



Austin

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Gotcha covered



Arizona Tile Team (L-R): Stacy Rosenbaum, Sharmily Patel
Jennifer Montenero, KiKi Carmichael, Anna Poletti, Heather Haas

If you've ever driven through Texas and/or Oklahoma, you know that there is a lot of land mass to cover. If your car breaks down, you had better have roadside assistance in your contacts.

If you live in these two states and want a new countertop or marble floor, **Heather Haas** has you covered better than your favorite car insurance company.

Haas is the regional sales manager at **Arizona Tile** for these two states, which is a big area to cover. She started with the company 17 years ago when she opened Arizona Tile's first Texas branch in Dallas. From there, Haas moved to West Texas and opened up that territory before finally coming to Austin. She laughs when she thinks about moving again. "I hope [Aus-

tin] is my final stop."

Covering such a large area as Texas and Oklahoma isn't an issue for Haas, as she hails from Hereford, way out in the panhandle. "It was a great place to grow up, but," she said, "I don't miss the wind or the lack of trees."

Arizona Tile started in 1977 in San Diego, but has its corporate office in Tempe, AZ now. It deals in quartz, tile, marble, granite, travertine, limestone, etc., both natural and manmade.

Haas stays busy, filling both remodeling and new construction needs.

"It's a competitive market," she said. "You really have to get out in the market and sell yourself and your products. You really have to be knowledgeable about

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Hello Austin!



Rhino Roofers' Austin and San Antonio team members

There's a new roofer in town, **Rhino Roofers**. Located in Round Rock, this is the company's second location after experiencing exponential growth in just one short year.

The company was founded by a group of roofing industry veterans, **David Villarreal, Dante Cantu, and Misti White**. Experienced in starting and running successful businesses, Cantu joined forces with Villarreal and White, who have over 20 years of roofing experience each, to establish Rhino Roofers in April 2021.

"As our website says, our team is dedicated to giving our clients the 5-star, white-glove experience," says Sales Manager **Jacob LaRue**. "We believe that separates us from all the other contractors. In addition to providing the highest quality

products and workmanship, we also aim to provide outstanding customer service."

Wanting Rhino Roofers to stand apart from their competition, the trio did their homework before taking on their first project. "Part of the vision of Rhino was to build a roofing company that's completely different from the rest of the industry," LaRue states. "When the partnership agreement was signed and started the company, there were months of planning before we even started building in San Antonio. We didn't have our first full month, actual sales, and roof build until August of 2021. A lot of that was planning, building the right infrastructure, determining how we could give back to

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Following in the wingsteps

There's no such word as "wingsteps;" we're more used to "footsteps." But "wingsteps" definitely applies to **Austin Butts**, who is the second generation to work at **Red Wing Aerials**, the photography firm founded by his father **Kevin Butts**.

Red Wing Aerials does custom eye-in-the sky photography, and construction photography is one of its main services.

"The biggest thing we have on the schedule all the time is construction," Butts said. "That, or apartment or real estate pictures."

Butts graduated from Texas State University last year. While in college, he began working for Red Wing Aerials in the post-production area, editing photos and learning all the ropes.

Now, Butts is the primary drone photographer for the company. He



Austin Butts

learned photography both from his father and by studying various resources online. "He told me everything I know about camera settings and different lenses and composition," Butts said. A most important part of the job is "what our customers are really looking for. He taught me all that."

The elder Butts used to be a banker, working for Frost Bank. But his love of flying couldn't be held in check. "He always had a passion for getting up in the air," Butts said of his father.

Once he got Red Wing Aerials going in 2005, Butts found out that the construction industry needed what he had to offer. He first had to show them that, however. He would see where the construction was going on, go up and take pictures of it, and then show the work to the folks he just photographed from above.

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New leadership

After a nationwide search, The National Academy of Construction (NAC) has selected its next president and CEO. **Edd Gibson** will assume his new role beginning Jan. 1, 2023, as Wayne Crew steps down. Crew had been serving as NAC's president and CEO since 2015.

"Edd is an excellent choice to lead the Academy," says **Milo Rivero**, NAC First Vice Chair and Search Committee Chair. "He has been involved in practically every activity undertaken since he was elected and has been a proven leader in all."

The National Academy of construction was developed to recognize the captains of the construction industry – the people who have contributed heavily to it, and to share the knowledge of those captains of industry, making them available to the government of the nation.

The search to fill the vacancy that would be left by Crew started last summer. Gibson was the only internal candidate and a member of NAC. After going through the interviewing process, Gibson was short-listed and later selected to fill the position.

"The committee was unanimous in its selection guide which is very well respected by all the members of NAC," adds Rivero. He's contributed heavily with his time and know how to further NAC along the way, so I think he's highly respected.

Gibson earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a PhD, both from Auburn University. He also holds an MBA in engineering management from the University of Dallas. He spent four years in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, four years at Texas Instruments, and one year at North Carolina State University. He has held chair positions at The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Alabama, and Arizona State University, is a prolific author, and has supervised over 100 master and doctoral students. He



Edd Gibson

served as a Fulbright Fellow in Norway and as a Visiting Academic Fellow at Cambridge University. He is the recipient of numerous research, teaching, and service awards. In 2016, he was awarded the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Peurifoy Award for Outstanding Research. He served as president of the Architectural Engineering Institute of ASCE and is now an ASCE Distinguished Member.

Gibson becomes the third leader for NAC in its 23-year history. Richard L. Tucker served as the original general secretary, as the position was called in its founding, from 1999-2015. Crew will retire at the end of 2022.

Current chair of the Academy, **Maggi Walker** states, "Edd adds to the legacy of strong leadership at NAC. His collaborative, inclusive, and engaging approach fits perfectly with the NAC mission of recognition, honor, and service." -cmw

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what our products can be used for, whether it's exterior patios with our anti-slip finish or decorative products in a luxurious bathroom. We just have to get out there and do presentations...and show them the products that we have to fit their business model."

Haas knows who her customers are. "We are speaking to flooring contractors, countertop fabricators, designers, architects [and] remodelers."

The COVID situation didn't faze Arizona Tile at all. "We never had a day that we were closed," she said. "Our sales number didn't slow down," as people who were suddenly working from home decided they need to upgrade their workspace, not to mention they looked around and decided it was time for a face lift.

Haas interacts with her counterparts in other areas of operation. "There are probably eight regionals within our company, and we all share ideas and talk about what works and what needs to be tweaked," she said. "We have a lot of conversation back and forth."

Haas is very aware of her being in a business where trends or style can change over time. "We're always looking for the next big product or the next big

innovative look," she said. "It's a constant process because it takes a long time to get with a factory to make a certain look and then be sure that the color and the texture is tweaked properly. Then we have to produce it to sell so that we kind of stay ahead of the game. As far as design goes, we've never stopped designing the next popular phase."

Today's technology is a plus. "A digital print technology can get much more rich, natural looking items in a porcelain that looks like a natural stone or marble," Haas said.

Arizona Tile has a wide range of both natural and manmade items. "We have a huge inventory of manmade quartz and just natural stone, whether it's marble, granite, limestone, quartzite. But I would say that right now the manmade quartz is the most popular countertop material," she said.

The future looks bright. "We're going to find ways to incorporate the technology and make it look seamless in a kitchen or bathroom," she said. "It's going to be really fun and interesting."

Haas covers a big area, but she and Arizona Tile have you covered.

Arizona Tile is a tile and slab distributor, with its Texas hub located in Austin. -dsz

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the community, and building the right team of people dedicated to helping our customers." With all the right pieces of the puzzle coming together, one short year later, Rhino Roofers' team is 50-plus employees strong. "The experience from David and Misti who've been in the industry is a key component. Misti ran roofing companies here in San Antonio and has 20 years of experience. David, too, as a supporting representative for Owens Corning and all of South Texas knew the shingle side, the manufacturer side very well. That gave us the knowledge and ability to know all inspectors and the best crews to do the installation in San Antonio. We were able to build a team of people very quickly."

With over 130-plus combined years of experience, the team at Rhino Roofers knows the ins and outs of roofing from small repairs to large roof replacements. Determined to be a game changer in the roofing industry, Rhino Roofers wants to take the stress and confusion out of residential roof replacements. "We don't want to fail when it comes to communi-

cation, follow-through, customer education, cleanliness, and of course, quality of work," adds LaRue.

Rhino Roofers specializes in everything roofing – residential, commercial, asphalt shingle roofing, metal roofing, clay tile roofing, and the unexpected, storm damage. Residentially, they perform roof installation, replacement, and inspections. Commercially, Rhino is experienced in the application of spray foam roofing, commercial roof repair, commercial roof replacement, commercial roof maintenance, modified bitumen roofing, TPO roofing, PVC roofing, coatings, multi-family roofs, HOA-approved roofs, assisted living center roofs, and church roofs. They are Owens Corning Platinum Preferred Certified and Malarkey Emerald Pro Certified contractors.

This new location will serve a 50-mile radius around Round Rock. Rhino's San Antonio location has a 60-mile service radius of the Alamo City.

Rhino Roofers is a full-service roofing company headquartered in San Antonio. -cmw

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There can be several factors motivating a company to use aerial photography on its construction project. One could be to show investors the progress being made. Another reason could be to document the work which can hold everyone accountable to do that which is expected in the time expected.

Butts uses his drone to also do what he calls "speculative work," i.e., pre-construction site surveying. "I just went over to San Marcus," he said, "and there's just a random field, out in the middle of the country. I just pulled out my drone and got pictures of it" for the person who was making the inquiries.

The FAA rules for both planes and drones are so specific that companies don't use in-house folks to send up their privately owned drones in order to capture pictures of their work. One has to be a licensed by the FAA to use a drone for commercial purposes. "With the license comes a whole slew of rules," Butts said. "If you break even one of them and the FAA finds out they can tack on \$1,000 with a penalty."

Red Wing Aerials recently opened a branch in Dallas, employing a total of four pilots. Their market is essential, the entire state of Texas, with forays into Oklahoma and Arkansas.

With Mr. Butts being the owner of the company and its primary photographer, Mrs. Butts keeps the whole ship afloat (plane aloft?) as the office manager. "She

coordinates every aspect of the business from the pricing [to the] scheduling. She responds to customers and answers the phone," Butts said of Mom **Kari**.

"Customers all rave about our work," he said. "We have great reviews."

Butts is currently working on getting his student pilot license so one day he can fly the planes as well as the drones.

Since there doesn't seem to be any end of construction in Texas, it's a good thing the younger Butts is following in his father's wingsteps.

Red Wing Aerials offers a wide variety of aerial photography services, with its principal office in San Antonio. - dsz



Flying a drone

ON THE SPOT What is your favorite "all-time" movie and why?

I like *300*, it gets me motivated.

Jacques Williams,
Atlas Design and Development

I think *Déjà Vu* with Denzel Washington is my favorite because of the time traveling and going back and forth and what different outcomes you get with different choices.

Heather Haas, Arizona Tile

With a five-year-old child, I only watch animated-type movies. I really love *Coco*. It's been a special movie for me and my daughter. It just reminds us of what came before us and the connections we have to our past, and the sacrifices that people have made that we may never be privy to, to get where we are today.

Michael Melton,
Power Haus Equipment

I'm going to have to go with *Zootopia*. I can literally watch that movie every day. It's about a rabbit who wants to become a police officer.

Christina Cummings,
All Area Overhead Door

I would probably say *The Grand Budapest Hotel* by director Wes Anderson because of the stunning cinematography and the color palette that he used. Very special, very cool. You should definitely check it out.

Austin Butts, Red Wing Aerials

The one I've probably watched the most is the whole *Raiders of the Lost Ark* series. The action, the history, even though the history isn't accurate, it's the historical context of it. Taking history and changing it a little, making it very exciting on top of all the non-stop action. It's just fun and excitement all in one.

Rick Vavro, Austin Underground

I would have to say *The Matrix* and *Fast & Furious*. Both, I don't know which one. *Fast & Furious* because I'm a fan of cars. I like fast cars. The Matrix I can watch over and over because it's not reality. Both are my favorites — one for my heart and one for my head.

Jean-Philippe Gagnon,
CleanCo Construction

Secondhand Lions. It's a nice portrayal of bringing together a nephew and two uncles who end up raising the nephew. It's just a warm story. It has a little bit of fantasy to it, but it's real. They end of teaching him a lot of life lessons.

Barry Wurzel, Wurzel Builders

I've got to go with *Napoleon Dynamite*. It's just the right amount of stupid with the right amount of funny. A lot of people think it's the stupidest movie they've ever seen. Then there's the people that think it's the funniest movie they've ever seen. And I just think it's so funny.

Jacob LaRue, Rhino Roofers

Dumb & Dumber. It doesn't matter how many times I watch it. It never gets old and is just as funny every time. So many great quotable lines in that movie.

Michael Engen, Engen Contracting Inc.

Pride & prejudice. It portrays a strong woman standing up for what she believes in even though she receives ridicule for it. Yet she also has compassion and cares deeply for others. It reminds me of me in some ways and other women in construction that must work hard to be seen and heard, and still be a wife and parent.

Tara Gray-Hyzak,
Harvey-Cleary Builders