WOOD GROUP PSN INVESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE WORKERS

BY: KATIE CARMICHAEL
most important equipment. Located behind the building is a fully simulated production facility packed with a mock tank battery and associated equipment and instrumentation, as well as an area with buried pipe for pipeline locating. As for those who are here for more than just day training, a 235-bed lodge awaits at the back of the property, stocked with all the amenities to make these temporary quarters a comfortable home away from home.

The project is the brainchild of Wood Group PSN Americas’ co-presidents John Glithero and Mitch Fralick, who quickly recognized the need for such infrastructure in the once quiet South Texas region. “When we started working down here, we had to find places to meet, and, luckily, the communities were very supportive of us and let us use their different facilities that they had,” Glithero recalls. “But our workforce is so large and our needs had grown to the point where we had to have somewhere a little bit larger and more accommodating, so we decided to make that long-term investment.”

Wood Group PSN was recently acknowledged for its efforts in the area, receiving an honorable mention for the 2014 Eagle Ford Excellence Award for Safety Performance from the South Texas Energy & Economic Roundtable (STEER).

Safety is first and foremost at Wood Group, and this core value is at the heart of its health, safety and environment (HSE) facility located on FM 2102 in Kenedy. A leading energy service firm, Wood Group has three businesses – Wood Group PSN, Wood Group Kenny and Wood Group Mustang – providing a range of engineering, production support and maintenance management services to the oil and gas, and power generation industries worldwide.

Last March, Wood Group PSN opened a 16,000-square-foot training facility in Kenedy, where educational programs for Eagle Ford Shale workers focus on HSE and technical competency. The center includes a 350-person-capacity training room, an instrumentation and electrical (I&E) lab, a computer-based training (CBT) lab, and a boardroom. “Through its decades working with the energy industry, Wood Group has developed extensive expertise and a comprehensive curriculum that is passed on through a mix of class training, hands-on experience and CBT,” Fralick explains.

Within these walls, more than 15 years of curriculum development and industry expertise is imparted to a new generation of workers.

The first layer in the cocoon is Aristos, thesecond layer in the cocoon is Aristos, the Steer Safety Cocoon is the most recent safety initiative to come out of Wood Group PSN. It’s innovative, yet intentionally simplistic in nature, comprised of four layers focusing on hazard awareness, safety training, behavioural standards and life-saving rules.

The second layer is Hazard Awareness, which promotes awareness of accidents that occur and provides tools to help identify unsafe situations before a work incident occurs. These tools help employees work together as a team and as individuals to keep all work zones safe.

The third layer is the Protection Layer. This is a unique training tool created by Wood Group PSN that provides an interactive experience for employees to better understand the real-world implications of everyday decision-making. All employees are expected to complete the one-day training program, which encourages everyone involved with Wood Group PSN to think about their actions both at the workplace and beyond. “You can have the best tools in the world, but if people don’t make the personal decision to use them, you’re not going to get anywhere,” Fralick says. “Aristos is all about people’s behavior and people making the right decisions.”

The fourth layer is Life Saving Rules, the next layer of the cocoon, includes nine guidelines that everyone in the organization must follow to ensure safety. This includes safe entry and exit procedures, which promotes awareness of one’s surroundings and provides tools to help identify unsafe situations before work even begins. These tools help employees work together as a team and as individuals to keep all work zones safe.

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The group enticed employees to complete the Rules, were introduced to employees through a of the cocoon and the third layer, Life Saving each individual layer. First, the overall concept was introduced in phases to allow employees to raise their hands, we know we’ve got some ’Hey guys, who all is familiar with our Safety leadership, but it has been Fralick and Glithe to every employee,” Glithero states. Naturally, the company employs traditional methods of communication - both internally and externally - through its communications department via newsletters, surveys, online outreach, management teams and project managers. The company also utilizes social media to reach its employees and the public. However, Fralick and Glithero will quite often just show up and conduct their own, albeit less scientific, market research. “We’ll go to a shop in North Dakota [for example] and say, ‘Hey guys, who all is familiar with our Safety Cocoon?’” Glithero says. “And if you’re standing there with 150 guys and only half of them raise their hands, we know we’ve got some work to do.”

“Wood Group’s social responsibility,” Glithero says. “We’re here for the long haul.”

Today, Wood Group is an international leader in energy services with approximately $7 billion in sales, employing about 40,000 people and operating in 50 countries. Wood Group PSN sponsors and supports local charitable events, such as the Youth Rally, an annual day of fun, food and activities for underprivileged children in the area; Little League games, at which the company has provided between 250 and 500 meals for kids over the course of the season; and the local stock show and Lonesome Dove Fest, to which the company donates equipment and volunteers. It also offers up to four scholarships a year to high school seniors from the South Texas region.

As Glithero and Fralick explain, Wood Group PSN helps the community because it is the right thing to do. Period. And for the co-presidents of Wood Group PSN Americas, there’s no better reason than that.

In August of 2013, Wood Group PSN announced that the Americas region president, Derek Blackwood, would be retiring and Fralick and Mitch Fralick were promoted. The company employed traditional methods of communication - both internally and externally - through its communications department via newsletters, surveys, online outreach, leadership teams and project managers. The company also utilizes social media to reach its employees and the public. However, Fralick and Glithero will quite often just show up and conduct their own, albeit less scientific, market research. “We’ll go to a shop in North Dakota [for example] and say, ‘Hey guys, who all is familiar with our Safety Cocoon?’” Glithero says. “And if you’re standing there with 150 guys and only half of them raise their hands, we know we’ve got some work to do.”

The development of the HSE training facility in the heart of the Eagle Ford Shale is largely indicative of the company’s strategic mentality of “think global, act local.”

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The idea of the Safety Cocoon originated at an annual meeting of all Wood Group PSN leadership, but it has been Fralick and Glithe- no’s responsibility to educate all 12,000 of their employees on each safety measure. Both men admit that can be quite a challenge. “We are so spread out geographically that one of the areas of our focus is continuing to find ways to test that our messages are getting to every employee,” Glithero states.

When it comes to the co-presidents’ professional relationship, the best compar is may be classic yin and yang. Fralick has onshore experience; Glithero has an offshore background. Fralick has a manage- ment degree, Glithero an engineering degree. Nevertheless, they share the same bottom line: Always put people first.

JOHN GLITHERO:
After graduating from Texas A&M University in 1979 with a bachelor’s degree in engineering, Glithero began a career in commercial con- struction and development before moving into the oil and gas industry. He previously worked in a company that was eventually bought by the Michael Baker Corporation and became Baker Energy. Glithero rose to the rank of Vice President, a post he held for over a decade.

In 2002, Glithero joined Wood Group to start its operations and maintenance business in the United States, initially based offshore. In the years that followed, this branch of the company has grown remarkably.

MITCH FRALICK:
Fralick graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University with a bachelor’s degree in business management and immediately en- tered the oil and gas industry. In 1988, during the historic industry downturn of the 1980s, Fralick and his partner, Jonathan Knapp, founded Producers Assistance Corporation (PAC), specializing in operations and main- tenance services and providing day-to-day commercial operations of wells and facilities. Wood Group bought PAC in 2008, and Fralick was eventually named Senior Vice President of Onshore Operations.

Fralick notes that PAC has increased in size nearly eight times over since being acquired by Wood Group. The operation that included just over 300 employees when it was sold to Wood Group now boasts roughly 1,800 person- nel. “[Wood Group] didn’t come in and try to change the way we did business,” Fralick con- tinues. “They bought a successful company and provided the resources for it to be even more successful.”

Wood Group entered the U.S. energy services market - having built the foundation of its business in the United Kingdom - by acquiring smaller successful companies and combin- ing them under the well-established and network of a global business. Therein lies the strength, and quite possibly the secret, behind the company’s incredible success.

Wood Group’s history dates back to the early 1900s in Aberdeen, Scotland. In 1912, William Wood founded Wood & Davidson, which provided ship repair and marine engi- neering services to the local fishing fleet out of the port of Aberdeen. Wood had seven sons, the youngest of which, John, would eventually take over the family’s portion of the business in the early 1950s.

It may seem like an unusual move. But it be- gins to make sense once you look at these two men over such a vast geographic area. Wood Group PSN Americas includes oper- ations in Canada, North and South America and the Latin America, not to mention the number of employees they employ, over 12,000. Both men have a management degree, Glithero an engineering degree. Nevertheless, they share the same bottom line: Always put people first.

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THE SAFETY COCONUT IS INNOVATIVE, YET INTENTIONALLY SIMPLISTIC IN NATURE, COMPRISING FOUR LAYERS FOCUSING ON HAZARD AWARENESS, SAFETY TRAINING, BEHAVIOURAL STANDARDS AND LIFE-SAVING RULES

Life Saving Rules

1. All work, including changes, must be risk assessed
2. Verify isolation before work starts
3. Protect yourself against a fall when working at height
4. Test precautions when working over or close to water
5. Rigging and lifting precautions and equipment must be planned, controlled and evaluated for the job
6. Obtain authorisation before entering a confined space
7. Ensure all safety precautions are in place for ground works
8. Always wear a nest belt and never use any type of mobile phone
9. You must be fit and able to do your job safely

Learn more about Wood Group by visiting the organisation online at www.woodgroup-psn.com.