

## Unity Builds Concrete Success

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT), Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is proud to highlight AC Concrete Enterprise, Inc. and Hester Concrete Services, LLC's surety bonding success through joint venturing.



*Aaron Ferguson, President of AC Concrete Enterprise, Inc.*

AC Concrete Enterprise, Inc. and Hester Concrete Services, LLC are two Jacksonville, FL based companies with more than 10 years of combined concrete construction experience. The firms specialize in concrete professional services, sidewalk/driveway construction, and flatwork. In an effort to increase their bonding capacity, they participated in OSDBU's Bonding Education Program (BEP).

On March 7, 2017, OSDBU's Southeast Regional Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) implemented a BEP centered around the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center (JRTC) Phase Two project. During this BEP, these firms learned they could become more prosperous by joint venturing to increase their surety bonding capacity. Prior to the BEP, AC Concrete Enterprise, Inc.'s surety bonding capacity was \$5,000. Hester Concrete Services, LLC's surety bonding capacity was \$200,000. At the end of the BEP the two companies obtained a surety bonding capacity of \$500,000 as a joint venture.

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## Project Profile

### Superstructure for SJRPP NOx Reduction Project - JEA

#### The Big Pour

By Deborah K. Thompson, Owner of Deborah K. Thompson, Consultants

Over the years, trying to get small minority and especially Blacks in the construction industry to a level of parity has been a challenge for me and many of the clients and members of the First Coast African American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. But on April 28, 2007 at 12:00 a.m. in the morning, one of my proudest moments was realized. Mr. Aaron Ferguson, President and Owner of AC Concrete Enterprises broke through many barriers and made his way through the challenge.



I am calling Aaron Ferguson's largest project to date, the "Big Pour." With over thirty (30) men on site, a reserve crew for backup with friends and relatives on call from three states, Aaron had plenty of support. In addition, the Technical Assistant Specialist from Blackmon Roberts, an FDOT consultant, and the President of the First Coast African American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. Minority Business Outreach Program, were also on hand. We watched Mr. Ferguson take charge, set the stage, and begin pouring concrete that would not stop, but for brief moments to refuel, for just over sixteen hours. From approximately 1:17 a.m. when the first Florida Rock truck arrived at the site, the action began as muddy concrete was strategically placed into three Pumpco pumps. AC Concrete Enterprises headed by Mr. Ferguson took its first crew to task. With three crews on standby, from 1:17 a.m. until 3: p.m., over three hundred trucks dumped more than 3800 cubic yards of concrete into an 8 foot deep hole at the JEA-site off New Berlin Rd. in Jacksonville, Florida. Once the task was over, it seemed like an easy job.

Aaron can be quoted as saying "I began in this trade over thirty years ago, and I was only sixteen years old working along side my brother-in law." This brother-in-law, along with cousins and nephews were at the site, to assist and support Aaron Ferguson. The brother-in-law, now an eighty year old man from Mississippi, came to witness the "Big Pour."

As a child in Mississippi, Aaron poured concrete as a laborer until 2002. At this point he decided to become a subcontractor; pouring and finishing concrete as a business owner. Participating in various certification programs at the state and city levels, he has gone up the ranks, building a small company as he goes and today has reached new heights. Mr. Ferguson feels now that he can compete at new levels in the construction sub-trade of concrete and with competence.

The Prime contractor on the job was Williams Industrial under the leadership of the President, Mr. Tom McDowell. The company has worked with AC Concrete over the past year and has seen him grow. They gave AC Concrete an opportunity to show its ability and perform on a sizable contract. From the JEA site on New Berlin Road, Mr. Ferguson thanks God and his immediate family-a wife and two daughters for supporting him through his success.



