great example of how a department manager with principles yet compassionate at the same time."

- Isariya S. Duncan
PE, LEED BD+C

"Trent Stouvenel is the epitome of "workaholic"; he is always the first one in, last one out and here on the weekends. Trent is a great leader who encourages and empowers us in CAD; it has been a blast working under his management for the past 5 years. Best boss ever!"

- Victoria Chen
CAD/BIM Detailer 1

"Trent is very patient and does his best to help me understand how to do things. He is also HILARIOUS!"

- Trista Semones
CAD Administrative Assistant

SAFETY SHOUTOUT

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE AJK SHAREHOLDERS WHO
EARNED A SAFETY SHOUTOUT!



We often work overhead, while on ladders. It is always best practice to have someone assist you with material and installation. The teamwork of our employee-owners is necessary to ensure safe outcomes and efficient work practices. Thank you, **Hugo Lara** and **Orlando Altamirano** for working together.

Per OSHA guidelines: maintain a 3-point contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) when CLIMBING/DESCENDING a ladder.



We want to give a hearty safety shout-out to **Marcos Andrade**. He inspected his ladder in the morning and it was in fine condition. Later in the day, when he went to re-use the ladder he noticed that the screw in the spreader had failed. Always inspect your ladders, before every use. Not just once a day. Marcos is looking for a secure place behind our trailer to store the ladder, then he informed our Foreman who then scheduled a pickup and proper disposal of the ladder.



Over at Petco Park Stadium in San Diego, keeping our employees and the public safe is our top priority. **John Windle** and **Anthony Lopez** work together to make sure all existing circuits are de-energized and locked out properly. The crew carries hot sticks as well to periodically check circuits while they work. Great job, John & Anthony!



Jose Vasquez is working at the Whittier Library project and takes safety to the next level. He has all of his gear on including ear protection to protect his ears from all of the loud noise going on around him on the project. Per OSHA requirements, earplugs are considered an acceptable option to control exposures to noise. Most people only wear them for very loud situations but not Jose Vasquez! Great job, Jose for taking all the necessary precautions to protect and preserve your hearing.



Much props to **“Turbo Tommy” Saunders** for getting together with his Foreman, Eric Tissel to creatively put a plan in place to not only safely tie-off but also have the freedom to move around and maximize their lateral movement.



At every visit to Hollywood Arts Collective, **Angel Otoya’s** personal PTP (pre-task plan) book stands out. Not only does Angel have his PTP filled out every time, but he is also very detailed in his descriptions. He takes the time and puts in the extra effort to really think about the task at hand, the hazards associated with the task, and the tools that are necessary to perform his work safely. Great job, Angel!

SAFETY NEWS

MARCH IS NATIONAL LADDER SAFETY MONTH

Did you know each year there are more than **164,000** emergency room-treated injuries and 300 deaths in the U.S. that are caused by falls from ladders? And most ladder deaths are from falls of 10 feet or less and are the leading cause of deaths on construction sites? In an effort to decrease ladder-related incidents nationwide, The American Ladder Institute has announced March as National Ladder Safety Month, which is designed to raise awareness of ladder safety and to decrease the number of ladder-related injuries and fatalities.



With **SAFETY** being everyone’s responsibility, you can help reduce ladder-related incidents by having a **“Safety First, Safety Always”** mindset and by following these ladder safety guidelines.

Always inspect a ladder before use:

- Look for damage and defects. (Ex: loose rivets, rungs, or rails)
- For an extension ladder, inspect the pulleys, ropes, and locks for excessive wear.
- Make sure that all footings and pads still provide a non-skid surface.
- Check that all factory stickers are legible.
- Remove defective or unsafe ladders from your work area.
- Report defective or unsafe ladders to your foreman.

When using a ladder:

- Make sure that you’re using the right type of ladder for the task. For example, closed “A” frame ladders should not be leaned up against walls and used like straight ladders.
- When setting up a ladder, make sure the ground it is set upon is level and stable.
- If the ladder is not tall enough for the task, get a taller one.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending and use both hands to grasp it securely.
- Remember the 3-Point Rule: At least two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand, should be in contact with the ladder at all times.
- Keep your body between the side rails of the ladder: avoid over-reaching. This reduces the chance of the ladder tipping over and/or the user falling off.
- NEVER step on the last rung or top support brace.
- Keep the area around the base of the ladder free of hazards. (Ex: debris, tools, material etc.)

PRE-FAB

AJK Prefab strives to improve project productivity, reduce project durations, reduce labor costs and improve safety. Here’s a look inside our shop with our prefab crew hard at work.



CONDUIT STUBS



LIGHT POLES
& HEADS



UNIT PANELS
WITH WHIPS



OH RACKS



UG DUCT BANKS



PRE-CUT WHIPS



WIREMOLD



PANELS

AJK is always looking for new prefab ideas to debut in our newsletters to help spread the word. If you have ideas that you would like to share, with a chance to debut in our next newsletter, please submit your ideas and/or pictures to the following email address: **BH@ajk-a.com**

Anything and everything that you can dream up or have used in the past that someone else may benefit from is welcomed and appreciated.

LOW VOLTAGE & SERVICE

Please help us welcome our new employees from the service and low voltage department!

Craig Gabel: Electrical Service Project Manager

Craig has 43 years of experience in the electrical trade specializing in Office Tenant Improvement, Restaurants, Retail, Commercial, Residential, and Industrial projects. He worked 20 years in the field with his tools, 14 years as a service manager, and the last 9 years as a project manager. He has worked on

Scott Kirkey: Service Project Manager

Scott has 38 years of experience in the trade and is experienced with Project Management, System Sales, Estimating, Installation, and Service in Access Control, Fire Alarm, Nurse Call, Public Address, Security, Surveillance, Telephone Entry, and Voice/Data Systems.

Anthony Kane: Low Voltage Project Manager

Anthony has 26 years of experience in AV, LV, and SEC systems. He was a lead foreman for 8-10 years before becoming a project manager. Some notable customers he had the opportunity to work with include Gensler Jewel Box DTLA, Beats by Dre, KTLA, Disney Studios, Konami Gaming, Toshiba, and 3M.

Welcome to our new LV Service Technicians **Leonardo Mendez** and **Roy Marquez**.

And welcome to our foremen and journeyman that have transitioned to the service department: **Brian Mays** (LV service technician), **Jon Carlson** (Electrical Service Technician), **Gavin Casaccia** (Electrical Service Technician), and **Jose Galeana** (Electrical Service Technician)

WORK ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY & FEBRUARY



Danny Gonzalez, Carlos Viscarra, Sean Cannon, Octavio Larios, Carlos Ramirez, Jonathan Perez, Willy Gonzalez, Joseph Tonsil, Eloy Arcineda, Kevin Gomez



Ryan Hogge



Brad Hanenberg









CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF

ajk

HAPPY WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION WEEK (MARCH 6-12)





Thank you to **Christina Dinh** and **Jessica Choto** for their time and efforts in planning the WIC week celebrations and festivities!

HUMAN RESOURCES

ease

ATTN to ALL AJK Employees:

We will be starting our annual open enrollment for benefits starting March 1st. This will be a month-long event that will end on March 31st so do not miss out!

This pertains to **ALL AJK EMPLOYEES**, even if you are making no changes to your current benefits, you still need to submit. We will be sending out an email for open enrollment through our EASE portal. Please keep an eye out for this email and update/submit your information ASAP.

Thank you and looking forward to an exciting 2022!



I.T. NEWS

While the internet has always been a dangerous place, current world events have increased the likelihood of cyber attacks in general, and more specifically against Americans.

EMAIL

Be careful opening emails that you might not be expecting (Even if you recognize the sender)
If it looks odd in any way, bring it to the attention of the I.T. Dept.
Email attachments and hyperlinks are both common ways for malware to infiltrate.

PASSWORD SECURITY

Extremely Important: Do not use your AJK system password on any other sites, or share your password with anyone. If you think your password may be out there, please contact the I.T. department to have your password changed.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO KEEP OUR SYSTEMS SECURE.



Continuing Education

Do you need to fulfill your continuing education credits or do you just want to expand your knowledge?

Check out the FREE upcoming courses that ABC Socal is offering:

If you are interested in taking any of the available classes please directions on how to sign up below.

CLASS: Blueprint Reading For Electricians

This course is designed to help recognize and identify basic construction drawing terms, components, symbols, schematic logic, types, and uses of diagrams/schematics, scales, and conversions.

DATES

April 5, April 12
(Tuesday Nights)

TIMES

5 PM - 9 PM

LOCATION

ABC Anaheim

CLASS: Basic Lighting Control

This class includes hands-on exercises, the discovery of electricity, relays, and contactors, analog and digital. Learn the scientific properties of light and the terminologies used to describe light.

DATES

April 18
(Monday Night)

TIMES

4:30 PM - 8:30 PM

LOCATION

ABC Anaheim

[Email Christina to Sign-Up](#)

[CLICK HERE to see more ABC Courses not listed](#)

A.J. KIRKWOOD & ASSOCIATES, INC.
4300 N. HARBOR BLVD, FULLERTON, CA 92835
| 714-505-1977 | www.ajk-a.com



AJK Apparel (Password:
arch1883)

