



Pictured at the new program launch are Kelly LoBianco, LA County; Holly Mitchell, LA County District 2; and Anne-Merelie Murrell and Nataline Lomedico, Giroux Glass's former and current CEO / President, respectively.

Giroux Glass Recognized at LA County's New Employee Ownership Program

Giroux Glass was selected to host an event that announced a new service offered by a partnership between The Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and Project Equity.

The new program, "Employee Ownership LA County," launched on November 29, 2023, and is offered through DEO's Office of Small Business - Small Business Concierge. Its goal is to help business owners explore their options to sell their company to their employees, while preserving jobs and sustaining wealth opportunities. The free consultation service will feature education, technical assistance, and direct transition support for participating businesses and workers.

The service aims to preserve legacy small businesses and create opportunities for shared ownership, wealth generation, and economic mobility - for both workers and business owners - throughout Los Angeles County.

Supervisor Holly Mitchell of Los Angeles County District 2 was on site to announce the DEO program and identified it as a priority for the district because of its history of building wealth for workers and bolstering locally owned businesses. Also present was Kelly LoBianco, Director of Los Angeles County's Department of Economic Opportunity, who said, "We are excited to add this service to our Small Business Concierge and build understanding and momentum around this pathway."

Supervisor Mitchell recognized Giroux Glass as a beacon of excellence and presented the company with its inaugural DEO "Employee Ownership Commemorative Award."

Concerns about succession and employee financial well-being led to Giroux Glass becoming an ESOP company in 2006. Anne-Merelie Murrell purchased the company in 1991 from Louis Giroux, who had started his small glass company in 1946. By the time she considered her retirement, the business had grown exponentially in sales and work scope and had opened new offices in Nevada and Southern California. She initially considered selling the company but decided instead to reward the employees who had achieved the company's success and to give them company shares.

In 2015, Murrell named then CFO, Nataline Lomedico, to replace her



Rendering of new student union building at HHS

Blach Construction Breaks Ground on New Student Union Building

Blach Construction recently celebrated the groundbreaking of a new Student Union Building at San Benito High School District's Hollister High School (HHS). The tenth largest high school in California, its growing student body currently sits at nearly 3,500 students. This much-needed new facility will provide HHS with multi-purpose gathering spaces, including a state-of-the-art kitchen and food service area.

Designed by Aedis Architects, the 8,500 sq. ft. Student Union Building utilizes a customizable steel building structure to expedite the project timeline and minimize structural framing costs. It comprises a kitchen and food service space, as well as multiple state-of-the-art indoor multi-purpose areas and an expansive and inviting exterior quad where students can gather, study and eat.

Construction on the new HHS Student Union Building is expected to complete in Fall 2024. It is one of many transformative projects by the District Blach and Aedis on the HHS campus, which have also delivered a Science and Robotics Lab classroom building, a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center, several Athletics facilities, and more.

as CEO and president. The company became 100% employee owned in 2017, and former employees became partners. The company has consistently ranked on "best companies to work for" lists and a top glazing company nationally, expanded into Arizona during the pandemic, and plans to achieve its highest sales revenue in its history this year.

"We call our employees 'partners' for good reason," commented Lomedico. "When we each do our best, we all succeed. Our clients know that when they talk to any one of us, they're talking to an owner with accountability. We applaud this DEO service being offered by the County. Our story illustrates the success that small businesses can achieve, while providing employees the security of financial stability for their retirements, and owners a viable succession plan and greater employee retention and engagement." ❁