



Family Owned Business

Pioneer Construction

Current Generation: 4th

In 1933, a young entrepreneur and carpenter, originally from the Netherlands, named Earl Beckering Sr. founded a business named Beckering Construction Company. In 1962, under the leadership of his son, Earl Jr., the company name was changed to Pioneer Construction to reflect the innovative attitude and expanding services of the rapidly growing firm; they were the area's first non-unionized contractor - the first general contracting firm in west Michigan to operate an open shop. Later in 1971, Earl's son Tom took the reins of the company, and today (now in the fourth generation of family ownership) Tom's son-in-law, Tim Schowalter continues to lead the company which has grown into one of Grand Rapids' largest construction firms.

“Maintaining closely held ownership allows for ease of decision-making,” said Chris Beckering, Earl Jr.'s grandson and currently Pioneer's Director of Business Development. “One of the nice things about pioneer is not only that our ownership is family-oriented, but many of our employees, at every level of the organization, are second and even third generation employees. They continue to help us build and maintain the reputation we've gained over four generations of delivering quality construction on time and within budget.”

During an Oct. 21, 2010 banquet and ceremony, Earl Jr., Pioneer's second generation company leader was inducted posthumously into the Michigan Construction Hall of Fame and received the Distinguished Contractor Award. Pioneer continues to carry on the traditions passed down by his father of a strong work ethic, quality craftsmanship and personal service.