

A black and white photograph of a complex industrial steel structure, possibly a power plant or refinery. The image is filled with a dense network of vertical and diagonal beams, creating a strong geometric pattern. Several bright light sources are visible, creating prominent lens flare effects that illuminate the scene. The overall tone is industrial and technical.

HELIX ELECTRIC

1985-2010 25 YEARS



ILLUMINATED



EST. 1985

Dedicated with Gratitude to the
Employees of Helix Electric

HELIX ELECTRIC

EST. 1985 • 25 YEARS

Introduction	2
From There to Here	4
Switching On.....	8
The Early Years.....	12
Helix Rising	18
Keesler Air Force Base	42
Illuminated: Dynamic and Diverse.....	50
Bright Lights.....	68
Looking Forward.....	84
Endnotes	88

INTRODUCTION

The history of Helix Electric bears the markings of hard work, teamwork, determination and resiliency. Since 1985 these founding principles have helped our company achieve extraordinary results and have lent power to a compelling truth: when people work cooperatively toward common goals with integrity and attention to quality and detail, very special things can happen.

Twenty-five years ago, I leased a two-room garage in El Cajon, a suburb of San Diego, California. This is where Helix Electric originated and, upon reflection, it elicits many emotions—but mostly pride. That clichéd entrepreneurial setting is amusing, and certainly, time has proven happiness can arise from humble beginnings. Proudly, our company has meant good things to people, both personally and professionally. Similarly, we have served our industry and community (and others nationwide) with distinction.

We have come a long way. That first year of operation, the phone barely rang and we realized less than \$200,000 in revenues. By 1991 we had exceeded \$50 million annually and have built on that number ever since. From two employees—myself and a secretary—we multiplied to several hundred and, at the highest count, Helix’s workforce reached approximately 1,700. From one location in San Diego, we have worked remotely in numerous markets throughout the nation and expanded to offices in Los Angeles, Northern California, Nevada, Arizona, Guam, Hawaii and Texas.

Helix has remained true to its mission to achieve extraordinary results. We have grown and adapted to meet the demands of ever-changing industries—our own and those we partner with such as general contractors, engineers and architects. The single-service electrical company of our inception has evolved into Helix being recognized multiple times as both a nationally ranked top 10 electrical contractor and a top 40 specialty contractor. Among our clients, we have earned trust and confidence, and notably, a reputation for successfully tackling complex projects of diverse size and scope, both public and private. And internally, we are fueled by the desire for bigger and bolder work by improving and innovating our processes and aggressively developing the employees who will carry us toward greater heights.

From the beginning, building Helix has been challenging and rewarding on many levels. Much has inspired and driven our company’s accomplishments and I am pleased that we can offer this special commemorative overview. Helix Electric is a story—25 years in the making—of what can happen when people dream in big ways, dare to be different, and deliver on their promises.

With gratitude,



Gary Shekhter

CEO and Founder

FROM THERE TO HERE

A MAN COMES TO AMERICA TO CHANGE HIS LIFE

Odessa, in the south of Ukraine, is more than 6,600 miles from San Diego, California—home of Helix Electric’s corporate headquarters. It is a large port city along the Black Sea in the former Soviet Union, where the key industries are shipbuilding, fishing, steelmaking and food processing. Odessites are a sturdy, hard-working people, who for centuries have been proud of their industrial pedigree and their city’s status as a commercial trade gateway to Europe, Asia and the Middle East. However, generations of them lived and worked in the shadow of communism, an ideology that, for many, was suffocating to their growth as individuals and their development as a society.

Helix CEO and founder, Gary Shekhter, was born and raised in Odessa to parents who steadfastly rejected the ideals of the Communist Party. They were motivated to build comfortable lives for themselves and their son and daughter, without having any political membership or affiliation. For the young Shekhter, his environments—home country and home life—offered a swirling contrast of beliefs to reconcile. That experience shaped him and gave rise to his independent spirit. Arguably, those times in Odessa also planted the seeds of the Helix corporate identity—an earnest company that can adapt and thrive within unique scenarios and circumstances.

Shekhter’s parents were both engineers with state-owned companies. Despite enjoying respect and status in their field, they faced workplace limitations. Their resistance to communism, while not radical, still marked them as political opponents, and therefore created a professional ceiling. In Odessa and the rest of the Soviet Union, there were no opportunities for private enterprise. Everything was owned by the government.

Shekhter would follow in his parents’ footsteps in more ways than one. After studying electrical engineering at Odessa Polytechnic Institute, he found a good job in his field of study and throughout the 1970s proved himself as a designer of sophisticated machine tools. He was a responsible and reliable asset to his company, and yet, challenges awaited. Once, while managing a large machinery project that required a trip to Poland, he was not permitted to travel abroad because he did not advocate communism. The intersection of professions and politics that had limited his parents had come back to haunt Shekhter. This episode highlighted the divide between the reality of where he was from and who he ultimately wanted to be.



Odessa, Ukraine in the 1960s



A LIFE IN MOTION

By 1978 Shekhter was still young—in his late twenties—and married, with designs on starting a family. But he was impatient and frustrated in the Soviet Union. The clock was ticking—especially for a person who possessed his level of intelligence, drive and ambition. His plight grew to resemble that of



Gary and Jean Shekhter with young Boris

citizens in other countries, whose advancement potential is limited by strict political climates. Shekhter envisioned what the rest of his life might look like and began to fashion a different path. He knew a dramatic change was needed in order to realize his full potential.

During his youth, Shekhter had dreamed of living and working in America. In adulthood it became a consuming passion. Like most everyone, he knew about New York and had heard his fair share about California—namely, the big city buzz of Los Angeles. Back then, San Diego, despite being home to key military bases and a respectable portion of the aerospace industry, was still regarded by many to be a provincial beach town. The place had not registered much in Shekhter's mind. However, since they had family members in the area, he and his wife, Jean, decided that San Diego was where their new lives would begin. Unbeknownst to them, they (and Helix Electric) would be catching a wave: San Diego would later be tagged "America's Finest City" and, toward the century's end, would achieve economic and population growth that would make it one of America's most dynamic and fastest growing cities.

The Shekhters arrived in the United States in August 1979. Jean was pregnant with Boris, their first child, so there was added incentive to seek and find employment. Only three days after arriving, through a family member, Shekhter was introduced to Circle Electric, a very small local contractor.

I was fascinated by Gary's intelligence, his desire to be the contractor of choice, and his background—immigrating from another country and not only being able to compete, but thrive in a highly competitive marketplace. He is a true visionary. -Arthur Geller, Vice President of Human Resources

Fortuitously, the company was recruiting for a junior estimator position. Shekhter was interviewed and offered the job immediately—at five dollars an hour. Obviously that was not optimal pay. Shekhter had superior qualifications and a strong work history in Ukraine. Such a low, entry-level job gave him pause. But if nothing else, he understood that a fresh start in America meant beginning anew in more ways than one. He took the job—counting switches and receptacles.

Years later the Iron Curtain would fall in the Soviet Union. Gary and Jean would witness that historic moment from afar. The newest generation of Shekhters, Boris and Sarah, would grow up enjoying freedoms and opportunities their parents and grandparents were denied.

Gary Shekhter proudly displays his Certificate of Naturalization



SWITCHING ON

INSPIRATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LIGHT BULB MOMENTS FOR A NEW COMPANY

Gary and Jean Shekhter shared excitement and fear about arriving in America. It was a new home and the start of a new life. Shekhter's five-dollar-an-hour position as a junior estimator for Circle Electric was an early low point, but a mercifully brief one. The company could not ignore that his capabilities went well beyond entry-level. He was a smart and diligent professional who made a quick impression and rose through the ranks. Over the course of six years, he gained the type of business management experience and autonomy in the U.S. that communism kept from him back in Ukraine. By the time Shekhter decided to strike out on his own, he was Circle Electric's general manager and in charge of day-to-day operations. Professionally, the road he had traveled was long, arduous, and inspired him to think bigger than ever before.

Helix Electric began in October 1985 in a leased two-room garage on Fayette Street in El Cajon. This was a largely undeveloped East San Diego suburb with monochromatic mountain views—certainly not the colorful, scenic beauty typically associated with “America's Finest City.” Inside that garage were no vehicles in storage, no mass of hoarded possessions. It was aesthetically cold and unremarkable with its roll-up door, makeshift offices and the type of humble decorations one might expect from a start-up company. But while minimal, the space contained that which mattered most—the human element. Shekhter's business momentum and strong will to succeed instilled him with confidence at the onset of his new venture.

Confident also described the first few employees that populated the Helix outpost. Several—mostly electricians and other field personnel—were colleagues from the old Circle Electric days. They followed Shekhter because they had faith in his abilities, and in this new start-up scenario, familiarity certainly bred comfort.



Gary Shekhter and daughter Sarah attend company picnic at the San Diego Wild Animal Park (now the San Diego Zoo Safari Park)

That type of support was telling. After all, Shekhter was an electrical engineer by profession, not an electrician. His only previous experience with electrical drawings was a fleeting glance while attending Odessa Polytechnic Institute. Yet his leadership at Circle Electric spoke volumes about his intelligence and willingness to embrace challenges. Shekhter had earned the respect of a tough, blue-collar workforce. They became associated with Helix because they knew his potential and foresaw his success.

A SLOW START

There was great risk in starting Helix, as there is with most companies, but Shekhter was used to hard work and knew that nothing came easy. That awareness would serve him well, as obstacles—both small and large—were seemingly at every turn. Even the name Helix Electric was briefly contested when, less than a month after being open, another business claimed the same name—one Shekhter borrowed from Mount Helix, the neighborhood where he lived with his family.



A view of Mount Helix in San Diego

Shekhter scoffed at the name claim. He had incorporated under the name and the disputing company was not incorporated. Additionally, prior to opening, his lawyer cleared the name for trademark. Ultimately, after a few brief legal volleys, Shekhter emerged with the most compelling argument for continued use of Helix Electric. The other company simply faded away.

Not every issue disappeared as easily. Shekhter's burgeoning entrepreneurship was helped by his time

at Circle Electric, but it was also a hindrance. His former employer did not fare well without his stabilizing presence. In fact, following Shekhter's departure, the company repeatedly hit upon rough patches and a downward spiral ensued. Morale was broken and more of its employees began to inquire at Helix for opportunities. Many of those workers represented pleasant and productive links to Shekhter's past, and he hired as many as he could afford. However, certain aspects of that time were an ongoing source of stress.

Shekhter, as general manager and a minority stockholder at Circle Electric, had a hand in all areas of the company. Documents of all types routinely crossed his desk for signature—mostly contracts dealing with project duties and deliverables. However, others pertained to his small ownership stake. When Circle Electric went out of business, the company's financial problems lingered and various matters of the most minute nature were scrutinized. Legal action initiated by third parties resulted and, unfortunately, a wide net was cast. Shekhter, among others, became entangled by association.

Despite no longer being affiliated with Circle Electric, he had to mount a legal defense. It was expensive and a distraction that caused him more than a few sleepless nights. In spite of this litigation his focus did not waiver.

Once again in his life, Shekhter had to steel his resolve and adapt to the rapidly moving parts around him: legal woes, a new business and, with the birth of his daughter Sarah, increased family responsibilities.

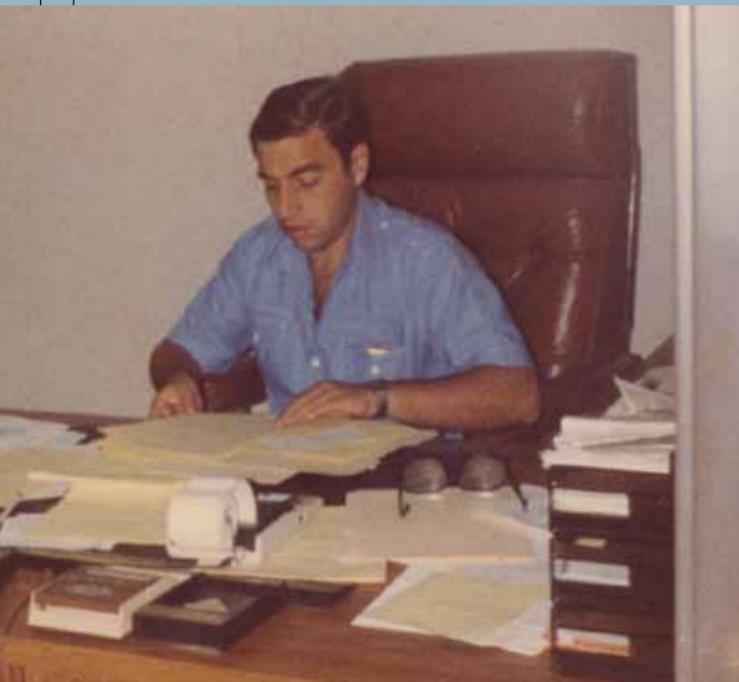
Despite these challenges, Shekhter buckled down and displayed a tremendous will to succeed. He did not wish to fail, and he could not afford to fail—either personally or professionally.



Helix Electric: licensed and ready

THE EARLY YEARS (1985-1989)

THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF GETTING STARTED



Another early morning for Gary Shekhter at Helix's first office

Gary Shekhter never shied away from a challenge, and Helix's first year of operations clearly met that definition. Every day, he arrived at the office at seven in the morning and the phone would never ring. He quickly discovered that starting a business was different than running one. It was a daily matter of survival—to make payroll, to pay the bills and to acquire new business. Plus, the 1980s were tough years for the private construction industry in San Diego

and most other parts of the country. But Shekhter always felt he could achieve whatever he set out to accomplish—and in this case it was to make the phone ring.

Shekhter had developed a few solid professional relationships, including one with Ron Harper, the founder of Harper Construction. This general contractor had a strong presence in San Diego and was one of the first to enlist Helix's services. General contractors like Harper and electrical contractors like Helix are inextricably linked. Theirs is a mutually beneficial relationship where the general contractor on a building project hires an electrical contractor to work with the structure to properly meet all project specifications. The first job with Harper was a multi-level senior living community project worth \$360,000 and located in Carlsbad, a coastal community north of San Diego. Soon after, Helix was offered another job with Harper, an apartment building in the city's Hillcrest section, which at the time was part of the emerging Uptown District. Helix completed the job on time and on budget. The success provided a boost for an unproven startup seeking to build its reputation.

The jobs kept getting bigger and more complex. As we gained more experience we found out how to do the work with more people and more structure. From there, the company just blossomed.

-Mark Fichtler, General Superintendent

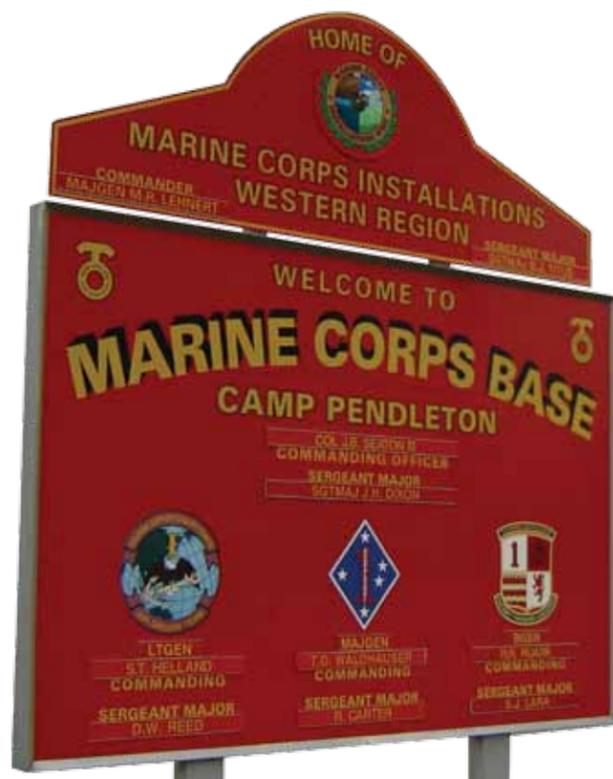
More jobs—small ones—began filtering into the office, and Shekhter continued to acquire all the work he could find while managing Helix as efficiently as possible. He sought opportunities through government contracts—public work to counteract the effects of the general slowdown in private projects. Unlike many contractors that stayed away from government work—citing low money and bureaucracy—Shekhter figured out how to manage those issues to Helix's benefit. He understood that government jobs did not involve glamorous monuments or historic landmarks, but if done correctly, they could keep the work coming and the phones ringing.



Downtown San Diego, 1980

THE FIRST BIG JOB: CAMP PENDLETON

The strategy to seek public projects paid off when Helix was asked by Hunt Building Corporation, on behalf of the United States Department of Defense, to bid a job on its Marine Corps base at Camp Pendleton. The San Diego area was home to a significant military population and Camp Pendleton, only 38 miles north of downtown, was a major amphibious training base and a staple of the region since 1942. Thousands of Marines and their families lived in the nearby Oceanside community, and the 125,000-acre base itself contained a mix of office buildings, training stations and residences. Additional homes and officers' quarters—nearly 1,000 units—were being built and renovated.



The timing of this opportunity was perfect for Helix to submit a strong bid and to parlay its early experience in apartment communities and other types of multi-family housing. Fortuitously, the general contractor for the project did not have complete specifications for the job. Shekhter called upon his insights as an electrical engineer and helped write the specifications so that the job would be more cost efficient to build. By demonstrating a unique way to save money for the general contractor, Helix edged out the competition and secured the work at Camp Pendleton.

By this time, Helix had built up its work force. At both gradual and sudden intervals, Helix was the beneficiary of the continued exodus from Circle Electric. The new employees brought infusions of knowledge and experience to field and supervisory levels, and equally important, they were familiar and comfortable with Shekhter's aggressive business approach and his results-driven management style. That meant the new employees were able to hit the ground running—ideal circumstances for Helix's first prestige job.



An overhead view of Camp Pendleton

Camp Pendleton was an institution in the San Diego region. Post World War II, it grew to be one of the largest and busiest training facilities for active and reserve Marine, Army and Navy units, as well as national, state and local agencies. The base had history and meaning for many people and was important to the country that, just a few years earlier, had given Shekhter a fresh start—and was still providing opportunities.

Shekhter put his best, most experienced crew on the Camp Pendleton job. It was a large, important project for a relatively untested company and required nothing less than a full team effort. There were two aspects of the job: 600-plus units of multi-family housing for the service members, and approximately

360 units of larger officers' quarters. Helix performed site development and installed all utilities and interior electrical work for both aspects of the project. The underground and distribution work was very complex and technical. Special care in safety and work processes must be taken on all jobs, but on a working military base those responsibilities amplify. Helix had to observe extra precautions and protocols. Nearly everything about the project posed difficulties that could make or break a young company. Ultimately, the former was the result, and after two years of work at Camp Pendleton, Helix emerged stronger and better.

THE 1980S: CLOSING STRONG

Camp Pendleton was an important, game-changing project that provided a welcome measure of legitimacy. Helix was the right company at the right time for that type of work; by performing successfully, it created more opportunities for itself in the public and private sectors. Before Camp Pendleton, Helix was relatively unheard of and untested. During and afterwards, it began to forge an identity beyond that of “scrappy” upstart—although the implied characteristics of determination and resourcefulness were a clear part of the company’s makeup.

The Helix team had developed a knack for cost-effective design and also valued high-quality workmanship and adherence to work schedules, which resonated with potential clients. Management made it a point to learn and grow from every job. Any mistakes were quickly addressed and corrected before they became consistent flaws that could impede the company’s progress. There was a collective realization that the moment was theirs to seize. Several of Helix’s competitors couldn’t weather the slower periods of the 1980s, and many closed shop while others struggled. Helix outlasted them by being open-minded about the types of work it accepted and by demonstrating skill and competence when those opportunities arose. One such opportunity came in 1987: the Vista Detention Facility in Vista, California.

While other electrical contractors hesitated to do certain types of work, Helix identified niches that allowed it to perform excellent work on unique projects. The Vista Detention Facility (VDF), another public job (this time for the County of San Diego in cooperation with Hensel Phelps Construction Company) came with attractive facts and figures attached. The \$4.7 million contract was for a large



1986: Helix built a strong work relationship with law enforcement and corrections throughout the decade

jail that sat on several acres of developed land and comprised two floors, with a total of four levels when counting the mezzanines and basement. From a technical perspective, the project was challenging and entailed installing a variety of security elements—prisoner control, fire alarm and other high security systems, as well as intercoms, electric doors, and assorted blocking and monitoring systems. Helix did not have much experience in that type of work, but again, the job turned out to be a success.

The VDF job foreshadowed the company’s “Prison Circuit” period of the early to mid-1990s, when it worked with several other correctional facilities. The company proved that it could be creative, resourceful

and embody business buzz phrases like “out of the box” and “ahead of the curve.” Perhaps most importantly, the VDF job provided another example of the company’s intrepid, hard-working approach. Shekhter was building a company that was not afraid of tough and unusual work. To the contrary, it welcomed such challenges. He accepted that type of work because Helix had the right personnel to get jobs done and done right. The bar had been set very high, but Shekhter had confidence in his team members—many of whom he had now worked with for more than 10 years. By the decade’s end, Helix had solidified its reputation as a company that could achieve extraordinary results.



Early electrified fence work

HELIX RISING (1990-1999)

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, RISK AND REWARD, AND OPENING IN LAS VEGAS

Seldom does a company ascend to the height of its industry overnight. Helix Electric was no exception, but after five years of operation the company was definitely on the rise. The professional triumphs of Vista Detention Facility and Camp Pendleton highlighted risk and reward—the former in terms of taking on complicated work, and the latter in terms of employee growth and customer goodwill. The company's reputation was enhanced, its foundation for growth was set, and it was performing better than its competition. Still, by no means was anyone getting comfortable or complacent.

Helix greeted the 1990s with a sense of urgency that dominated its culture at the office and in the field. The enthusiasm was palpable. Everyone was flexible, resourceful and committed to doing their jobs to perfection. Diverse personalities meshed, and everyone seemed to know their roles. There was neither bureaucracy nor unnecessary layers of management. The various project teams rolled up their sleeves and

contributed their talent, passion and expertise—all toward excellence and company growth. There was purpose and precision: work was obtained, the best team was put in place, the team built the project, and then everyone moved onto the next one.

Between 1993 and 2000, we were well on our way to becoming one of the largest contractors in California and the nation.

—Arthur Geller, Vice President of Human Resources

By the end of 1991, Helix had generated \$50 million in annual revenues. There was an impressive speed and upward trajectory to the company's growth. There was a rich irony, too, as each day, Helix further surpassed Shekhter's modest early ambitions. What he originally envisioned was a small business that he could maintain to support his family. But Helix evolved into a much different animal—in size and capability. The word "maintain" no longer applied in a competitive, "adapt or die" landscape that required the company to keep growing. Shekhter knew that achieving success would require the ability to both outsmart and outperform the competition.

Neither would be possible if Helix were to grow and expand in an uncontrollable fashion. Instead he told his managers that he would rather own a small profitable company than a large company that was only marginally profitable—or worse. He would reference terms like "controlled growth" and "growth by design," while warning against growth at the expense of the bottom line.

MORE WORK AND HITTING THE PRISON CIRCUIT

Helix's style of controlled growth involved a deft mix of public works and private contracts. The company's expertise in field operations and project management made it a desirable partner for municipal, state and federal agencies, as well as for prominent owners, developers and general contractors. Helix met the trending demand for medium voltage upgrades that had represented a fair amount of work in the industry since the late 1980s. Again, that type of work was a profitable and sensible, if not an entirely exciting, way to boost the bottom line. And certainly Helix was capable of more. It could build everything

ABC Salutes Helix Electric, Inc., a "can-do" Company!



ABC Executive Vice President Bob Winterton presents Helix Electric President Gary Shekhter recognition award from the Education Construction Foundation for Helix Electric's vision in establishing the National Center for Construction Education & Research.

Helix Electric turns out in numbers at ABC Legislative night when their company received recognition for its work and support of the Education Construction Foundation.



Lt. to Rta: Eric Chiers, Larry White, Danny Geller, Jerry Eves, Art Geller, Rick Meyer, Gary Shekhter, Nolla Lagrimos, Dan Zupp, Victor Fuchs, Bob Freeman, Kneeling: David Goshik, Ken Etnaus, Tom Livingston, Brian Jordan

Company profile in Associated Builders & Contractors publication

ranging from straightforward wiring jobs to sophisticated audio-visual systems to complex computerized control installations. It was the "can-do" electrical contractor and the project pipeline was filled with diversity—wastewater treatment facilities, military bases, hospitals, airports, universities, luxury high-rise residences, multiplex movie theaters and retail outlet centers and shopping malls.

All this activity, and still the early 1990s were recessionary times throughout the country. By being able to perform a full range of electrical work and by satisfying clients, Helix seemed immune to the problems of activity and identity that other companies were having. It stayed true to itself in every way—especially when it came to being open minded with unusual types of work. Helix served certain niches without ever blinking, which paid off handsomely during the period known as the “Prison Circuit.”



Helix completed this rooftop system at a juvenile detention center

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR—then known as the California Department of Corrections) was experiencing its own type of growth. Between 1980 and 1989 the prison population increased by 14.5 percent a year¹. A few years later, overpopulation stoked the demand for construction of new correctional facilities, as well as

additions and major renovations to older prisons. Helix was well positioned for repeat business in that arena, based on its work at Vista Detention Facility and other institutional-focused projects. The company was able to stay busy with that type of public work—fast-paced jobs that often involved cast-in-place concrete construction. Helix also installed a retrofit feeder raceway system on the rooftop of a juvenile detention center. Ultimately, amidst those harsh environs, a new specialty emerged: electrified prison fencing.

Prison projects were a key factor in Helix’s growth. The company’s contracts with CDCR sent them into almost every major facility in the state. Often these sizable environments were beyond San Diego County in the type of isolated, desert locales characteristic of long-term incarceration.

From 1994 to 1997 Helix installed lethal electrified fences at 13 prisons throughout California, including locations in Susanville to the northeast, Blythe to the southeast and Tehachapi in between. In addition, expansive types of containment were installed to the northeast at the Sierra Conservation Center in Jamestown, and to the south at Donovan State Prison in Otay Mesa (San Diego County). Both the Otay Mesa and Blythe jobs involved 9,200 linear feet of

We had found a niche with prison fencing—traveling around California doing large jobs that other contractors didn’t want to do or couldn’t do. Helix grew annually and working with prisons was a key reason.

– Isaac Altman, Vice President

fencing. They were monitored by an intuitive central computer that activated alarm functions and prepared historical data when anything came into physical contact with the fence. These installations were at a relatively low setting of four amps and were potentially lethal at 5,100 volts. Such complex fencing was common in high-tech environments, but many of the prisons were not so advanced. Electrified fencing

proved to be particularly cost-effective for large, maximum-security facilities that faced high operating expenses. For Helix, prison work was successful and its consistent demand facilitated the company’s growth. And even though prisons were not stylish, their size and scope allowed Helix to be even more competitive in seeking private contracts.



A close-up look at Helix’s electrified fence work

GALLERIA AT SUNSET MALL, LAS VEGAS

A one million-square-foot shopping mall in Henderson, Nevada featuring more than 100 specialty shops on two floors, with four department stores and a 600-seat food court.





Las Vegas, 1990 – boom times were ahead

However, based on the company's roots—Gary Shekhter's personal and professional journey—being an open shop represented an honest scenario, and frankly, the only one imaginable. In a 1992 interview with the trade publication *Engineering News Record (ENR)*, Shekhter explained his decision to make Helix non-union. He stated, "Coming from a highly structured society in the Soviet Union, I felt people have the right to choose what they want to do and how they want to do it. We don't need anybody as an intermediary between management and the workers."

Not surprisingly, local electricians unions in and around San Diego have never shared Shekhter's viewpoint. The same can be said wherever the company has gone to ply its trade. Assorted types of grievances, including lawsuits,

have been filed—with unsuccessful results—and Helix has endured its share of unflattering comments. Many unsubstantiated accusations have centered on the wages the company pays its workers, and worse, some unions have accused Helix of unsafe working conditions. Nonetheless, for its part Helix has been steadfast in its open shop policy, while other companies might have folded from such pressure. The company is proud of its employment policies, wage scales and safety record (for which it has received multiple awards). During the span of its 25 years, career opportunities have been provided for thousands of electricians, project managers and staff at every level—many whose loyalty and tenure are a testament to Helix's work environment and open shop orientation.

Quite simply, Helix is a company built on hard work and an open shop—often referred to as a "merit shop"—which rewards those who work hard and contribute to the collective mission. The open shop environment allows Helix to imbue its work sites with greater creativity and management flexibility. Helix project managers and superintendents have strong two-way communication with their crews and everyone is able to interact freely. This type of culture can be advantageous to jobs of all complexities, as well as to the client's budget and overall expectations. Conversely, by their very nature, union environments are guided by rigid sets of rules, regulations and procedures that can impact the speed and effectiveness of any project. Clients appreciate that Helix can be nimble and proactive in pursuit of delivering the best possible results. Often, the industry can be cut and dried: sometimes it's all about production. Helix is not only a production-oriented organization, but one that moves fast and prides itself in the speed and quality with which it can deliver projects. This level of efficiency is significant in a world where dollars matter and saving clients' money can be the deciding factor in winning a contract or not.



Las Vegas, late 1990s

LAS VEGAS: RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

Helix had established a significant foothold in the California market. The company's imprint was up and down the Golden State and opportunities gradually arose elsewhere. Work throughout parts



Victor Fuchs

of Nevada offered the company a chance to do more remote jobs at wastewater treatment facilities—again, the type of safe, manageable and profitable jobs that kept the financial ledger strong.

By early 1994, Victor Fuchs, a Helix vice president and division manager, was hearing in industry circles that a large shopping mall project called Galleria Mall was afoot in Las Vegas. As it turned out, the developer was Forest City Enterprises, a Cleveland, Ohio firm that had previously worked with Helix on several West Coast projects. Their relationship was strong, but there was a hitch: the major work in Las Vegas was mostly closed to out-of-towners.

Nevertheless, in typical Helix fashion a team of managers vigorously pursued the work, knowing that the odds were against them. The previous ties to Forest City gave them a foot in the door and a seat at the negotiating table. Ultimately, that proved to be enough. After a lengthy process, the difference between the Helix bid and those of the closest competitors was significant. Helix came in at a much more attractive price and offered substantial savings. The Galleria Mall project was a nearly \$5 million contract.



The Helix crew lays out a deck at a work site

Simultaneously, two forthcoming Las Vegas jobs came to light—one private, one public. Helix was invited by Fluor Daniel, another major contractor, to discuss the near-one million square-foot distribution center it was building for clothier Levi Strauss & Co. Helix got pre-qualified for that job, successfully bid, and won the \$6 million contract for electrical work. The other project was for the largest garage at McCarran International Airport. That project also went out for bid; Helix won the nearly \$7 million contract.

Helix had found itself in the right place at the right time. Suddenly, the company based in “America’s Finest City” had major work in America’s fastest growing city. From 1990 through 2000, Las Vegas’ population increased by 83 percent². New residents were drawn to the desert town and its lack of state income tax. Meanwhile, new retailers and developers identified a captive customer base and an abundance of undeveloped land, and many of those companies received a few generous tax breaks of their own.

This convergence of residents and businesses meant a natural demand for new infrastructure and buildings, as well as various renovations and upgrades. Las Vegas was ripe for developers and contractors. The town buzzed with life and economic activity—particularly on the famed Las Vegas Strip, a tourist destination and home to casino hotels and other popular attractions. But beyond those bright lights were also scenes composed of everyday elements more fundamental to residents. Single and multi-family housing of all kinds sprang up, and when it did, new shopping centers, schools, libraries, places of worship, cultural centers and other community fixtures followed. What was happening in Las Vegas in the 1990s was special—a tourist town becoming a major American city.



The District at Green Valley Ranch, a residential and retail project in Henderson, Nevada

We quickly realized that being connected is important in Las Vegas. Now, we’re a known quantity and people know our abilities. They consider Helix for almost any type of job. -Victor Fuchs, President, Helix Electric Nevada

Helix was present and accounted for during key stages of Las Vegas’ growth. By the middle of 1995, those three major jobs—Galleria Mall, Levi Strauss & Co. and McCarran International Airport—were underway with approximately 100 employees attached. Also, a high volume of additional retail

development sprung up around Galleria Mall. Helix pursued and secured those projects, too. Notably, one of them was a small, \$500,000 job with Martin-Harris Construction. One of the busiest contractors during the boom time of the 1990s, Martin-Harris became an ongoing, valued Helix partner.

McCARRAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, TERMINAL D



Despite all that activity, Fuchs and others on the Helix team still commuted from San Diego to Las Vegas to manage the jobs and attend client meetings. When those two- and three-hour meetings ended, Fuchs wanted to ensure the day was well spent. Instead of immediately turning around and going back to San Diego, he and his colleagues would drive around in their rental car and stop wherever they saw a construction trailer or heavy construction equipment. They would ask contractors about the work in progress

and any other jobs. From those encounters came leads and the potential for more work. When they returned to San Diego, the team took those leads and converted them into appointments for their next visit. The old-fashioned pounding of the pavement, combined with the projects Helix already had in play, further strengthened its business prospects in the city. There was plenty of work available and Helix was ready to aggressively position itself for more.

LAS VEGAS: THE DOORS OPEN

The Las Vegas office of Helix Electric was headed by Victor Fuchs and opened in September 1995. Previously the company had established temporary offices to fulfill contracts in California and other western locales. However, Las Vegas represented true expansion for the company—the first time it sought to commit long-term to a city outside of San Diego.

Helix immediately made it a mission to be local in its actions and attitude. Those initial large jobs prepared the company to quickly address the challenge of

finding the best manpower available. It was already aware that out-of-town, non-union contractors were perceived differently, so it urgently and aggressively recruited local labor. Early on, it hired several experienced superintendents, as well as strong personnel in field operations. The company eventually decided to take its efforts a step further through a new training division called Helix University, which focused on improving and expanding its workers' skill sets.

Helix has grown with a lot of hard work, a little bit of luck and being smart.

-Gary Shekhter, Founder and CEO



Las Vegas, 1991



ANDRE AGASSI COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY

Helix completed this design-build project for the Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, an organization named for the Hall of Fame tennis star and philanthropist. The three-story high school and multi-purpose gym measures more than 115,000 square-feet.





Lake Las Vegas Hyatt

Such an educational component was new for a non-union shop and was another way Helix began to outpace its competition.

Among the handful of non-union contractors in Las Vegas, Helix had quickly leapt to the top and found a lucrative niche. It was the electrical contractor that came to town with the experience and capabilities to perform big, important jobs in the \$10 million to \$30 million range. Las Vegas was booming and prestigious projects of that size were on the horizon. Helix got a taste of one less than a year after the new office opened. Once again, it was McCarran International Airport that called, and in 1996, the

company picked up work at the airport's Terminal D. Not surprisingly, the airport needed to increase its capacity to support the burgeoning metropolis. Helix was its choice to help with the electrical requirements, much like it was for the earlier work at the McCarran garage. This sent shock waves through the local industry; it was rare for a non-union contractor to continually get airport contracts. Terminal D was a \$15 million contract. At that point, the company had established itself as a player in Las Vegas—the contractor that could compete for nearly every public or private job. Part of the reason for Helix's fast ascent in Las Vegas can be summarized in one word: attitude.

The company's technical competency spoke volumes, but Las Vegas had an insular business climate and networking culture. Either you were "in" or you were "out." Helix sought a place in the inner circle to heighten its visibility. It also sought to eliminate any perception that its business presence in Las Vegas was only temporary. As newcomers, the company's positive, hopeful attitude resembled that of the city's influx of new residents.

Helix wanted to project permanence and a desire to lay down lasting roots in the community. Toward that end, the company's executives ingratiated themselves to local charities, community organizations and business groups, including NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association. Such networking proved valuable and gave the business

community a greater appreciation for and comfort level with Helix. New opportunities for work flooded the office and Helix's growth in stature and status was evident. The company was directly negotiating for most projects rather than engaging in hard bid processes. When large amounts of private work eventually became available, Helix was able to capitalize on those opportunities.

Most private work yielded stellar results for both Helix and its clients. However, in 1998, two projects—the Hyatt Las Vegas and the Resort at Summerlin (now the JW Marriott Resort and Spa)—presented obstacles. These represented "off the Strip" opportunities for Helix at a time when union labor still dominated hotel projects on the actual Las Vegas Strip.

JW Marriott Resort and Spa



Design-Build

All industries encounter changes to standard practices and procedures. For owners, developers and contractors, like Helix Electric, design-build emerged in the mid-1980s as a new process of unified project delivery to coexist with the traditional design-bid-build process of separate design and construction entities.

According to the Design-Build Institute of America:

Design-build is a method of project delivery in which one entity—the design-build team—works under a single contract with the project owner to provide design and construction services. One entity, one contract, one unified flow of work from initial concept through completion.

Helix was quick to adapt to significant trends. Its technical capabilities and partnerships were in high gear in the 1990s when design-build shifted to the preferred delivery method. Since then, Helix's design-build division has responded to increased owner demands for faster delivery schedules, budget restraint and singular accountability. The company's skilled craftsmanship, strong project management and integration of building information management (BIM) have resulted in streamlined execution that translates into vital time and cost savings. The Helix design-build portfolio features a diversity of structures, including high-profile, award-winning projects.

Unfortunately the owners were not familiar with construction in Nevada. Specifically, for both properties, complications arose with how to properly coordinate manpower and in what quantities. Some of those difficulties were attributable to general contractor-related troubles that beset each project. The Resort at Summerlin also had financial woes. Helix was caught in the middle of two jobs that were subject to delays and were in danger of not being completed. Ultimately, Helix finished the Hyatt job on time; however, the Summerlin project went into bankruptcy, which was financially painful for Helix. Together, those projects offered harsh lessons on the types of projects Helix should accept and the types of partnerships to pursue.

Despite those setbacks, Helix quickly regrouped and its growth and positive momentum continued through the turn of the century. With the exception of single-family homes and union work on the Strip, Helix was immersed in work in every electrical category and in all parts of the market. The diversity of projects was impressive and reflected the company's impact on the community. Every major mall bore the Helix imprint, as did every synagogue, and nearly every private school and university. When the chips were down, Helix was Las Vegas' contractor of choice for important and exciting projects. Clearly the company had a little luck on its side by being in the right place at the right time, but to its credit, it had the foresight and initiative to expand into a fledgling market.

Hughes Office Building, Las Vegas, Nevada



ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER

Helix provided this 800,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art convention center in Anaheim, California, with full electrical, lighting and data service capabilities.



KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE (1999-2002)

AN EMERGENCY JOB THAT WAS PIVOTAL TO HELIX'S FUTURE SUCCESS

By almost any measure, Helix was a company that grew and expanded in a wise and careful fashion. Even during the most difficult and promising stages of the 1980s, when Gary Shekhter was doing whatever it took to find new business, he realized that there were limits to the size and scope of work he could command. Despite aspirations to do certain types of bigger jobs—particularly jobs beyond San Diego County—it was not prudent for a small company to start traveling around the country, or even just the state of California. Instead Helix took the right opportunities as they came and bid on the projects that best conformed to its size and ability.

Helix found firm footing in the 1990s, as exhibited by its rock-solid reputation, higher revenues, and Las Vegas and Northern California expansions. Its diverse portfolio of work throughout the decade—hospitals to airports to universities to shopping malls—was enviable and a source of pride throughout the company. Helix had thrived on challenges. This mentality started with Shekhter and was evident throughout the Helix management team and among the field crews. The

job at hand was always foremost, but unfailingly—to the last man and woman in the company—they thought: What's next? What's exciting? What's new?

In Helix's history, these were moments that reflected our pursuit of opportunity and challenges.

-Brian Jordan, Executive Vice President

Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, would be the single answer to each of those questions.

In September 1998, the Gulf Coast region was hit by Hurricane Georges. This Category 4 hurricane brought 142 mile-per-hour winds³ and left Keesler without power for nine days. The long outage was attributed to damages sustained to the overhead electrical system—damage so extreme that the United States Congress passed an immediate funding request that provided for a modern underground conversion of Keesler's electrical systems. Typically conversion of this extent happens in several phases, but Keesler was an emergency. It needed to be converted all at once, quickly and carefully.

Keesler was an important, high profile base with a storied history. Since World War II, the base was a



Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi

designated technical training facility for Army and Air Force personnel, and trained some of the military's highest level air traffic controllers, airplane and engine specialists, and fighter pilots—including the famed Tuskegee Airmen. The base is home to the 81st Training Wing of the Air Education and Training Command, responsible for the technical training of

airmen immediately following completion of their basic training, as well as for recurring training assignments. Thousands of service members populate the base each day and are supported by abundant housing and training facilities of varying size and design.

Helix's large body of public work reflected a long, successful relationship with the military, including jobs at Camp Pendleton near San Diego and Treasure Island near San Francisco. Up to that point, the largest military project the company had done was at MCAS Miramar in San Diego, a \$22 million job. Keesler was a \$388 million design-build contract that entailed mostly underground electrical construction throughout the full expanse of the base. The project was appealing to Helix because it was a chance to

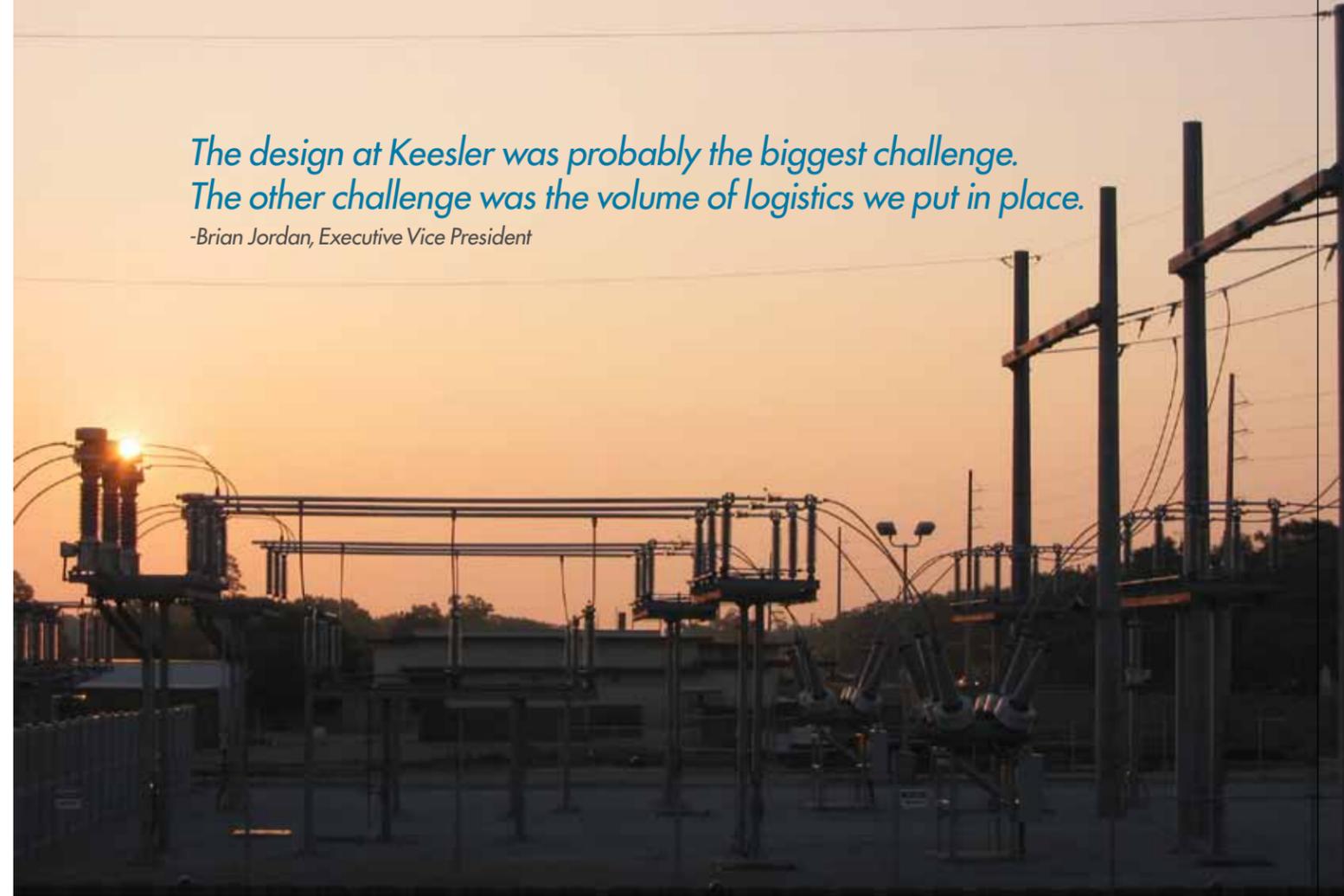
travel and work remotely from a completely new location for the company. At the time, it would also represent Helix's largest design-build job. The company had significant design-build experience, but mainly for multi-family residential communities and in partnership with private general contractors. Government work often presented a unique and sometimes delicate set of circumstances—a fact Helix management was quickly reminded of when bidding for the Keesler job.

GETTING THE JOB, BUILDING THE JOB

Construction at Keesler Air Force Base was administered by the Southern Division of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC). At the time Helix was being considered for work at the base, most federal and Navy procurement was of a "hard bid" nature—winner takes all. Typically, the various suitors would bid on the work, and the lowest bid got the job. The Keesler project was different. Instead of a hard bid, it required a new cumbersome procurement process for everyone involved—the Navy, the on-site Air Force engineering group and Helix. Frankly, none of the parties were enamored with the added complexity and detail in place to choose the best contractor.

The design at Keesler was probably the biggest challenge. The other challenge was the volume of logistics we put in place.

-Brian Jordan, Executive Vice President



Keesler AFB entrance in the 1950s



The Tuskegee Airmen

Specifically, the Keesler job was the first two-step process Helix had come across where, as a contractor, it was asked to submit a Phase One proposal comprising a general overview of the company, a detailed account of qualifications and experience, and a complete detail of its safety record. After reviewing the Phase One pool of submissions, the government selected a shortlist of contractors, including Helix, to advance to Phase Two, which required a more elaborate proposal that was heavy on technical and personnel specifics, along with pricing information. Helix beat out 14 other contractors in Phase One and was one of four contractors asked

to submit for Phase Two. Ultimately, Helix was number one in price and number one in technical. Winning the opportunity to work on a project it greatly desired was an exciting moment for the company. Then, of course, they actually had to build the job.



Technical drawings for getting the job done



Biloxi Lighthouse
in Biloxi, Mississippi

True West and Deep South—and Helix was the proverbial “fish out of water.” The company was far from its trusted base of labor and suddenly had to contend with the quality, quantity and availability of the local manpower.

This was a large, important project that required great detail and precision. But it wasn't a challenge we felt was insurmountable.

-Brian Jordan, Executive Vice President

However, Helix adapted by sending its experts to initiate the job, mobilize the labor force, and implement its workplace culture. They called upon reputable subcontractors and recruited key field personnel. Several of those local hires remain with the company to this day.

The Keesler job was big—3,000 houses, plus another 300 commercial buildings. The assembled manpower had a major task at hand and a relatively

short timeframe in which to complete the work—just two and one-half years. The main requirement was to convert the entire base—electrical, phone and cable TV systems—from overhead to underground electrical distribution. The size and scope of the work was significant and needed strong coordination and communication. Helix was functioning squarely under the authority of the Navy and Air Force and had to answer to both branches. The intricacies and nuances of working with different branches of the military proved complicated, but all issues encountered were quickly resolved in the name of achieving the best results for Keesler.

Initially the project design met with some differing expectations, but Helix was able to manage a number of changes to the project. NAVFAC was used to doing a regular design-bid-build job, which required elaborate, detailed drawings. Conversely, Helix was a design-build contractor that did not need the level of detail in contract drawings in order to build the job. For Helix, providing drawings for the commercial buildings was a given, but the Navy's approach meant the company would have to provide a detail for each of 3,000 houses as well. That would have been a costly drag on time and resources.

Instead, there was a compromise solution in both those areas: Helix would draw up 15 “typical” installations and apply them accordingly.

Once the level of detail was finalized, Helix team members did what they always did: put their heads down and went to work to meet their deadline and please the client. The logistical and managerial challenges were not lost on anyone—putting 70

miles of trench into place in such a short time, and building its first 115kV substation/switchyard (in conjunction with Mississippi Power)—but the project proceeded smoothly, even with the newly assembled workforce. Everyone understood the sheer size and resource demands of the job, but was too busy to contemplate it beyond that. Ultimately, the work they were doing would be pivotal for Helix's future.

An electrical substation at Keesler AFB



POSTSCRIPT: EXCELLENT RESULTS AND VALIDATION

Helix's work at Keesler Air Force Base reinforced the company's core belief that it could take on virtually any type of project and perform successfully. That has been a driving force since day one. However, what made Keesler significant was its distance from San Diego, as well as the speed of delivery attached to the project. Helix managed to bring the project in on time and under budget. The job was important to the corporate resumé and great for pre-qualification with potential clients. After Keesler, it was evident

what Helix could do on a large scale and what it could do remotely. Moving forward, if a prospective client ever wondered how productive Helix could be away from its home base, then all it had to do was look at Keesler.

Years later, on August 29, 2005, Keesler Air Force Base sustained a direct hit from Hurricane Katrina, one of the costliest and deadliest natural disasters in American history. The event is most tragically identified with the destruction it caused in New Orleans, but its devastation touched several neighboring areas of the Gulf Coast. Keesler

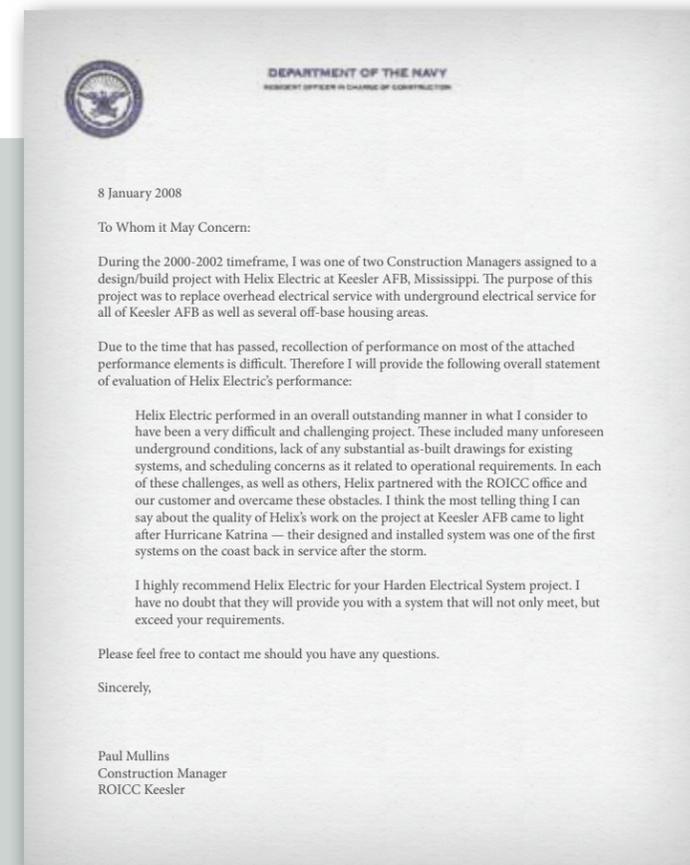
evacuated all non-essential personnel and hurricane hunter planes in advance, but major damage was sustained by the base's industrial and housing areas. Due to storm surge, about 50 percent of the base came under water; the commissary, base exchange and some base housing units were flooded with more than six feet of water.

As Keesler recovered from Katrina, one of the first electrical systems to come back online throughout the entire Gulf Coast was the system

built by Helix. This prompted a letter from the Navy in January 2008, lauding the company for its work and commitment to excellence. The letter was a strong testament to the quality of work at Keesler and demonstrated that the company could perform at a high level in unique circumstances. Later, based on its proven large-scale, remote construction capabilities and on the strength and durability of the Keesler installation, Helix would be awarded a major design-build job on the island of Guam—a location known for epic typhoons.



Hurricane Georges caused massive damage to the base



The letter from the Navy was a proud moment for us. It gave us more momentum toward the future.

-Brian Jordan, Executive Vice President

ILLUMINATED: DYNAMIC AND DIVERSE (2000-2010)

CONTINUED EXPANSION AND BECOMING A TOP 10 FIRM

There is a famous quote by 16th century British philosopher Francis Bacon: "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." Fast forward several hundred years and that sentiment still remains true. Not only true, but on vivid display—especially at Helix Electric.



Red Rock Canyon Visitor Center

The hard work and enterprising spirit of the men and women of Helix Electric created consistent, well-earned opportunities. Repeatedly, their top-notch performance on one project led to invitations to participate in others. The company was in demand for prominent public works projects and high-profile

private jobs. This was the case for the majority of the previous decade, and at the dawn of the new millennium, there were no signs of a slowdown. Quite the opposite was true. Helix was a company with confidence, intent on growing in dynamic and diverse ways that would lead it into the upper echelon of its industry. The continuation of its expansion would be an important part of that ascent.

Successfully completed projects like Keesler Air Force Base were springboards for bolder thinking and revised vision. Already, Helix thrived on challenges, and every new opportunity—no matter the complexity—was treated not only as a challenge, but as another step toward continued growth. The company refused to rest on its laurels. Staying status quo in an industry that was constantly evolving would be a death knell for any organization. Instead, Helix grew—past 1,000 employees and beyond \$150 million in annual revenues. If growth was good, then expansion, if properly managed, could be better—a chance to "make more opportunities."

The Las Vegas office of Helix Electric provided a readily available template for expansion. However, the company's response to the uniqueness of that city and the circumstances of its evolution could not be emulated just anywhere. Additionally, Helix was a company that was keen on research and measurement—of what they had done and of what they would do in the future. Even when it aggressively pursued bigger, more complicated projects, it had to make sense for its technical abilities and it had to benefit the company as a whole.



The Control Room at California ISO Data Center



One Las Vegas

SOLARIS RESIDENCES

Helix Electric provided all electrical systems for Solaris Residences, a custom-designed condominium project and mixed-use lifestyle center in Vail Village, Colorado that features state-of-the-art resident amenities. Completed in Fall 2010, the project includes 79 high-end residential units, 14 retail spaces, a bowling alley and a movie theater.



Project Partnering

Helix's relationships with developers, general contractors, engineers and architects give the company a distinct advantage over its competitors when new projects arise and design-build teams are assembled.

According to Helix Vice President Ken Emma, "Our goal is to build our client relationships." He added, "We want to work with our clients to build ongoing relationships that benefit their projects both today and in the future."

Helix's ongoing rapport with its collaborative partners results in smooth communications. The familiarity and teamwork that comes with having a history of work with a given partner helps the design and construction processes and ensures that they are unencumbered by redundancy and duplication.

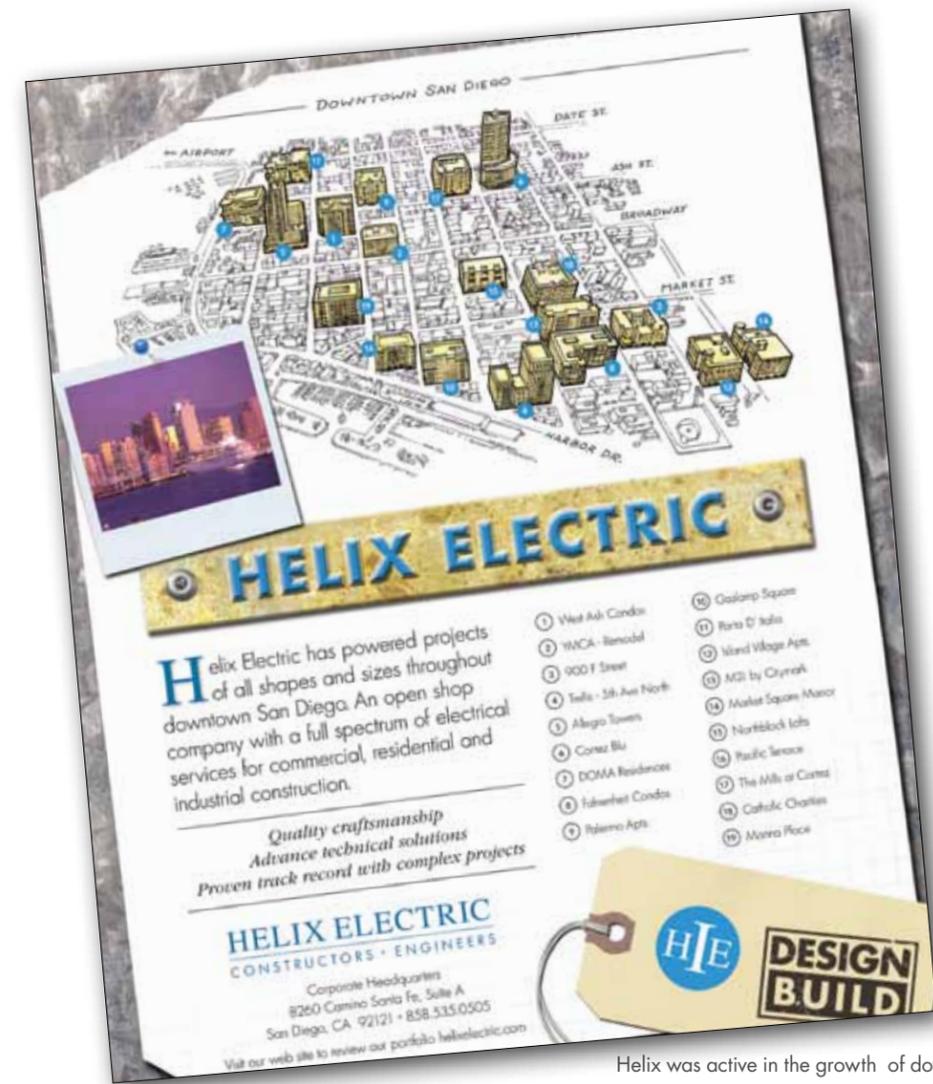
Helix has been a multiple recipient of the Associated General Contractor of America's Marvin M. Black "Excellence in Partnering" award. This honor recognizes successful partnerships and collaborations between general and specialty contractors.

NEW REGIONS, NEW FRONTIERS

Helix dominated electrical contracting throughout San Diego for many years. Major projects such as the SPRINTER rail line construction, the Las Americas retail outlets along the San Diego-Tijuana border crossing, and various downtown mixed-used, high-rise buildings gave the company a consistent presence in all reaches of the county. When the time was right, Helix expanded beyond its home region to projects in Hawaii and branch locations in Nevada, Guam, Northern California, Texas, Arizona and Los Angeles.

Helix Electric of Nevada (1995)

This branch, based in Las Vegas, has generated annual revenues of more than \$100 million, as well as delivered an award-winning work portfolio. Among many high points was the 2009 Award of Excellence in Construction from Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc., bestowed in the category of Electrical-Commercial Under \$2 Million. The honor recognized the company's work on the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority Metro Police Substation, a design-build project in which Helix was responsible for all of the electrical and low-voltage work—part of the wider project goal requiring that the substation have dual capacity to reduce overall energy consumption and generate enough power to sustain 24/7 operations.



Helix was active in the growth of downtown San Diego

Helix Electric of Northern California (1995)

Projects in various parts of Northern California were the first to demonstrate Helix's ability to travel distances and perform work remotely. Throughout the years, the company's public projects were environmentally responsible and community-focused. In 2007, the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District called on Helix for its Building and Corporation Yard. This environmentally sustainable project targeted a minimum of a Silver certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) through the

implementation of water-efficient landscaping, fixtures that promote reduced water use, under-floor air distribution and increased natural lighting.

In 2006, Helix was also responsible for the sophisticated electrical system that integrated power, lighting, communications, audio/video and security for the University of California-Davis Health System Education Building—a 122,000-square-foot teaching and student services facility.

QUALCOMM STADIUM

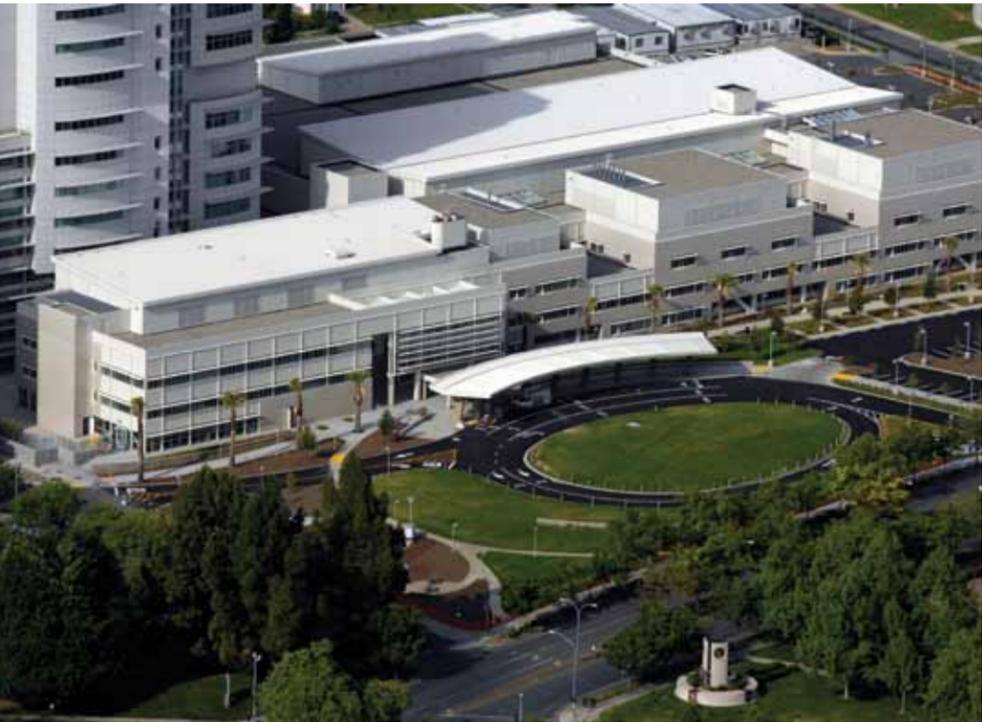
Helix performed a full design-build upgrade to the audio/visual and lighting system of this 71,500-seat stadium. Qualcomm Stadium has hosted multiple Super Bowl games and has been San Diego's premier professional and collegiate football venue since 1967.



UC DAVIS MEDICAL CENTER

SURGERY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PAVILION

Helix completed lighting, power (both normal and emergency), security and fire alarm, among other vital systems, for this 470,000 square-foot facility in Sacramento, California.



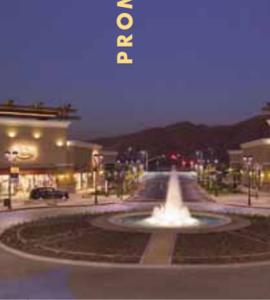
LOU RUVO CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH

Helix performed all electrical work on this unique structure designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry. The 67,000-square-foot facility includes 13 examination rooms, offices for healthcare practitioners and researchers, a community auditorium and a Wolfgang Puck café.



HELIX

PROMENADE SHOPS AT DOS LAGOS



CALTRANS



WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY



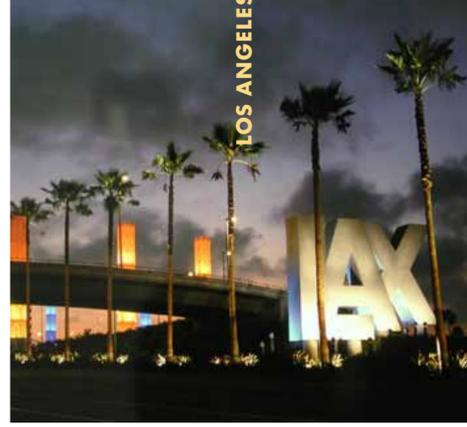
UC SANTA BARBARA



LOS ANGELES CITY HALL



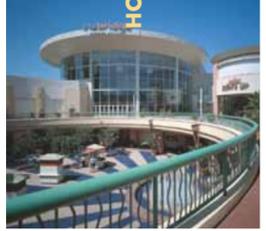
LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER



HOWARD HUGHES ENTERTAINMENT CENTER



CHAMPAGNE TOWERS



WELDON EDUCATIONAL CAMPUS



PLAZA AT ARBORETUM



THE WESTIN



GREENSPUN COLLEGE AT UNLV



CONGREGATION NER TAMID



RISING

Helix Electric of Arizona (2006)

The company was able to capitalize on the rapid population growth of the Phoenix-Scottsdale area.

Reminiscent of its early presence in Las Vegas, this desert boom resulted in Helix securing private

contracts to build complex electrical systems at several luxury

properties. Work at the X (Ten) Wine Lofts, a four-

story, 82-unit condominium, included interior and

exterior wiring, light fixtures, building switchgear and electrical utilities. The project was completed on time and on budget in 2008.

That same year, the Alta Phoenix, a high-rise apartment building and mixed-use complex in downtown Phoenix, also solicited Helix's capabilities. The installation was a complete electrical system for the main building and public areas that included lighting, power, telephone/data hook-ups and audio/video systems.

X (Ten) Wine Lofts, Scottsdale, Arizona

Helix Electric of Guam (2008)

The company's operation in Agana, Guam began in 2008 and serviced a \$55 million government contract to reinforce the electrical system for a United States Naval Base. Known as the Harden Electrical System, Main Base, this design-build project included the design and construction of the primary electrical distribution system serving critical operational facilities that mitigate damage caused by typhoons. Helix constructed three new 35kV/15kV substations and converted 17 miles of overhead distribution to a new typhoon-resistant underground distribution system. Beyond its contracted work in Guam, the company committed to a long-term presence on the island. Helix hired directly from the community and contributed to its development through involvement with Habitat for Humanity.

Harden Electrical System Main Base, Agana, Guam

Helix Electric of Texas (2011)

Based in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the newest Helix outpost is poised to service the variety of public and private sector opportunities in the nation's second largest state. Long-term population growth is anticipated and as of 2009, Texas contained five of the nation's 20 most populous cities—Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Austin and Fort Worth.⁴ Previous successful projects introduced Helix to Texas and positioned it to confidently enter the state with awareness of the established and emerging economies.

Texas markets are attractive for their size and compatibility with Helix's proven strengths and niches. The large military presence holds the potential to call upon Helix's past experiences. And similar to Las Vegas and Arizona, resident growth is expected to drive development of new high-rise and mid-rise multi-family housing. This parallels the ongoing transformation of the Texas energy market to wind, solar and other types of renewable energy and provides significant opportunities for distribution and substation work—areas where Helix is growing at an impressive pace. Overall, the company's commitment Texas is permanent and promising.



Helix Electric of Los Angeles (1998)

Less than 150 miles from Helix's San Diego headquarters, Los Angeles has been a frequent source of exciting opportunities. The company's runway wiring project for the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) was prestigious and visually complemented by the artistry of the large, luminous "LAX" sign that greets planes upon their descent. Helix performed the electrical work that powers that 100-foot high, red, white and blue landmark. Los Angeles World Airports, the operator at LAX, also chose Helix to

upgrade apron lighting from Terminal 1 through Terminal 8, as well as the Tom Bradley International Terminal. The work was successfully completed in July 2007, on time and on budget. Downtown Los Angeles also bears the Helix design-build touch via the 705 West Ninth Residential Tower, a 35-floor residence that meets LEED standards under the city of Los Angeles' Green Building Project.



TOP 10 RECOGNITION

In 2006, Helix Electric, the company that started in a humble suburban San Diego garage, was designated as one of America's Top 10 electrical contractors. *Engineering News Record*, the respected trade publication, ranked Helix number 9, and also ranked it 38th among the Top 600 Specialty Contractors. These lists are based on the previous year's revenues. Both acknowledgements

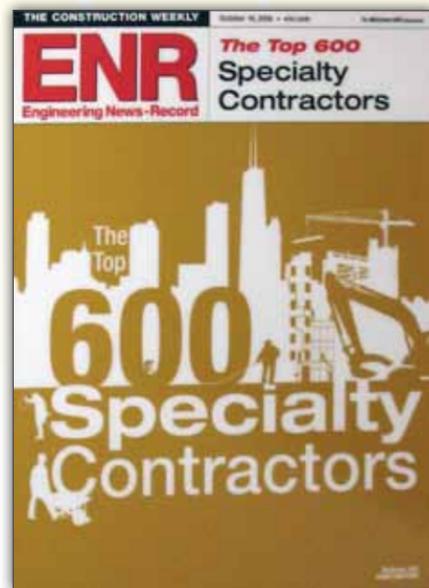
illustrated Helix's rise from being a Western regional contractor to one that could traverse the country servicing major clients and high-visibility projects. They also represented valuable marketing tools for contractors. Back in 2002, Helix was number 23 and number 78 on the ENR electrical and specialty rankings, respectively. That was when the company began to make major strides on such lists, which were often referenced by Helix partners such as owners, developers and general contractors.

Other businesses were ever-aware of Helix's progress—some for reasons other than competition and partnership. Specifically, Helix's rankings surge corresponded to an attractive acquisition offer. Obviously that acquisition never materialized. Gary Shekhter refused the offer based on simple grounds: he didn't think it was the right thing to do, and frankly, money was secondary. Instead, primary to

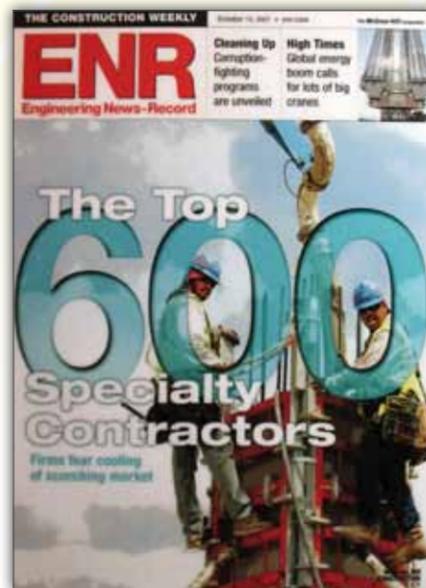
him was the pride and joy of growing a company from the ground up toward the pantheon of performance in its industry. Again, he realized that Helix was a company with confidence. It was only gettier bigger, better and stronger—and responsibly leading the company and its employees in those directions was what mattered most to him.



Engineering
News Record
Top 600
Specialty
Contractors



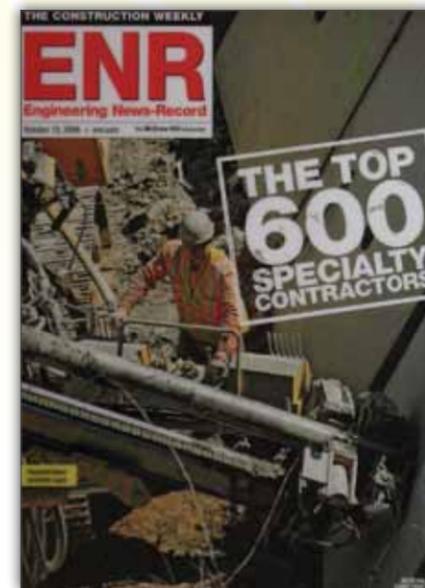
2006 #38



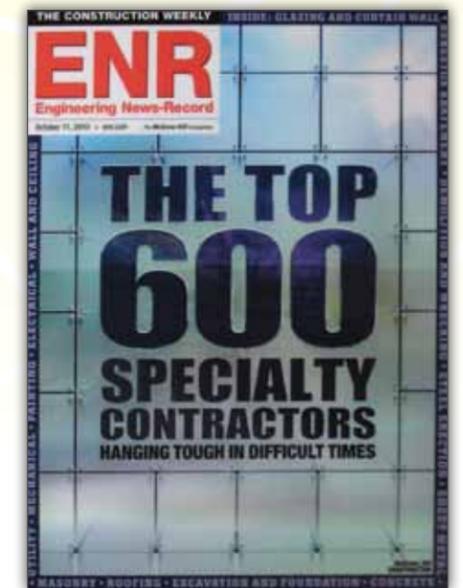
2007 #38



2008 #39



2009 #40



2010 #34

BRIGHT LIGHTS

THE HELIX WORKFORCE POWERS PERFORMANCE AND INNOVATION

Gary Shekhter believed that as a company grows, its challenges only intensify. When they do, it becomes important to have an exceptionally skilled workforce—in the field and at the office—that is hungry to confront those challenges. They must be comfortable with and prepared for the increased demands of a competitive industry. Specific to Helix, they must also adapt to the expectations inherent to being part of a highly ranked corporation.

Helix Electric successfully performs complex and challenging projects—with award-winning results.

Shekhter was always sensitive to developing a top-flight workforce for both the betterment of the company and for the individual employees. That awareness is essential to the company's story. Helix's growth and expansion was not purely about sales and profits, but also aligned with Shekhter's desire for employees to have continuous opportunities that maximize their abilities.



Communism in the Soviet Union had hindered his own career potential. However, in America Shekhter realized that successful organizations empowered their people to excel in traditional and entrepreneurial ways that allowed for individual advancement and collective success.

Fortunately, the seeds for Helix's successful workforce were planted early. The open shop (or "merit shop") orientation created an environment that rewarded ambition and hard work.

Momentum resulted from the Camp Pendleton job in 1986. More projects emerged, and so did the prototypical Helix employee base. As the company grew, it sought the best and the brightest: intelligent, goal-oriented, energetic individuals who could match the enthusiasm, commitment and passion that now defines Helix's workplace culture. When new employees arrive they are greeted with excellent working conditions, benefits and pay. They also have the security of knowing that Helix's services are in demand. And since 1994, they have had access to one of the industry's most unique and continuous training programs: Helix University.



ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Helix performed electrical construction for this 780,000-square-foot passenger terminal in Ontario, California. Construction included an associated parking lot, roads and site work with electrical power.



TERASAKI LIFE SCIENCES BUILDING

Helix is proud of its 15-year continuous association with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). The Terasaki Life Sciences Building is among several projects the company has completed. At five stories and 175,000 total gross square footage, its interior consists of approximately 75,000 square feet of wet labs, 26,000 square feet of vivarium space, and 25,000 square feet of faculty offices and scholarly activity areas. The building meets both Title 24 and LEED requirements.



The answer to achieving the needed workforce is for the construction industry to train that workforce.

—Gary Shekhter, from Construction Executive (1995, special Helix insert)



Helix University students exemplify continuous improvement

HELIX UNIVERSITY

The fast-track pace of work in Las Vegas prompted a consistent cycle of recruitment and training and inspired a company-wide educational arm called Helix University. This was an atypical approach, but it was certainly a wise investment aimed at the immediate sharpening of employees' technical skill sets. It also proved to be an investment in the future of the company, as Helix University became a permanent endeavor. Internally, the program was a hit with workers and management; externally, validation of its impact came only three years after its inception. Helix was recognized with an Outstanding Achievement Award from the National Center for Construction Education and Research, an organization supporting standardized craft training.

Helix University offers comprehensive instruction in technical craft areas and workplace safety. The curriculum also includes management courses that prepare workers for advancement through cross-training in a variety of disciplines. Additionally, for continuous professional enrichment, the program has a tuition reimbursement benefit that assists employees with higher education. This benefit extends to families through the Helix Scholarship Program, established for employees' children who are active full-time college students maintaining a 3.0 grade point average or higher.

Helix University reflects the company's 24/7 approach to provide well-trained workers who are equipped with the power to perform. Evenings and Saturdays at Helix's headquarters and branch offices can be as busy as any weekday. During craft training classes, employees learn the latest advancements in electrical

installations and engineering from experienced, certified instructors. Tools for success such as communication, critical thinking and problem solving are also emphasized. Excellence in those areas is naturally precipitated by keen attention to workplace safety, for which Helix is a multiple award-winning advocate. Helix supervisors know that their most important priority is not production, but the safety and welfare of their crew. In fact, they reject the misconception that, by nature, construction is hazardous and accidents are bound to occur. On the contrary, the company's safety programs are designed with the singular goal of protecting employees and have resulted in more than one million continuous man-hours without incident.

Helix superintendents are the key personnel who assume safety leadership from project to project. They are the senior officials at the field level who manage the

crews that build the jobs. This veteran presence also keeps an eye toward identifying the company's future. Top field-level employees with ambition toward management and recent graduates from industry apprenticeship programs become potential candidates for Helix's Step Up to Supervision Program. This is a precursor to the even more prestigious Supervisory Training Program (STP). The STP is an invite-only opportunity within Helix University that welcomes 10 to 15 workers with the "leadman" title, a designation that places them second-in-charge to the superintendents at job sites. The STP rewards these high performers through a curriculum focused on jobsite leadership, project management, pre-construction and safety. The coursework is intense, comprehensive, and ultimately, designed to promote upward mobility.

THE RITZ-CARLTON KAPALUA, HAWAII

Helix participated in a six-month remodel/conversion of this five-star property located on Maui. The project involved multi-faceted electrical work toward remodeling 320 hotel rooms, converting another 270 hotel rooms into 107 two- and three-bedroom condominiums, and expansion of public spaces, including the lobby and bar, three restaurants, fitness center and spa.



THE LEADING EDGE: STAYING SHARP

Helix University has, among its many attributes, served as a tool to retain and attract exceptional employees. The corporate emphasis on training and education ensures continuous quality and customer satisfaction. Within the Helix culture that focus also helps maintain a spirited, competitive undercurrent—in a competitive industry, no less—that sharpens preparation and performance. On a daily basis, Helix combines the energy and urgency of both emerging and established professional talent that keeps the company on the leading edge.

Helix's core of professionals includes many who have been with the company from the start—even

some that worked with Gary Shekhter at Circle Electric. Their cumulative knowledge represents hundreds of years of experience and has been a stabilizing factor and source of innovation throughout the company's history. As the business has grown and the construction industry has changed, they have adapted and thrived by staying atop trends and creating internal systems and processes that have made the company an industry leader.

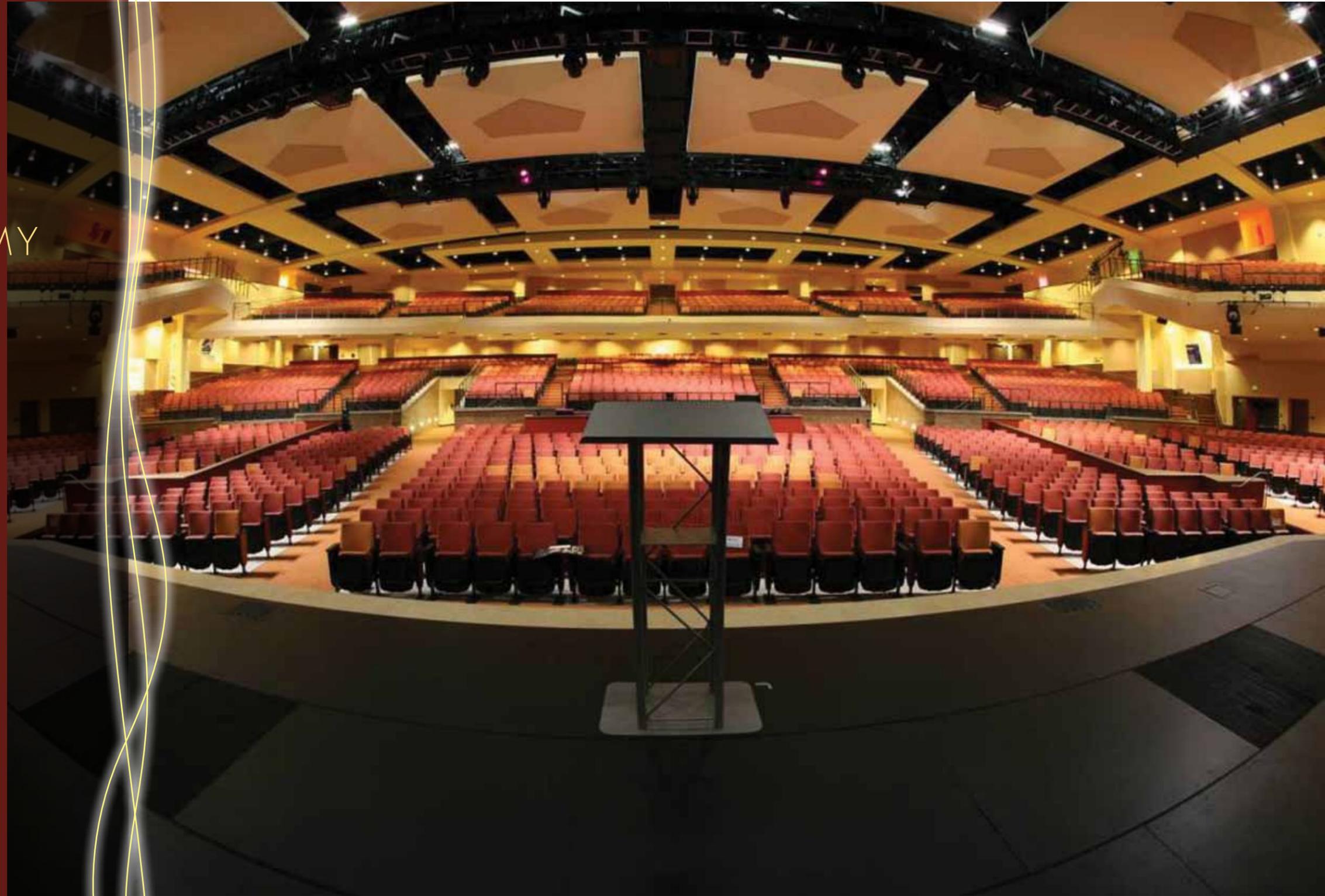
For example, Helix has an impressive track record of successfully winning projects amidst heavy competition. When a bidding process is involved, Helix' best offer is typically more cost effective and technically superior than the competition's, which secures the job and delivers a financial benefit for the client.



From the warehouse to the training center, Helix University helps employees graduate to prestigious projects like Los Angeles City Hall (pictured, right)

THE ROCK ACADEMY

The many educational projects in the Helix portfolio include this renovation of an existing 240,000-square-foot three-story educational building and three-level 80,000-square foot sanctuary in San Diego, California.



We like to cultivate our people from within. The challenges of the future demand our employees are the best trained workforce around.

—Gary Shekhter, from the San Diego Daily Transcript, August 2004

Part of the reason for Helix's bidding success and prosperity within the modern realm of design-build is that, on the estimating side, Helix is often better researched, and therefore, better prepared than its competitors. A full-fledged estimating department has been in place for many years with personnel that follow global commodities markets for certain materials and building essentials. At both basic and advanced levels, they ascertain the cost and value of a project, and then how to manage those aspects with vendors and customers. This level of depth and detail enables Helix to bid properly or become a valuable partner with other contractors in big design-build jobs.

Additionally, when a new job moves forward, Helix's design engineering department is an active resource. From constructability reviews, best value identification, design solutions and code analysis to 3D modeling and prefabrication, the department is involved in all stages of construction. Every project in the company's vast portfolio of work, including large, complex commercial jobs such as hospitals, life science laboratories and water treatment plants, bears the precise imprint of Helix's design engineering

professionals. By utilizing building information modeling (BIM) and state-of-the-art technology, their department contributes to continuous productivity and quality of construction.

Much of this precision, again, harkens to Gary Shekhter's commitment to measurement and his systematic approach in business. To a certain extent, an axiom applies: what gets measured, gets done.

As a result, Helix executives and managers pay careful attention to gauging business metrics and instituting measurement policies and procedures from project to project. Measuring productivity and outcomes also applies to manpower, which helps the Helix workforce to be among the best in the industry. Consequently, after 25 years, the company is better than it has ever been—and the work reflects that fact. The prison fence Helix built in 2005 is more advanced than the one built in the mid-1990s; the full electrical construction at a new medical center is more innovative than the previous one; and Helix's comprehensive wiring installations at several airports represent superior craftsmanship borne of experience and skill.

Then and now,
Helix is driven and guided by its
POWER TO PERFORM

PROMENADE SHOPS AT DOS LAGOS

A 100-acre commercial site in Corona, California encompassing four single-story buildings housing 40 retail stores, restaurants and a parking lot.



LOOKING FORWARD

CONTINUED CHALLENGES AND COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Gary Shekhter never intended to found one of the nation's leading specialty contractors. Professionally and personally, his focus leaned toward fulfilling his top priority: supporting his wife and children. However, through the test of time and the tides of unpredictability, he accepted and thrived amidst the additional responsibilities and pressures inherent to running his own company—the extended family of employees; the industry network of important peers and influencers; and the various clients and partners with which Helix did business. The full scope of this reality dwarfed Shekhter's modest initial business vision, but it did not deter him. Thus, the story of Helix Electric's first 25 years is filled with examples of tenacity and diligence, risk and reward, innovation and progress.

Expertise in renewable energy will keep Helix strong into the future

Two words remain staples of Helix's lexicon and company culture: "opportunities" and "challenges." When Shekhter and his family arrived in 1979, America represented the Land of Opportunity. Reflecting similar optimism, Helix sought opportunities that created even more chances to grow and excel. The company continually accepted unique challenges, driven by the belief that they make both individuals and companies better and stronger. Then and now, the willingness to be open to all types of opportunities and to take on tough challenges has been a point of distinction. Fresh from Ukraine, a motivated Shekhter accepted a five-dollar-an-hour job as an estimator, but knew better things were ahead. Later, his fledgling company accepted niche projects like jails and prisons, but did so purposefully.

Helix is a financially strong company with a workforce that's experienced, strong and capable. We're always looking to new niches and fields, and to approach new horizons, because that's where the future will be.

—Brian Jordan, Executive Vice President

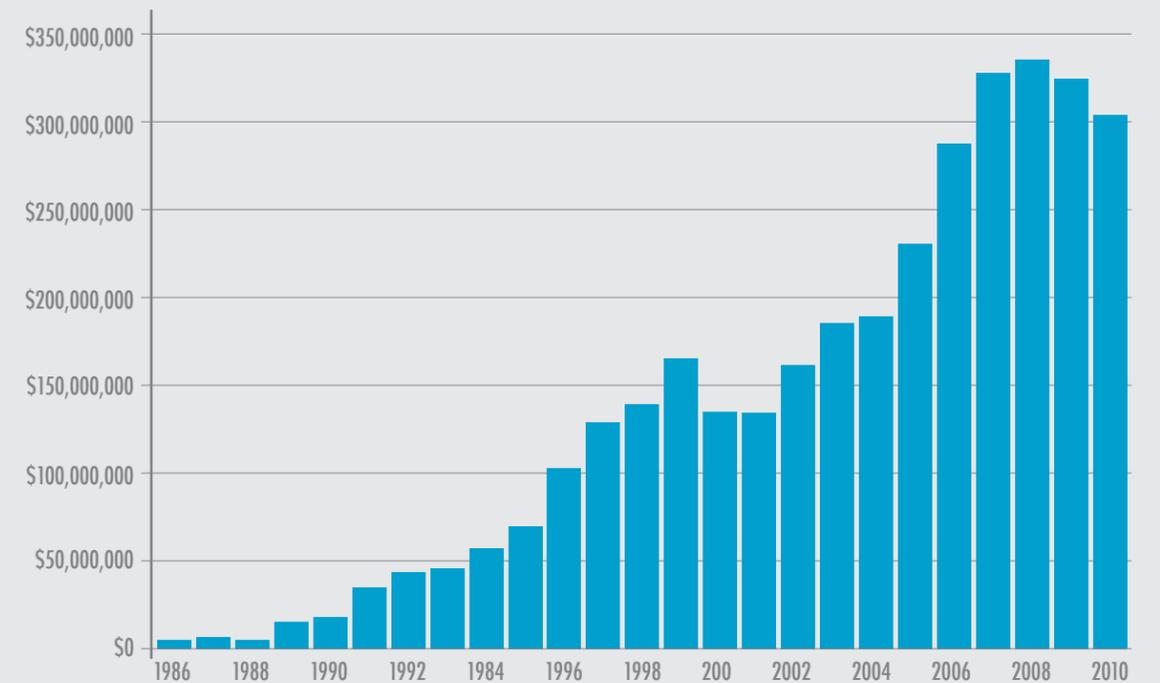
Such confidence and determination from an upstart and start-up, respectively, is impressive. Even more impressive is when that start-up becomes a large company with nine-figure annual revenues and that same level of tenacity still prevails.

Today Helix is a proven national brand and the focus of its executives and employees is aggressive and forward-looking. They leverage the benefit of 25 years of experience and technical achievement in consistently

exciting and diverse ways. Now, more than ever, because of expansion to new locations and its remote capabilities, the company is accessible to customers in multiple markets throughout the country.

Helix is armed with a comprehensive breadth of service offerings encompassing all facets of electrical construction including residential, commercial and industrial projects, mass transit and rail work, medium voltage power distribution, energy management

REVENUE BY YEAR



LAS VEGAS SPRINGS PRESERVE

This 180-acre cultural and historical attraction is Platinum LEED certified and features a botanical garden, a 1,800-seat amphitheater, a 2.5-mile trail system and 250 species of wildlife. Helix designed and installed solar lighting systems and constructed electrical in straw-bale walls and earth-rammed walls.



I want to leave a legacy of a strong and thriving company that's continuously growing and innovating and performing at very high levels.

—Gary Shekhter, CEO and Founder

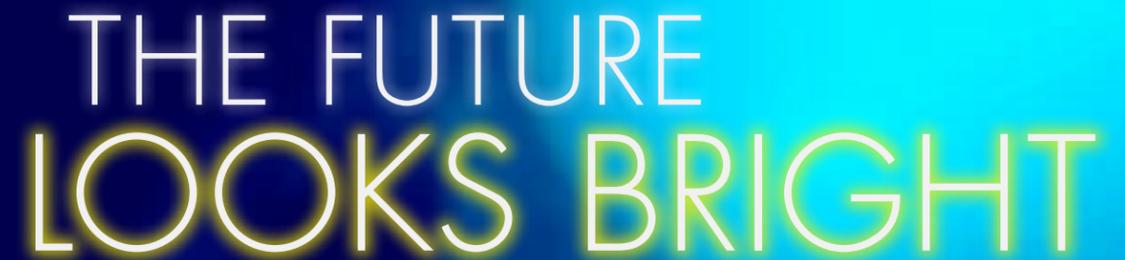
systems, and emergency power systems. The increasing complexity of electrical projects and systems has kept experienced and knowledgeable contractors like Helix in demand. By possessing the right management structure and by deploying the best manpower—all of whom commit to each job with confidence—the company satisfies traditional electrical construction requirements and modern needs, like sustainable energy.

Helix is increasingly involved in solar photovoltaic and wind power for environmentally conscious clients and communities. Helix was prepared to meet these emergent demands through leadership that requires all of its project managers be LEED certified and by providing quality training to its wider workforce through Helix University. Additionally, in 2009 Helix invested its financial resources and initiated industry partnerships that yielded solar construction projects in New Mexico, Arizona, Hawaii, California and other parts of the western United States. Such seeds of growth resemble the company's smart, controlled rise up the ranks of electrical contracting. Moving forward, Helix plans to

carefully nurture its participation in renewable energy, expanding its presence until it becomes an industry leader in this area as well.

Similarly, Helix has designs to maintain its leadership as a major specialty contractor. The organization is well-built from A to Z, at all levels. Each division maintains a tight focus on what it does well. The company will continue to leverage its size, capabilities and reputation toward targeting jobs that are unique, challenging and of great scale and visibility. From electrician to superintendent to project manager, the future is committed to excellence and respect for the values that built the company. Twenty-five years after its inception, Helix Electric has become the contractor of choice—equipped with the power to perform and the mission of achieving extraordinary results.

As always, when tasked with high expectations from Shekhter and executive leadership, the men and women of Helix will do what they do best: They will travel. They will build. They will thrive.



THE FUTURE
LOOKS BRIGHT

ENDNOTES

1. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. CDCR Today, July 3, 2000. Chapter 4, 6th paragraph.
2. Perry, Marc J. and Mackun, Paul J. Population Change and Distribution, 1990 to 2000, Census 2000 Brief. U.S. Census Bureau, April 2001, page 6.
3. A Brief History of Keesler AFB and the 81st Training Wing. 81 TRW History Office, Keesler AFB, November 1, 2007, page 50.
4. U.S. Census Bureau Cumulative Estimates of Resident Population Change for Incorporated Places Over 100,000, Ranked by Percent Change: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, April 2010, www.census.gov