

MEET THE TITANS OF ALASKA'S LANDSCAPE AND SITEWORK INDUSTRY

By: Nikki Giordano, ABHA

Landscaping allows Alaskans to expand their living space by creating an outdoor area that helps them enjoy nature every day. It adds curb appeal, room for entertaining and fosters an active lifestyle. Working outside in Alaska has unique challenges; fortunately, the professionals at Titan have it all figured out.

"People underestimate how long our construction season is in Alaska, we can go a full six months," said Todd Christianson, President and CEO of Titan, an entrepreneurial residential and commercial landscaping contractor and construction company in Anchorage, Alaska.

Christianson got his start mowing lawns 30 years ago. Since then, he's built a business that is a one-stop shop for anything homeowners want or design outside including lawns, decks, fencing, concrete, driveways, pavers, fire pits, retaining walls, water features and much more. Titan is an impressive operation, located on almost eight acres with a topsoil manufacturing plant. Most landscaping operations close up shop for the winter. Titan is a year-round company that pivots to commercial snow removal for about 100 properties.

Titan's versatility requires the company to employ a uniquely diverse and skilled workforce. "We don't hire traditional summer help, most of our employees are tradesmen and women who work year-round," Christianson said.

Titan's culture and values are pushed to the forefront of the company which has increased employee retention and growth as a company. At least 20 employees have been with Titan for more than 10 years and Christianson credits his crew's professionalism and talent for the company's success. He feels without the leadership team of Kevin

Thompson, Renee Davies-Ecklund and Chris Dietrich, Titan would not be experiencing the scalable growth that they have been achieving. "We're blessed to have the people we have here," he said. "It's all about teamwork."

An example of Titans strong belief in culture is the implementation of the Annual Titan Olympics. Employees are given shirts to represent their team and country. Each team competes in four work specific events such as bobcat/truck loading with topsoil, spike pounding, post hole digging and wheelbarrow races up Titan's mountain of dirt. It is our company's highlight of the summer, with everyone participating and representing their countries. The diversity of Titan's workforce represented the USA, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Last summer, former Alaska Aces Hockey legend Keith Street led the Canadians to the Golden Shovel Award. The event is followed by a celebratory barbeque with employees and families.

Demand for Titan's services is at an all-time high. "Everybody stayed at home during the pandemic, looking around their houses and deciding, I need a new landscaping, patio, fence or deck," Christianson said. This unprecedented demand on the homebuilding industry is putting a strain on labor and materials.

"Getting pavers, slate, fire pits and wood, you have to purchase it all at once and pray you don't run out because it's not available or that the price hasn't gone up since last week," Christianson said.

Despite the challenges, Christianson and his crew are making it work. They're proud to provide Alaskans with an opportunity to love their outdoor gathering areas.