



HILTON GARDEN INN CAMDEN WATERFRONT CAMDEN, N.J.

Glaziers cooperate on Camden's first new hotel in 50 years.

By: Amanda Gibney Weko

CASE STUDY

AGI Glaziers

GMI Contractors, Inc. | Bristol, Pa.
D&D Family Construction | Phila., Pa.

Team

Developer: Ensemble Real Estate
Investments

Operator: Concord Hospitality
Enterprises Company

GC/CM: INTECH Construction

Architect: Nelson Worldwide

Scope

New 122,750-square-foot hotel

Completion

December 2020



Hilton Garden Inn with Benjamin Franklin Bridge in background (all photos © INTECH Construction)

INTRODUCTION

The Hilton Garden Inn Camden Waterfront opened its doors December 4, 2020, becoming Camden's first new hotel in 50 years. Part of a mixed-use development renaissance in the city, the hotel sits adjacent to the Delaware River and a short walk to new office, retail, and entertainment venues.

Camden Mayor Frank Moran said at the opening, "Camden's revitalization is tangible, and Hilton Garden Inn Camden Waterfront will be one of the leading catalysts for our city's economic resurgence."

DESIGN-BUILD

INTECH Construction led design-build project delivery of the steel-framed structure. NELSON Worldwide designed the 180-room, 122,750-square foot hotel, which features over 4,000 square feet of event space and 20 extended-stay units. NELSON customized Hilton Garden Inn standards to achieve the dramatic facade.

COOPERATIVE GLAZING

The hotel's facade of punched windows and panels was executed through cooperation between two AGI member glazing contractors. GMI Contractors, Inc. managed the project and subcontracted the glazing installation to D&D Family Construction, LLC. D&D's owners, Dennis Bozeman and Dedarryl Washington, AGMT, previously worked for GMI and the company trusted their expertise and experience. D&D holds Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) credentials, and their minority participation supported overall project objectives.

SCOPE

GMI President Stephen Gilchrist served as project manager, while Bozeman and Washington led glazing crews. The comprehensive glazing package included 5,000 square feet of YKK storefront and curtain wall, 250 Crystal Windows aluminum windows, fixed bathroom windows with levers, two sets of automatic sliding

doors, SAFTI FIRST fire-rated doors with Stanley operators and Omaha hardware, CR Laurence glass railings, Trulite glass canopies, and 10 interior lobby mirrors. Glass was supplied by Glass Enterprises, Inc.

To accommodate outdoor gathering even in cooler months, D&D also installed a series of permanent glass partitions to shield outdoor patios from Delaware River breezes.

CHALLENGES

GMI and D&D mobilized in late 2019. "Our biggest challenge was Covid-19," said Gilchrist, explaining that the project was shut down for about a month during the earliest phase of the pandemic. When the site reopened, temperature checks and masks were required and crews maintained safe distancing when possible. To ensure the project progressed smoothly, Gilchrist was on site two-to-three times per week and Bozeman and Washington remained on site throughout the project duration.

Another challenge involved storefront glass. Additional steel was required to reinforce the system and enable the storefront placement as the architect designed it. The corner windows also posed a challenge for positioning and installation. But through proactive drawing reviews and glazing expertise, GMI and D&D overcame any potential obstacles for a smooth and relatively uneventful installation.

SOLID PARTNERSHIP

Both AGI members agreed the project relationship was successful. "It was our first experience with D&D," said Gilchrist. "They did a good job." He added that GMI subsequently hired D&D for several additional projects. Bozeman agreed the collaboration worked well. "We're experienced glaziers as well as owners. Between the two of us, Dedarryl and I have done almost everything." Since they founded D&D in 2019, the company has welcomed opportunities to subcontract with other AGI members.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Mayor Moran called the hotel's opening a "momentous occasion" for Camden residents, business owners, and visitors. Over \$1 billion of improvements are underway in the city. As the 900th Hilton Garden Inn to open since the brand originated in 1996, the property will be sure to wow guests once widespread travel resumes.

[Read the Hilton news release](#) announcing the project.

