

Deborah and Craig Danto

Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Danto Builders LLC

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Deborah and Craig Danto:

For Craig and Deborah Danto, husband and wife and owners of Danto Builders, much of their success can be attributed to their involvement with their clients along with a family-owned environment they've organically created. From their annual Big Bad BBQ that raises money for the Special Olympics to their honest and transparent nature, everything about Craig and Deborah, and the staff at Danto Builders, reflects a team of individuals that truly care about their community and their clients.

"Craig was born and raised in construction," Deborah said. "He's a 4th generation in the construction business. Craig's father was originally in the underground portion, doing airport runways. Eventually he went vertical and developed communities throughout the United States. From working with his father, Craig knows everything from land planning,

development and design to underground infrastructure and vertical construction." He and the Danto Builders' team's understanding of engineering and design, and practical field experience allow them to complete the most challenging projects efficiently and effectively. Recently, they won awards from AIA Fort Lauderdale, South Florida Business Journal and Gold Coast Builders Association.

When Deborah and Craig married, Deborah joined Danto Builders as Chief Operations Officer and brought with her a wealth of knowledge and experience. "My background is in business," she said. "I have my MBA and I've worked with large corporations such as Pizza Hut and Arby's. I eventually got into manufacturing and now construction. Through it all, I've always had an operations/technical mind." After a number of years with Danto Builders, they saw an opportunity to restructure the company to better position themselves for additional government opportunities. Deborah became a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED AP), acquired her General Contractor License and, together with Craig, restructured the company to be an official women-owned business.

Danto Builders focuses their portfolio on commercial, industrial and government projects. More specifically they concentrate on hospitality, especially restaurants, healthcare and local government projects. They are a CBE-, DBE-, SBE- and WBE-certified company and their CAGE number is 88LJ4.

Deborah and Craig are very bullish on the future and see many different opportunities for further growth. "We see developments and partnerships in our future," she said. We're looking at projects outside of

South Florida. We're not the big guy, but we have the ability to do big jobs."

Deborah offers up some great advice for aspiring entrepreneurs. "Don't quit your day job until you're set up to go; ideally have a couple jobs in the pipeline; and have reserves to sustain the business for several months or more," she said. "Find a mentor before you go into it. Having someone that can walk you through the pros and cons before you take the leap. It's also important to get involved with the community. Face to face meetings and introductions is what's important. You can't just send out emails. Networking can and will expose you to new opportunities. Lastly, be honest and don't try to paint a rosy picture for your clients that everything is going to be perfect. Construction is tough and things go wrong, but as long as we make them right, we'll all work well together."

Regardless of the industry, things will go wrong. Being upfront and honest with your clients is a surefire way to gain their respect and their loyalty.

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