

Bringing opportunity back

► THE COOK MEDICAL AND GOODWILL INDIANAPOLIS PROJECT
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▲ From left: Rob Smith, Glenn Powe, Karl Brady, Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett, City-County Councilor Keith Graves, and Pastor Donald Edwards pose for a photo at the 46218 Community Cookout in the summer of 2019.

A Positive Light in the Neighborhood

If you could see the **34th street neighborhood** through the eyes of long-time resident, **Glenn Powe**, you would see it through the lens of the past when the neighborhood thrived. You would witness change, and time would take you to today where you would see the community on the verge of a positive future.

Lack of jobs and sources of income for residents have taken a toll on the neighborhood, but Glenn believes the new **Goodwill** manufacturing site at **38th and Sheridan** and the opportunity it brings for employment and assistance with education will be inspiring to many in the area.

Glenn's roots in the neighborhood run deep, since 1967 as a matter of fact.

"The same boys I was a toddler with, a teenager with, a grown man with, and now an older man with I've known

my whole life," he said. "Not too many people get to say that they had the same friends since they were babies."

His childhood memories are of a time when jobs were plenty and the neighborhood was densely populated with children and young families. The area was a popular part of town. He

remembered as a child thinking his neighborhood was like the big city even if it wasn't in downtown Indianapolis.

Businesses like RCA, General Electric, and International Harvester were as close as a walk or bus ride away and offered decent paying jobs. **Mayor Hudnut's** agenda in the 70s and 80s to make Indianapolis the "Amateur Sports Capital of the World" built an excitement around sports. Football, basketball, and baseball leagues for



▲ Glenn Powe with his three sisters. They are, from left: Bonita Powe, Donna Powe, and Lisa Bivens.

youth helped families stay connected in the neighborhood, remembered Glenn, and leagues were sponsored by not only schools but churches, and the local Shell gas station and 7-Eleven stores.

Neighbors had a close-knit bond. Like the **Blizzard of 1978**, recalled Glenn, when

he walked out of his house to see every one of his neighbors outside shoveling the street and each other's driveways. He described another memory of the trek to the store that day with a few parents and multiple kids, stopping at elderly neighbors' doors asking if they could pick up anything for them.

Even now, Glenn works to keep the neighborhood connection intact. He serves on the Board for the **East Side Reunion committee** and is a member of the **46218 committee**, where local residents from the area plan cookouts and community events, connecting people who lived in the neighborhood 30 to 40 years ago.

Community connection is key.

"I'm hoping the Goodwill site will cause the community to come together. People really still are connected. And, when they see that this is a place that cares enough about humanity and has programs to help them, that's going to be inspiring."

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▲ **Then and now.**

Above left, from left: Tom and Bill Harmon with their father and Harmon Construction founder William D. Harmon, look over building plans in the early 1980s. Above, right: The current Harmon Construction ownership team, from left Tom Harmon, Willie Harmon, and Bill Harmon.

Letting Their Work Do the Talking

In February, it was announced that **Harmon Construction**, based in North Vernon, Indiana, had been selected as the general contractor (GC) for the construction of **Goodwill Commercial Services** new manufacturing facility at **38th and Sheridan** in Indianapolis. Harmon Construction is a sister company of **Taylor Brothers Construction** and **Harmon Steel**. The companies operate independently but are majority owned by brothers **Tom and Bill Harmon**, and Bill's son **Willie Harmon**. The subcontractors Harmon will bring in are **97% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)** and **100% XBE** (any combination of Women-, Veteran-, Disability-, and Minority-owned Business Enterprises) as certified by either the state of Indiana or the city of Indianapolis. The following is a shortened version of an interview with Bill and Willie

about the history of the company and their thoughts about the **Cook Medical-Goodwill Indianapolis project**.

For information about the company, visit www.harmonconstruction.com/.

How does one start a construction company, especially when he has a full-time job already?

Bill: My father was a railroader. He worked as a car inspector. And he worked the night shift. He worked in the boxcars and they had to frame wood out inside the boxcars. So he would pick up the tools and work at night. Over time, he had all this time during the day, so he would build a room for somebody or do concrete for somebody. A couple of years later the railroad did away with his job and he said, "I'm going to start doing construction full time." As far as me and my brother Tommy, we were his

labor. We grew up with it.

What makes a good construction company?

Willie: I always feel like, for our group, it's the people that we work with. It's the customers that we choose to align ourselves with, the owners. We try to put ourselves in good positions. Construction to me is more about legacy. There is a legacy to starting a project like Goodwill and to be able to—five years, 10 years, 15 years—later to be able to tell your kids or your grandkids that, "I worked on this job. And we did this." There is a certain part of pride that comes along with construction.

Let's switch to the Goodwill Indianapolis project. What was it about the project that drew you in and go through the whole selection process?

- ▶ Some of the projects on which Harmon Construction has worked: **1. Riley Hospital for Children;** **2. Louisville Urban League Sports and Learning Complex;** **3. Indianapolis International Airport;** **4. IU Health Saxony Hospital in Fishers;** and **5. Caesars Southern Indiana in New Albany.**





▲ The Republic Bank Foundation YMCA in Louisville is one of the many "legacy" construction projects Harmon Construction has worked on over the years.

Willie: I think what attracted us to it, especially as a minority-owned company, was the goal that they were trying to reach, the step forward in inclusion that they were trying to capture, and especially with the climate of everything in the world and people looking at that stuff differently, I think that was the biggest thing that stuck out to us—that somebody was willing to make that commitment to open up some doors for people. And we want to take this opportunity to maybe open that door for somebody else too.

Explain for people who maybe don't understand what a general contractor does?

Bill: We are in charge. We are the direct conduit with the owner to build his project. We hold the contracts, we hold the insurance. We are going to put supervision people out there to build the project. We are going to make sure it is a safe project. Everybody has to do their part to build a successful job. You are just sort of the manager of the orchestra—the whole thing. You have to be the iron hand too, if somebody ain't doing their part, you have to get with them.

You're in charge of the subcontractors, as well. So talk about that process and what you are looking for there?

Willie: We need to be aware of their capabilities. This project was a little bit different with the goal. It is a challenge to be able to reach 97% goal on a project. So, getting out and finding those subcontractors—and **Akilah Darden** (from the Darden Group) helped with a lot of that. You want to make sure that they have the qualities to perform the work, and do it to the liking and satisfaction of us as the general contractor—but also the owner, who we are representing.

In what areas do you hire subcontractors?

Willie: It's definitely HVAC. Any MEP is what we call it in construction—mechanical, electrical, and plumbing. Roofers. From our standpoint, we also perform a lot of the work that we are talking about. So, making the decision if it makes sense for us to pour concrete on this project or to go find a subcontractor to pour concrete. There's interior finishes, there's painters, some smaller stuff. Cleaning—we do a good cleaning of the project while it's going on and

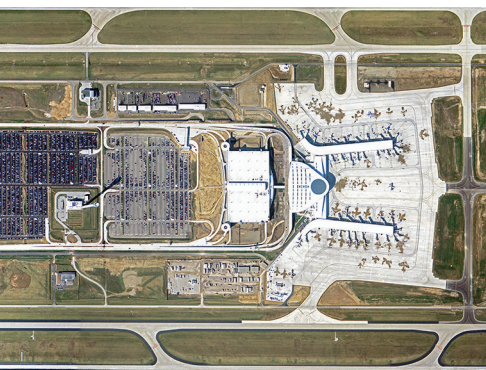
then at the completion when we turn it over to the owner.

Will you be doing any hiring of laborers from that neighborhood?

Bill: Yes. We are developing a plan to hire some people, train, educate. They are wanting to maybe bring some people out of the neighborhood just to help move material in for electricians and stuff. We are not going to ask you to go up there and install a light, but we are going to explain to you how that whole light goes in. Our goal is to get some people involved from that neighborhood.

Is anything else you want to add?

Bill: We are really excited about this opportunity. We applaud Cook for reaching out to the minority community to do this. And we are going to do such a good job, that we hope that Cook is one of our customers from now on and forever. My father's thing was "total quality service." He never advertised but he let his work do his talking for us.



Coming Together to "Keep Indy Beautiful"



A group representing the **38th & Sheridan** project and neighborhood took part in the "Keep Indy Beautiful for the **Basketball Tournament**" event held Friday, March 19. A total of 18 volunteers from **Cook Medical**, **Goodwill**, the **Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department**, **YMCA**, **Darden Group LLC**, and **TrainX** spent the afternoon picking up litter in the Wholesale District downtown. At the end of their shift, they had collected 16 bags of trash.



Mark your calendars

Pre-Job Fair

April 10 from 1:00-3:00 pm

Job Fair

April 17 from 1:00-3:00 pm

Both events will be held at
Him by Her Collegiate School for the Arts
4501 E. 32nd Street, Indianapolis 46218

Pre-registration is encouraged but not required.

Pre-register by calling **(317) 918-7799**

Want to learn more about the Cook Medical and Goodwill Indianapolis Project?

Here are a couple different ways to do that.

Contact **Mr. James Campbell**
from the **SHANE NHA**

► Email at **Campbellmc1140@gmail.com**

► Phone **317.223.5109**

or

Visit **www.38thandsheridan.com/**

We want to hear from you!

We want to hear your feedback about this project!

Please send your questions, concerns, or thoughts to **community@cookmedical.com**.