



CHRISTOPHER L. KUSHNER

SHOP FOREMAN, FTI INSTRUCTOR & FORMER MARINE

SPOTLIGHT

On Chris Kushner:

Title Shop Foreman for R.A. Kennedy & Sons, Inc. (Aston, PA)

Hometown Glenside, PA

Family Wife Carolyn and three children (ages 13, 10, and 5)

Favorite Sports Teams Phillies and Flyers

Favorite Movie Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope



ABOUT CHRIS

After growing up in Tacony and graduating from Father Judge High School, Chris "Kush" Kushner worked odd jobs trying to figure out what to do with his life. He let his intense patriotism guide him toward the Marine Corps, in which he proudly served his country from 1996-2000. "Aside from being married and my kids being born, my country is most valuable to me," he explains. "Everything my country gave to me, I wanted to give back. The work I did to keep our country safe and free is extremely important to me."

Kush worked as a construction tech for an engineering firm after exiting the military. He was encouraged by his father-in-law to go into glazing. He kept up the pressure for nearly four years until Kush relented and considered it. "I checked it out basically to get him off my back," Kush recalls with a laugh. "But I have loved my job ever since." Since August 4, 2004, Kush has proudly been part of Local 252.

"Aside from the Marine Corps, this is my favorite job. I love every day I go to work," he says.

IN THE SHOP

Today, Kush is a shop foreman for R.A. Kennedy & Sons, Inc. of Aston, Pa. His inside work often leaves him working alone for days on end, although recently he has been in charge of glazing a unitized system for a project in King of Prussia. The task has included training and supervising a team of five guys.

"I'm that low-key guy that does my job and helps people," Kush explains.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Kush has been an instructor at the Finishing Trades Institute since 2015. He teaches blueprint reading and AutoCAD to first-year apprentices in the glazing academy.

Kush is also a certified mobile crane operator. In February of this year, he hopes to obtain his practical examiner certification from the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) to teach and record others who want to pursue certifications in mobile crane operations and rigging.

FAVORITE PROJECT

Kush quickly names Nemours Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children as his favorite project. Completed in 2014, the building's dramatic exterior features a system of unitized, multi-colored glass and laminated metal panels. The R.A. Kennedy team collaborated with the architect to execute the complex glazing project, which did not include a single right angle. Kush recalls the project's focus on the children who are the hospital's patients. Kids were regularly engaged in the design and construction process. When curtain wall sections were set by crane, the foreman stood indoors with kids and crew to give crane signals. The interaction was meaningful to everyone involved.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Kush took advantage of the education opportunities provided through the Finishing Trades Institute. He completes his final public speaking class in a few weeks and will earn his associate degree this spring. Kush plans to continue his college education through FTI by pursuing his bachelor's degree in labor management.

PRIVATE LIFE

Kush maintains a protective privacy around his family. Although hesitant to reveal personal details, he speaks with pride about his two daughters, ages 13 and 10, and his five-year-old son. Kush has been married for 18 years to his wife Carolyn, a nurse at Abington Memorial Hospital. She works with brain trauma patients and Kush hopes his colleagues never cross her path on the job.

When asked about hobbies, Kush explains he's a die-hard Phillies (#1) and Flyers (#2) fan despite their recent performance. He's also a self-proclaimed cocktail expert. "I make a great mojito," Kush says.

COACH MINDSET

Kush coaches both of his daughters in softball for the Glenside Youth Athletic Club. He also coaches his oldest daughter and the Varsity Saint Luke's Region 11 CYO softball team. This spring, his son will pick up the bat with his father as his first baseball coach.

Coaching comes naturally to Kush, and he regularly mentors apprentices when he's teaching. "For the past 20 years, I've asked people, 'What would you attempt if you knew you couldn't fail?'" Kush says. "For me, I learn more from my mistakes than from the things I do right. I'm going to remember when I do something wrong," he adds. "I try to get people to think about trying things even if they might fail. A goal may seem out of reach, but you never know until you give it a try."

Clockwise from top left: Nemours Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children (image © Brad Feinknopf/OTTO), the Kushner Family on vacation at Walt Disney World, Kush glazing a unitized system in the R.A. Kennedy shop

