



## Corporate Milestones: Champion Elevator celebrates 5 years of success

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Shown (from left) are: Robert Masterson, Donald Gelestino, Joseph Corrado, Nicole Pecoraro, Laura Rivera, Donna Scibetta, Samantha Retas, and Stirling Collins

Champion Elevator Corp., IREON member  
President: Don Gelestino  
1450 Broadway, New York,, N.Y.

Don Gelestino, president of Champion Elevator Corp. & IREON member

What milestone are you celebrating in 2020?

Its our five-year business anniversary in September, and we are also celebrating the move to 1450 Broadway in Times Sq. which was in January. Champion also looks forward to the opening of our Washington D.C. branch as well as our Connecticut branches. We have also secured capitalization for acquisitions of other competitor companies and look forward to the new relationships that will blossom from these opportunities.

What thoughts or emotions come to mind when you think about this milestone?

Perseverance, “do good and be good” and good things will happen... That was the motto of a very successful and dear friend of mine, George Subraj of Zara Realty. I believe we were such good friends because we recognized that in each other.

What inspired you to start your firm?

I love what I do and the elevator industry. I believe I am fortunate to work with such dedicated and creative people. It is a pleasure to be part of a winning team!

What were some of the challenges you faced during the early years?

In any grassroots start-up which I self-capitalized, “cash” is always a concern. The biggest challenge is building the super team...We don't rush success by getting sloppy with our employee selection but funny enough by doing so we probably grew way faster by being selective and making the right choices which results in the highest level of customer service.

What are some of the firm's greatest accomplishments since inception?

Our team and customers for sure. The team provides personal service and the customers appreciate this. The combination is a self-fulfilling prophecy that fuels its own fire...We were only in business six months and we landed one of the largest commercial accounts which is comprised of 130 elevators. In our second year in business, we were awarded a \$40 million+ modernization project and maintenance of 180 elevators at Co-Op City.

How has your company evolved over the years?

We have continued rapid growth consistently.

What is it like working at your firm?

We are a culture of hard-working but hard-playing people. We support each other, educate each other, and have a genuine personal dedication to the well-being of our customers.

What is one of the fondest or funniest memories in the history of your firm?

As much as this may be embarrassing, before we started I had invited Joseph Corrado over to my house to show him my business plan which I presented with a projector...That's not too funny, but I was projecting onto dirty sheets which we both noticed as I was telling him about my successful new venture that I would like for him to be part of...Well, at least he accepted and is now the vice president!

What's ahead for your firm?

We are growth oriented so growth is on the horizon but we are also very interested in technology and customer communication, so I see some very creative enhancements to our service for our clients.

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