



DAVID TOMCZAK

PROJECT MANAGER AND FTI INSTRUCTOR

SPOTLIGHT

On David Tomczak:

Title Project Manager for The Glass Company (Atlantic City, NJ)

Hometown Sewell (Washington Township), NJ

Family Wife Cassie; daughter Kenzie (3) and son Kasper (18 months)

Pet Peeve Unrealistic deadlines. "As glaziers, we come in toward the end of a project and other trades' mistakes or delays compound our work."



ABOUT DAVE

After more than a decade as a glazier, David Tomczak recently transitioned to a project management role with The Glass Company. Based in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the company provides commercial glazing for hospitality and gaming clients. When The Glass Company gets a job, Dave takes over - his responsibilities including measuring, scheduling, ordering materials, coordinating manpower, and even performing some of the work. It's a leadership role that Dave earned through hard work and commitment.

"I like seeing things look better than when we started," says Dave.

Dave became a glazier right out of high school, beginning his apprenticeship in August 2004, after graduating that May. A friend and neighbor of his family got him interested in glazing. Dave discloses that his only other job was as a bus-boy at Outback Steakhouse. "Glazing is all I really know, my whole adult life," he says with no sense of regret.

Glazing has been a good choice for Dave and he speaks highly of his experiences over the last 12 years.

Below: Dave teaching at the ACE Mentor Program Career Day



"I started at a time when the industry was very busy," he explains. "I got to learn a lot of different things relatively fast." Dave enjoys that the work changes every day. He likes being able to work with his hands and to work alongside a great group of guys. "The group here is pretty tight," he adds.

PROJECT VARIETY

Working in the gaming industry has exposed Dave to interesting glazing projects. He recently did the "cage" area at the Tropicana. The cage functions as the nerve center of the casino, where the accounting, currency exchange, and operations take place. The design included a framework of polished stainless steel columns surrounding five rows of glass panels with strategic openings to allow transaction conversations.

Dave's favorite recent project was the first level at the new FMC Tower (Cira Centre South) in Philadelphia. The project included a 60-foot-tall glass wall with no metal. Construction involved a Pilkington tilt-wall system, in which the solid glass panels were suspended from the ceiling.

DIVE IN & GIVE YOUR ALL

"It's a commitment. You have to dive in and put everything into it," Dave says. He admonishes those who get turned off by the four-year apprenticeship and think they could make more money faster in another career. Dave points out the long-term benefits of glazing, including healthcare and pension, job stability, and confidence for a comfortable retirement. He explains the balance of right now and down the road and knows he will be able to retire at a reasonable age and still have years to enjoy life. In the meantime, glazing offers him a very rewarding career. "I see the bigger picture."



PAYING IT FORWARD

"I had very good instructors when I was an apprentice," said Dave. "They had a positive effect on me, so I feel like I owe it to the organization to do the same thing." Dave says he helps the next generation of glaziers get the same experience he got, by teaching them the right way to do things in the classroom and in the field.

For the last four years, Dave has served as an instructor at the Finishing Trades Institute where he teaches Health & Safety courses in fall protection and scaffold erection and dismantle. He also assists with the OSHA 30-Hour Training and regularly steps up as an instructor for special training sessions. Last spring, he taught a group of high school students who attended the ACE Mentor Program's career day at FTI.

DOWN TIME

When he's not juggling the myriad responsibilities of glazing project management, or spending time with his wife Cassie, daughter Kenzie, and son Kasper, Dave enjoys saltwater fishing and watching the Eagles and Flyers. He tries to take an annual trip to see the Flyers play in a different arena - this year, he'll visit Nashville to watch them take on the Predators.

Dave calls glazing a great living and appreciates the lifestyle and opportunities he's had. "If you want to work hard, you'll go far."



Clockwise from left: Dave with daughter Kenzie; Dave with son Kasper; the Tomczak family