

## FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS



VICKI THOMPSON

## From the field to upper management

MEMBERS OF THE ALBANESE FAMILY GOT AN EARLY START IN THE BUSINESS

Joseph J. Albanese Inc. was an integral part of Kevin Albanese's childhood.

His grandfather (after whom the company is named) founded the business as a cement contracting company in 1955.

"He started, literally, with a small pickup and a wheelbarrow, and did small concrete projects, sidewalks and driveways," Kevin said. Then his father, John Albanese, took up the baton. As the next CEO and president, John expanded to demolition, grading and paving, concrete pumping and concrete saw cutting.

One of Kevin's early memories is of the first piece of Caterpillar equipment his father ever purchased – a 426 backhoe in 1985. "I was about 7 years old when I got my first paycheck," Albanese said. Surprising, unless you knew his father helped out with the business at the tender age of 6.

In the early years, Kevin spent time in the shop and learned to run the company's low bed: "To this day, he still maintains his commercial license

### JOSEPH J. ALBANESE INC.

**Primary owners:** Kevin Albanese, Chris Albanese, Phillip Albanese, Beth Rogers

**Location:** Santa Clara

**Most current revenue:** \$239 million

**Number of employees:** 830

**Number of family members who are employees and/or owners:** 4

**Number of generations in the business:** 3

**Year business started:** 1955

**Rank on list:** 5

**Business description:** Concrete construction and general engineering

and can often be seen joyriding a concrete pump or low bed," the company website said.

After gaining experience in the field, he worked his way through a series of management positions. Today, he is both president and CEO of the company.

"Coupling a broad-based background in practical construction with a thorough grasp of construction law, I provide a unique perspective into many of the most complex construction/legal issues facing the industry today," Kevin said.

Similar to Kevin, his brother Phillip also worked his way from the ground up. He worked a few summers of high school as a laborer and apprentice carpenter. Then, after graduating from Boston College, he returned as a project engineer and rose to the rank of COO and vice president.

"Phillip's skills and mine, I think, are pretty complimentary," Kevin said. "We've worked through a lot and we have a great team of people."

Joseph J. Albanese also hosts a number of other families (some comprised of three generations). This adds an air of authenticity to the company's family values.

But Joseph J. Albanese wasn't intended to be a family business at its genesis: "For most family businesses that I've seen it's really an organic growth," Kevin said. "An entrepreneur starts his or her own company, and later that passion is shared with the next generation, or a sibling, or a spouse."

When asked about the challenges of a family-owned company, he said, "It's hard to separate, sometimes, the emotion from the business. You've got to make sure to control that, and not let the emotions overwhelm or override a good business decision."

And the joys? "You're able to share it with the people that you're closest to. And when you have common ambitions, and common goals, and common focus, it's a pretty powerful enterprise."