



Apple Store at The Grove,
Los Angeles, CA

Transparent Quality

As Giroux Glass grows, employees stay focused on the company's founding values

Giroux Glass, Inc. is an employee-owned glass, glazing and architectural metals contracting company with headquarters in Los Angeles. The company's CEO, Anne-Merelie Murrell, purchased the company in 1991 as part of an ongoing effort to improve the neighborhoods she loved.

"I'm an alumna of the University of Southern California ("USC") and I wanted to do something to improve the area around USC, to change its façade," Murrell says. "That was my objective, to improve the neighborhood."

Murrell purchased Giroux Glass as part of a real estate deal that included a neighboring two-story commercial building, though at the time she knew very little about the glass industry.

"Though I had done a lot of renovations and similar work, I was not really familiar with the high quality and the standards of a true professional glazier," she says. "But I took on the challenge. We started with 10 employees in 1991, and by 2009 we had 450 on our payroll."

In addition to bringing on hundreds of new employees, Giroux Glass increased sales by more than 300 percent within the first 10 years of purchase.

"Along the way, we expanded geographically," Murrell says. "When there was a need in Las Vegas, we opened up a satellite office there, and we're one of the leading glass glaziers in that area. We opened up another place in the San Joaquin Valley, in Fresno. We are licensed to operate in Nevada, Arizona, California and New Mexico and we also have a fabrication plant that we purchased in San Bernardino—so we serve a large geographic area."

AN EMPLOYEE-OWNED COMPANY

In 2007, Giroux Glass became an ESOP company. Murrell committed to selling her 95 percent stock in the company to the ESOP in annual increments until it is completely transferred in 2021. One of the great-



GIROUX GLASS™
INCORPORATED

CEO
Anne-Merelie Murrell

APPOINTED CEO
Nataline Lomedico

LOCATIONS
Fresno, Los Angeles and San Bernardino, California
Las Vegas, Nevada

est benefits of employee ownership, according to Murrell, is that it enables the employees to become personally vested in Giroux Glass and its success.

“Our employees worked so hard for this growth. I believed it was due to their efforts and that they should be rewarded,” she says. “I knew that if I stepped aside, I wanted them to have the company themselves. What we have is basically a family-owned business, but our family is people that have been here—our partners. Everyone is very important. Our actions as individuals influence the reputation of the company. It’s a wonderful feeling that we’re all working together. And statistics show that employee-owned companies outperform other companies.”

Giroux Glass recently announced an upcoming leadership change: On Jan. 1, 2015, Nataline Lomedico, current CFO, will step into the role of CEO. Murrell, the current CEO, will transition into the role of Chairman of the Board of Directors.

“Nataline has been with the company for almost 15 years,” Murrell says. “She has so much enthusiasm, and has been able to motivate so many people in the company. It’s natural that she should become the new CEO. I can’t tell you how fortunate we are to have someone of Nataline’s caliber.”

In preparing to take on her new role, Lomedico says she looks forward to continuing Murrell’s tradition of working to help the company grow and succeed.

“Anne-Merelie started the company with a desire to grow, learn and be better,” Lomedico says. “That’s something that we’re embedding into the foundation of the company going forward. I think that has led to the growth of Giroux, with so much more to come.”

TAKING PRIDE IN PROJECTS OF ALL SIZES

Over the years, Giroux Glass has completed many large-scale projects that have garnered international recognition. One prominent example of an acclaimed project is the Skywalk at the Grand Canyon, a transparent cantilever bridge that extends over the canyon’s ledge. A popular tourist attraction, the Skywalk was installed in 2007.

The company has also completed glass installations for high-end residences throughout Cali-

fornia as well as for a number of hotels along the Las Vegas strip, including The Quad Resort and Casino and the SLS Hotel and Casino. The hotels commissioned Giroux to install thousands of exterior windows, balcony doors, shower dividers, entrance walls and spa areas.

Although the company has achieved a great deal of success through these large-scale projects, Murrell says Giroux Glass takes just as much pride in smaller projects, many of which are commissioned by schools, hospitals and museums.

“The larger projects are more complicated in their structure and their engineering—those are challenges, and we love that,” Murrell says. “But we do schools, we do museums, we do hospitals. They don’t get much press, but the same pride goes into each of those, into each installation. We just got a contract today for an elementary school in Fresno, and we’ll have the same pride in completing that school as we have in doing the bridge over the Grand Canyon. We love what we do.”

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