

THE RESOURCE GUIDE FOR BUSINESS IN THE REGION

GREATER • BRIDGEPORT Region

WINTER 2019



**Members Taking the Lead in Economic & Community Development
Leadership Greater Bridgeport Celebrates 30 years
Plus Your Updated BRBC Business Resource Guide**

Geovanni Flores,
United Rentals and
Willie C McBride Jr.,
WC McBride Electrical
Contractors LLC

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The Role of Leadership in Turning on a Region

Leadership

Often, when imagining leadership, one contemplates Teddy Roosevelt on horseback, Harriet Tubman guiding people to freedom, or Roberto Clemente climbing on board a relief plane to personally bring supplies to earthquake victims. Those are dramatic examples, but the full breadth of leadership also includes companies that make a difference. In the world of business, leadership is often seen in the work of trailblazers and exceptional businesses. This year the Bridgeport Regional Business Council and sponsor PSEG are recognizing two such business entities.

Those businesses will share the 2019 Paul S. Timpanelli Leadership Award named after the former BRBC President and CEO in recognition of his personal impact on the economy of our region during his 28-year tenure at

the BRBC. This award recognizes individuals and companies that have demonstrated outstanding leadership and have had an impact on the economic prosperity of the region. Past awardees are Elizabeth Torres of the Women's Institute for Housing & Economic Development, Bob Scinto of R.D. Scinto, and Gary Flocco and Geof Ravenstine of Cherry Street Lofts.

This year's co-winners are WC McBride Electrical Contractors, a local Bridgeport contractor and United Rentals, an international equipment rental company with a Bridgeport branch; Both were chosen for their leadership on the job, with regard to hiring practices, and for their presence in the community. The awardees happened to work together on jobs, including the building of PSEG's new 550-million-dollar 485-megawatt gas-fired



combined-cycle power plant in Bridgeport.

PSEG Unit 5 Project Director, Scott Matheson said both companies performed admirably. "McBride Electric's quality, speed and craftsmanship exceeded our expectations." He added, "United Rental was unbelievably responsive, and their equipment and mechanics were always reliable. Both companies were vital partners in the meeting of our high demand schedule."

It wasn't only their business performance that made these companies this year's Bridgeport Regional Business Council Leadership Award winners. They were also chosen for their hiring practices which included veterans and diverse populations and for their contributions in the community. Both the WC McBride Electrical Contractors and United Rentals teams seem to follow the simple axiom once proclaimed by Abraham Lincoln, "Whatever you are, be a good one." This year's winners are among the good ones.



“Both companies were vital partners in the meeting of our high demand schedule.”

Opposite: WC McBride Electrical Contractors at PSEG job site

Left: Jim Gilroy, PSEG Community Relations; Richard Costello, Strategic Account Manager, United Rentals; Geovanni Flores, Branch manager, Stamford United Rentals; Scott Matheson, PSEG Unit 5 Project Director; Alan Johnson, Area General Manager, United Rentals at Unit 5 turn on ceremony.

PSEG & the Awardees

PSEG, which recently completed the construction of its new 550-million-dollar 485-megawatt gas-fired combined-cycle power plant in Bridgeport, is a multi-year sponsor of BRBC's annual Leadership Award. Spokesperson for the company Jim Gilroy says that's for good reason. "PSEG has the responsibility to encourage leadership recognition and development initiatives because of our role in the community as the City's largest taxpayer."

WC McBride Electrical Contractors and United Rentals worked diligently to garner significant work assignments for the PSEG Connecticut project. Being chosen to execute multi-million-dollar contracts was just the first part of their effort. Next, they had to deliver their best to a client who demanded nothing less than perfection - this took expertise, persistence, and a quality of service. Both teams delivered a superior product but what made them this year's honorees were the intangibles, the things that made them invaluable to the community.



UNITED RENTAL



United Rental is an international company based in Stamford with its biggest state presence in Bridgeport. On the job, PSEG was impressed with the company's equipment, delivery, and on-location training but what makes United Rental a winner in the eyes of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council was its attention to people.

In Bridgeport United Rental is proud of being able to employ 55 people which includes administrative staff, union operators and mechanics. Company officials say when

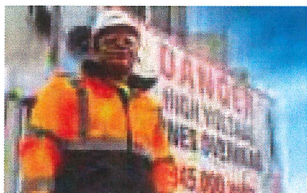
hiring they made it a priority to hire people from the community.

Also, United Rental is one of the largest companies in the country with a special program to hire veterans. Hiring veterans is just the beginning according to Branch Manager, Geovanni Flores (pictured left), "We also provide training and when necessary emotional support to our staff, many of whom are veterans. We want them to know this is a place where they can feel free to ask for resources."

In addition, Geovanni says

the company's leaders must lead by example by getting involved in the community. Geovanni, himself has been a volunteer fireman in Trumbull for ten years. In addition, to employee involvement, the company provides support to organizations such as the Bridgeport Rescue Mission and residential programs for abused women. Since United Rental has a large presence in Bridgeport, company officials say they believe they have a responsibility to the community that serves its employees.

WC MCBRIDE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS



For Willie C. McBride Jr. giving back to his hometown is, in his words, a "calling". Born and raised in Bridgeport, the once electrical union City employee set out just five years ago to start his own business. Since then it has been a meteoric ride for the African American businessman. He hasn't forgotten, however, where he came from. Willie says, electrical work helped him raise a family, so he started his company to give others the same opportunity.

Currently, Willie employs 50 people which includes 40 minority employees. More than 60% of his staff are from Bridgeport. He's also proud of the vision to bring more

women into the industry. In fact, his first hire ever was a woman, Jordan Mathis (pictured bottom left), who is still with him today. Jordan actually has a leadership role in the company's current work at PSEG. She's in charge of quality control and inventory. It didn't come easy for her however as she went through a five-year electrical union apprenticeship. Today, Jordan owns a home in the North End of town and is herself a trailblazer as a black female electrician. She says now she has full health insurance and the ability to support her family members.

WC McBride Electrical Contractors is also known around town for

its philanthropy in the community. PSEG Spokesperson Jim Gilroy of PSEG says, "We noticed that every time we participate in a community event McBride Electric is right there with us as well, proving his commitment to the community." Willie McBride says that it costs him nothing to volunteer his time to talk to troubled youth at The WorkPlace or to sit on boards such as the Bridgeport Regional Business Council or the Cardinal Shehan Center. Clearly, the WC McBride Electrical Contractors story is a quintessential success story deserving of this year's Leadership Award.