

Ardmore Roderick Inc., doing projects for Lockheed Martin in Titusville, looks to grow its business in Brevard; ranked high by 'Engineering News-Record'

By Ken Datzman

Ardmore Roderick Inc., a fast-growing minority-owned company with its roots in Chicago, has been flying under the radar for some time. But not any longer.

The infrastructure engineering firm that provides design, construction management, project management, and other services to public and private clients is seeing its visibility rise across the nation.

Ardmore Roderick has climbed to the 21st spot in "Engineering News Record's" 2024 rankings of the "Top 50 Program Management Firms" in America.

"We're proud of that achievement," said Eric Jimenez, Ardmore Roderick's vice president and director for the company's Southeast Operations. The firm has completed billions of dollars in commercial construction work around the nation.

"Even though we are just a 19-year-old firm, founded in 2005, we have been moving up ENR's list. In 2023, we were ranked No. 27 of the Top 50 Program Management Firms in the nation. These rankings are a big deal for us because we are competing with much larger program management companies."

In Chicago, Ardmore Roderick's name is well established for its high-profile infrastructure projects. The projects include Chicago O'Hare 21, a long-term modernization of the airport, and Chicago Transit Authority's "Red Purple Modernization."

"We have been working on the CTA project for years. It is the biggest CTA project in the history of Chicago and we are the project manager," said Jimenez, who holds various industry credentials including the Professional Engineer, Professional in Program Management, and Certified Construction Manager designations.

Ardmore Roderick was founded by Rashod Johnson, its president and chief executive officer. He grew up in Chicago's rough-and-tumble South Side.

He started the business from his attic. It was originally called The Roderick Group. Roderick is his middle name. In 2018, The Roderick Group and minority-owned firm Ardmore Associates joined forces.

Despite a challenging environment growing up, Johnson went on to earn his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Illinois and an executive MBA from Notre Dame University.

He has built the largest Black-owned infrastructure engineering firm in Chicago.

Now Ardmore Roderick is looking to expand its footprint on the Space Coast, providing services for businesses considering moving or starting operations here.

Ardmore Roderick is currently doing work for Lockheed Martin in Titusville. And it has completed projects for that company. Lockheed Martin has been developing its Titusville campus since 2019 and Ardmore Roderick has supported a wide range of work, transforming existing facilities to meet the needs of Lockheed Martin.

"My first job when I moved to Florida in 1996 was with Lockheed," said Jimenez. "I was a contractor for Lockheed doing design and construction services with a firm out of St. Louis. I've had a longstanding relationship with Lockheed."

Ardmore Roderick has 300 employees nationwide operating from seven offices.

"And we also have strategic partners we work with," said Jimenez, adding that his firm has an office in Orlando, in Titusville within a Lockheed Martin complex,



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Eric Jimenez is vice president and director of Ardmore Roderick's Southeast Operations. Based in Chicago with offices in Florida, Ardmore Roderick is a full-service infrastructure firm. The minority-owned business is ranked No. 21 in "Engineering News-Record's" 2024 "Top 50 Program Management Firms" in America. Jimenez was named the Florida Engineering Society's 2024 "Engineer of the Year." He is at the Space Coast Health Foundation's Center for Collaboration in Rockledge.

and in Fort Lauderdale.

"We opened the Orlando office in 2018 and came to Brevard in 2019. We have been working mainly for Lockheed Martin in Titusville. But we are looking to grow in Brevard County with projects. In a capsule, Ardmore Roderick is everything infrastructure."

Jimenez said his company has a general contractor's license. "And we have architects, engineers, construction managers, and project managers, all in-house. So, we have a lot of in-house expertise. We have a group of prequalified subcontractors that perform our construction work."

He works closely with Lori Beth Wilson, Ardmore Roderick's deputy director of operations for the Southeast Region. She is an industry veteran.

"Beth and I have worked together for about 15 years," said Jimenez, whose company is a member of the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast.

"She is the smartest advanced planner that I have ever met. Beth understands the design side and she has a strong knowledge of security systems. She knows the

building-facility world very well. Beth runs our operations for the projects we are doing in this area."

Ardmore Roderick has delivered multiple design-build projects for Lockheed Martin providing that company with a range of services, including engineering, construction management, and quality assurance.

Ardmore Roderick, for example, successfully led the "B810 Windover Project," an interior renovation of classified spaces in the administrative building. Collaborating closely with Lockheed Martin, Ardmore Roderick adapted the initial requirements throughout the design process to meet the evolving needs of the customer, said Wilson.

Ardmore Roderick transformed 27,000 square feet into an efficiently laid-out workspace as it worked on the B810 third-floor renovations.

The project encompassed new heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems, upgraded power and data

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distribution, as well as contemporary ceilings, furnishings, and finishes. The project also includes a parking lot expansion.

"When we do a renovation, we want to make sure we are not impacting the client's business in any way, and that they stay operational while we are doing our work," said Wilson, who was educated at the University of Cincinnati. "The client needs to make money and focus on its mission. We do not even want to be seen."

Currently, Ardmore Roderick is redesigning an existing building that will be Lockheed Martin's Florida production facility in Titusville. "The building will showcase just over 200,000 square feet of manufacturing and office space," said Wilson. "We are providing turnkey services. We are a one-stop shop for services. Ardmore Roderick is Lockheed Martin's one point of contact for the project. This particular project is scheduled to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2026."

Ardmore Roderick is a Minority Business Enterprise, or MBE, a program administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

"We endorse and help grow minority businesses," said Jimenez. "The work we are doing today in Titusville involves a group of highly diversified contractors."

The National Minority Supplier Development Council, or NMSDC, has released its 2023 "Minority Businesses Economic Impact Report" and the compiling shows impressive growth by NMSDC-certified MBEs from 2022 to 2023.

The highlights include:

- \$363.6 billion in annual revenue (5 percent increase)
- 1 million U.S. jobs created (4.5 percent increase)
- \$81.5 billion in wages earned by MBE employees (8.2 percent increase)
- \$57.1 billion in taxes generated

"We strive to use minority firms as much as we can on projects. The nation runs on small business," said Jimenez, who was named the Florida Engineering Society's 2023 "Engineer of the Year."

Jimenez said it's a "true honor to be recognized for the work that we do in Florida. I look forward to continuing to support the engineering profession and bringing my experience and expertise to our clients across the state and the Southeast Region."

He has nearly three decades of experience as an engineering professional and is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico.

In 2017, he founded his own practice, Construction Professional Services in Orlando, and soon after joined forces with Ardmore Roderick to expand their design and construction services in Florida.

Jimenez has been responsible for more than \$1 billion in design and construction services for a variety of clients, including Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Osceola County, and the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority.

"We are doing a lot of work at GOAA's south terminal," said Jimenez, who is the chair of Florida Engineers in Construction, or FECON.

FECON is one of the five practice sections of the Florida Engineering Society representing those members who are engaged in construction or design/construction, or a Florida Engineering Society member whose interest is primarily in the construction field.

The commercial construction industry has stayed on track. According to the latest "Dodge Momentum Index," or DMI, compiled by the Dodge Construction Network, construction increased 7.9 percent in July over June's reading. Over the month, commercial construction planning increased by 6.8 percent, and institutional planning expanded by 11.1 percent.

"The potential Federal Reserve rate cut in September is becoming increasingly more likely, alongside slow inflation and weaker labor market conditions," the report says.

"That is likely driving owners and developers to remain optimistic about 2025 market conditions and pushing more projects into the planning queue."

Within the commercial portion of the DMI, growth was widespread across all segments. Data centers continued to play an important role in growth, and retail planning has been steadily accelerating over the past eight months.

On the institutional side, health care was the primary driver of July's expansion.

"Our plan is to grow alongside Brevard County," said Jimenez. "We want to help businesses that are planning to move here, and existing businesses that are expanding or investing in new facilities or renovations. We are excited about the opportunities on the Space Coast. We have the team in place to provide a full range of professional services. We see Brevard as an important market for our growing company."

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