

# Reusable structure helps Harcon Inc. win award

By Alan Friedman  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A flair for innovation and an equipment investment of \$180,000 recently helped Alpharetta-based Harcon Inc. win an award from the Georgia Branch, Associated General Contractors of America Inc.

Harcon, a 12-year-old concrete formwork subcontractor, earned the AGC's 2001 Build Georgia Specialty Contractor Award (\$1 million to \$5 million) for its work on the Glenridge Highlands Two office building along Georgia 400 just inside the Perimeter.

"This is very exciting for us," said Harcon founder Michael Hardin, whose company has annual sales of approximately \$20 million.

Harcon creates the formwork for reinforced concrete structures. "We have carpenters and laborers who install the formwork," Hardin said. "Someone else does the reinforcement steel and pours the concrete. When the concrete's hard, we strip our forms and reuse them."

## Special project

Glenridge Highlands Two, a 20-story, 431,000-square-foot office building that was completed last November, was one of many projects Harcon has done with general contractor R.J. Griffin & Co. But, for a variety of reasons, including a tight construction schedule, AGC judges believed Harcon's work on this project was special.

"The client had a seven-day turnaround per floor (for laying concrete)," said Gena Abraham, chief engineer for the Georgia Building Authority, who was one of the judges. "Harcon had to come up with an innovative way to meet the client's needs, and they did it."

The innovation was the use of what Hardin called a "flying" forms structure that could be assembled on the ground and then flown from one floor to the next by a construction crane.

Flying the reusable forms from floor to floor, plus the forms' large coverage area (30 feet by 45 feet), helped speed the overall construction process.

Hardin said that in preparing for the Glenridge Highlands Two project, his company looked into renting or purchasing the needed formwork equipment because the company didn't have it. Harcon wound up purchasing the flying system from Hi-Lite Systems Inc. of Ontario, Canada.

"The latest [formwork] technology is in Canada," he said. "It's a lot more innovative than what's on the market here in the United States."

The flying system price tag was \$180,000. Harcon's contract for the Glenridge Two project with Griffin, on the other hand, was worth in excess of \$2.1 million.

"This project was a big challenge, and they did a good job," said R.J. Griffin project manager Dan Kaufman.

Kaufman said R.J. Griffin and Harcon have a "long-standing relationship," and he estimated that through the years, the two companies have worked together on about 100 projects.

Hardin said another special aspect of the project was the work Harcon did to create the elliptical halo that sits atop the building, about 30 feet above the roof. The structure has given the build-

ing an identity of sorts.

Project architect Robert Tretch of Atlanta-based Thompson, Ventulett, Stainback & Associates said Harcon did a "smash-up job" on the building's roof adornment. "Their formwork was very interesting."

## Growing company

Hardin, 44, a 1981 graduate of the University of Florida with a degree in civil engineering, started Harcon in 1989.

"We had two employees then," he said. "Now we've grown to 400."

Thanks to the construction boom in the Southeast, he said, his company grew about 55 percent a year for eight years, and "doubled its size two years in a row."

Last year Harcon opened offices in Birmingham and Charlotte.

Hardin said about two-thirds of the company's employees are in the Atlanta area. □

Specialty Contractor Award  
**Winner**  
\$1 million to \$5 million



**Glenridge Highlands Two:** Harcon Inc.'s work on the 20-story office building included an elliptical 'halo' that is positioned about 30 feet above the roof.

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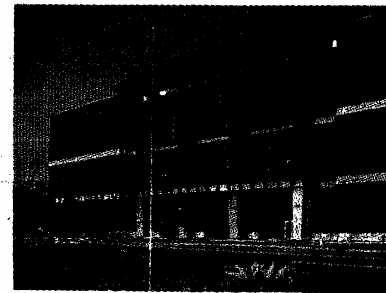
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June 6, 2001

Hi-Lite Systems, Inc.  
2570 Drew Road  
Mississauga, Ontario  
Canada L4T 3M

Attn: Mr. Dave Jackson

RE: Build Georgia 2001 Award

Dear Dave:

Many things went into Harcon's successful vie for the 2001 Build Georgia Award, which we recently received from the AGC. I wanted to express my appreciation to you for your letter of reference, which was included with our narrative presentation.

I am enclosing a copy of the Atlanta Business Chronicle's feature on the award.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Hardin  
President

MAH/cfg