



# THE PIPELINE

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Cover

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- Harry Brett, Local 12

Cover

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- John Hynes, Boston Global Investors

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AS BOSTON'S SEAPORT DISTRICT CONTINUES TO RADICALLY AND RAPIDLY EVOLVE, much has been made of how a neighborhood has been created virtually from scratch. To be considered a full-fledged neighborhood, however, an area needs neighbors—a critical mass of residents—as one of its pillars. The population of the bustling South Boston outpost will increase significantly when the first phase of EchelonSeaport opens later this year.

Located in the heart of the district, the striking three-tower, mixed-use complex now under construction will be one of the most unique and luxurious places to live in the Seaport and the entire city. Valued at \$950 million, the 1.3-million-square-foot project will include 447 condominium residences across two of its towers and 270 apartments in a third tower. When it is completed in the first quarter of 2020, some 2,000 new residents will call EchelonSeaport home.

The project straddles the underground Silver Line. To accommodate the MBTA tunnel, there are three levels of parking below grade on one side of the property and two levels on the other.

John Moriarty & Associates is the project's general contractor, and GBPCA contractor J.C. Cannistraro is handling the mechanical systems. "The job is

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## PLUMBER VS. DOCTOR Who brings in more Benjamins?

Let's compare plumbers and doctors.

They both perform vitally important jobs. They both diagnose and repair ailing systems. One works in operating rooms at hospitals, while the other helps build operating rooms by outfitting them with life-saving medical gases. Only one makes house calls any longer. One gets to have a fancy title in front of his or her name.

Here's a question you may not have considered when comparing plumbers and doctors: Which one of them generates more wealth? The answer may surprise you.

A number of newspapers, magazines, and online outlets have published articles pondering the relative moneymaking abilities of plumbers and doctors, including the Wall Street Journal, Yahoo Finance, and The Economist. Not to spoil the suspense, but

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# E.M. Duggan scores Triple Crown accolades

In the last issue of *The Pipeline*, we shared the news that GBPCA contractor E.M. Duggan of Canton, Mass. was cited by *The Boston Globe* as one of the region's top ten large companies based on employee satisfaction. In January, the shop received more good news, this time on a national stage.

The trade publication, *Contractor*, named Duggan the country's Contractor of the Year. As TV pitchman Ron Popeil might say, "But wait, there's more." Another industry publication, *The News*, announced that it chose the Boston-area shop as its 2018 Best Contractor to Work For in the East region.

Call it a Triple Crown win. Clearly Duggan is doing something—make that many things—right.

Why is the company basking in multiple spotlights? In its article honoring Duggan, *Contractor* emphasizes the overriding criteria that the publishers used to bestow its honor: valued employees. *The News* as well as *The Boston Globe* also make it clear that employees are front and center in their accolades. In both cases, they call out Duggan as one of the best places to work.

There are a number of reasons why the three publications' honors are especially significant. For one, Duggan has been in operation since 1891 and is one of the oldest plumbing companies in the country. Rather than being set in its ways, the longstanding contractor has continually evolved with the times. For example, it was one of the first plumbing contractors to embrace prefabrication when it opened a shop in 1967. By strategically adapting and innovating, Duggan enjoys success both externally

**"We believe happy people are the most productive, and that's very evident in the effort our people give."**

600 workers, many of them Local 12 plumbers, are in the field and in its shops and offices. That is a lot of people to satisfy. Plenty has changed in its 128-year history, but valuing employees is one of the traits that has remained consistent and sustained the family-run company, which traces its lineage back five generations to founder Edward M. Duggan.

The management team leading the award-winning company refers to its workplace culture as the "Duggan way."

with its customers and internally with its employees.

It's also important to note that because unemployment is so low now, particularly in the construction industry, honoring a company for being a top workplace is striking. There are plenty of opportunities for workers in the marketplace; that they choose to work for Duggan is telling.

Another reason why the accolades are noteworthy, given their emphasis on employees: Duggan has a lot of them. Upwards of

600 workers, many of them Local 12 plumbers, are in the field and in its shops and offices. That is a lot of people to satisfy. Plenty has changed in its 128-year history, but valuing employees is one of the traits that has remained consistent and sustained the family-run company, which traces its lineage back five generations to founder Edward M. Duggan.

The management team leading the award-winning company refers to its workplace culture as the "Duggan way."

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# CONTRACTOR

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## Stalco Completes Renovation of Manhattan Community College's Pool and Aquatics Center

SPECIAL TO CONTRACTOR

NEW YORK, NY—General contractor Stalco Construction has completed a \$7.2 million renovation of the Borough of Manhattan Community College's (BMCC's) aquatics center, including the 220,000-gallon pool. The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) served as the project manager. BMCC is part of the City

Photo by Ole Wik-Wik Marketing Communications

Social gathering areas for students and faculty overlook the renovated aquatics center.

## Contractor of the Year: E. M. Duggan Stresses the "Duggan Way"

BY JOHN MESEBRINK OF CONTRACTOR'S STAFF

CANTON, MA—When one of the premier news outlets in the country recognizes you as one of the best places to work for, you must be doing a lot of things right. Recently, in its "Top Places To Work" report, the *Boston Globe* selected E.M. Duggan, Canton, sixth in the large group category as Top Places To Work in Massachusetts for its *Boston Globe* Magazine.

"It is an extremely humbling, exciting and validating honor to receive such a prestigious award. It will and has always



The E.M. Duggan executive team (l to r): Len Monfredo, Vincent Petroni, Rick Dorci and Kevin

"We treat people with respect," explains Vincent Petroni, president, CEO, and CFO, "the way we'd like to be treated." That simple, but potent tenet sets the tone and helps guide the contractor.

Adds Len Monfredo, the company's executive vice president, "Everyone belongs and knows that they are valued. The biggest reason why we are successful? It's our people."

The people who work for Duggan recognize and appreciate the relationship they have with their employer. *The News* based its Best Contractor to Work For title on nominations made by company employees. In a sense then, it's Duggan's employees that really singled out the shop for the honor.

Productivity among employees is essential for success, of course. But Duggan prefers to use a carrot rather than a stick approach. "We try to create an atmosphere that's conducive," says Kevin Walsh, executive vice president of plumbing. "We believe happy people are the most productive, and that's very evident in the effort our people give."

It's that kind of attitude and winning formula that has garnered Duggan recognition beyond

the trifecta of awards it recently received. *Boston Business Journal* has named the contractor one of the Best Places to Work for five consecutive years as well as including it on its List of Fastest Growing Private Companies. In 2016, the Mass Building Congress inducted Duggan into the organization's Hall of Fame.

With a slate of pending projects that extends through 2021, the future looks bright for the contractor. But it is not about to rest on its laurels. One of the ways Duggan is expanding and preparing for headwinds it might encounter should the economy shift direction is by bulking up its service group.

"There will always be service work out there because all the building mechanical systems have to be maintained," notes Monfredo. He says that the service group has grown exponentially and will continue to do so. "Construction is cyclical, but we're now better prepared to ride out downturns."

Another way that Duggan prepares for the future? By assembling a crackerjack team of employees that knows it is valued.

# THEIR PATH TO LOCAL 12

There are as many stories about why and how people become plumbers and join Local 12 as there are members. As a recurring feature in *The Pipeline*, we tell some of those stories by speaking with apprentices at the Local's Training Center and sharing their journeys. In this issue, we focus on Nick Roberts and Carlo Lopez.



**Nick Roberts**  
**Age: 27**  
**Fourth-year apprentice**  
**Working for**  
**J.C. Cannistraro**

## ***His introduction to plumbing was trial by flooding***

Nick Roberts has one of the oddest stories about his journey into the plumbing trade.

It began with a crazy-high water bill that led him to a flooded vacation home in New Hampshire. Although he had never picked up a wrench before, he was suddenly faced with the task of repairing the many burst pipes in the waterlogged house. During the process, Roberts discovered he loved the work and found his passion.

The home belonged to the family of the girl he was dating a few years ago. When his girlfriend's mother saw that the water bill was through the roof, she knew that something was wrong and packed her son, Roberts, and some plumbing tools into her car for a road trip to the vacation home. When they discovered the mess, the mother, who had some plumbing experience, purchased pipe, fittings, and other materials and showed the two guys how to solder one joint. She told them to fix the rest and left them to the task.

"We had no idea what we were doing—not a clue," Roberts says with a chuckle. "It was trial and error."

After they finally figured it out, he found the assignment to be fun. Saying it was like a big puzzle, Roberts felt a sense of accomplishment when he was able to help put all of the pieces together.

At the time, he had worked at a few different jobs, but nothing had clicked. Inspired by his pipe-soldering adventure, he called a few plumbing shops seeking employment. One called back and asked Roberts about his plumbing experience. After they stopped laughing at his story, they hired him. That led to a job with a bigger shop.

Up to that point, Roberts was self-taught and had never received any formal training. "Outside the union, you have to pay for school—and you go at night," he explains. Neither were viable options for him.

Other plumbers encouraged him to apply to Local 12. "They said it was where I would get the best training, the best benefits, and make the most money," Roberts recalls. "The Local is the pinnacle of plumbing."

In 2016, he applied to Local 12 and was accepted as an ap-

*Continued on page 7*



**Carlo Lopez**  
**Age: 25**  
**First-year apprentice**  
**Working for**  
**E.M. Duggan**

## ***A fairy godmother (and Building Pathways) made all the difference***

Growing up in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Boston, not far from Plumbers Local 12, Carlo Lopez used to pass the union hall and the nearby halls of other construction trades. But he never paid much attention to them.

"I really didn't know anything about unions," Lopez says. Nobody ever talked about them, and the topic never came up during his high school years. He dismissed what little he did know about organized labor because "I just never thought it could be for me," as Lopez puts it. Not until a fairy godmother came along that is.

As a child, he didn't know anybody who worked in the trades. But Lopez was always interested in how things worked and remembers taking his bicycle apart and putting it back together. He was good with his hands and could fix things that broke around the house and around the neighborhood.

Lopez excelled in high school sports and was awarded a sports and academic scholarship to attend college. He studied business management, got his associate degree, and started a marketing and sales job working for Samsung. It was while he was located

at a Best Buy selling Samsung products that fate intervened.

A woman came in to the store seeking a mobile phone, engaged with Lopez, and took a liking to him. "She said that I conducted myself well, was smart, and asked me if sales was what I really wanted to do for the rest of my life," he says.

The woman, who has a connection to Building Pathways, began telling Lopez about the pre-apprenticeship organization that was founded by the Building and Construction Trades Council. The innovative program is designed to launch low-income Boston-area residents from underserved communities into the construction industry. She followed up by returning to the store with information about how to apply to Building Pathways and encouraged him to pursue it.

"To this day, I don't know who she is," Lopez says about the woman. "She appeared out of nowhere, and I never saw her again. My mother says she was like a fairy godmother."

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# Echelon Seaport is a distinctive mixed-use project

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flying,” reports John Cannistraro, president. The company has been delivering finished assemblies to the job that it has manufactured at its new pre-fabrication plant located a few blocks away in the Seaport.

“Basically, the mechanical room was pre-built in the shop and brought over to the site,” says Harry Brett, Local 12’s business manager. “It is very impressive.” Brett adds that the project represents a great opportunity for the Local’s members to work for a solid two years.

Cannistraro says that the Echelon is not a typical cookie-cutter project. “There are a great variety of layouts and designs among the units and the public spaces. Nearly everything is custom.” That has made the project distinctive and challenging for the contractor.

A design in which the upper levels of the 14- to 21-story buildings gradually taper has

presented challenges as well. “Many of the floor plates step back to create balconies,” explains Cannistraro. “Nothing lined up at the beginning of the project. We worked a long time to get things in sync.”

One of the reasons why Cannistraro was able to navigate the construction and installation process with confidence is because the contractor played an active role in the design-assist process early on in the project.

“It was very helpful to have the mechanical contractor sitting in the room with the design team providing feedback and input,” says Scott Summers, senior vice president, design and construction for Boston Global Investors.

BGI helped get the Echelon through the initial design and permitting phase. After construction started, it has continued to play an advisory role on the project. Cottonwood Group is the owner and developer for the three-building complex.



Street-level view

“During construction, the coordination is at a level that’s much better than it would have been if Cannistraro had just been handed a set of drawings,” Summers notes. “It’s fantastic working with them.”

“We are all quite pleased with Cannistraro,” adds John B. Hynes, III, BGI’s CEO and managing partner. One of the chief visionaries for the Seaport, the developer believes that the Echelon will be the best place to live in the emerging district. Hynes says that the project’s materials are second to none. He is also a big fan of the aesthetic statement that the three towers will make and the way that they are positioned on the 3.5-acre site.

The buildings form a courtyard that will serve as a retail plaza with shops and restaurants. “I think the Echelon will be a destination in the Seaport,” says Summers. “I don’t think people will walk past it. They will walk through it.” At the same time that it will be a vibrant public space for visitors, the courtyard will offer pleasing views and generate a sense of energy for the buildings’ occupants.

Among other generous amenities at the Echelon will be two outdoor pools with sun cabanas, an indoor pool, a wellness center

with a spa and private rooms in which to stretch or practice yoga, a golf simulator, a fireside lounge, and a climate-controlled wine room. It will also feature an innovation center that will offer spaces to work and schedule meetings as well as present speakers and programming. The Echelon will even include a pet spa.

While no hotel rooms are planned, Regent Hotels staff

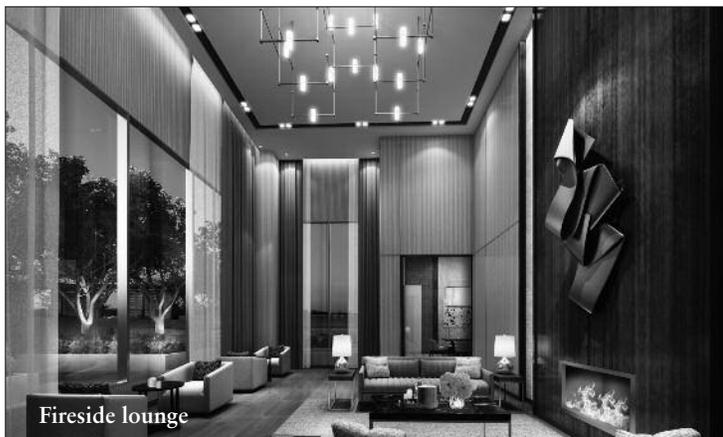
members will be onsite to offer concierge and other services befitting a four-star resort. What would it take

to be able to enjoy this level of luxury and pampering? The condos are reportedly being offered for \$700,000 to over \$5 million.

Before its modern-day transformation, virtually nobody lived in the once-gritty South Boston area now known as the Seaport District. That’s quickly changing. The Echelon, notes Hynes, will be “a small town in itself.” He adds that over the past five years developers have built more than 3,000 units across the Seaport.

“That’s a lot of inventory for a city like Boston,” says Hynes. “It’s a dream come true—for all of us.”

**“The Echelon will be a small town in itself.”**



Fireside lounge



Central courtyard

# John Hynes, III: The architect of the new Seaport

**ONE OF THE KEY PLAYERS** helping to shape the burgeoning Seaport District is John B. Hynes, III, the CEO and managing partner of Boston Global Investors. That should come as no surprise. Having a grand vision and the ability to engender progress is in his blood.

Hynes' father was Jack Hynes, the veteran reporter who was known as the dean of Boston television. He chronicled the region's news for decades. His grandfather and namesake, John B. Hynes, made news as the mayor of Boston in the 1950s.

"I didn't really understand his impact," Hynes says, until he was an impressionable 12 years old, and his grandfather died. The eulogies at the former mayor's funeral helped convey the full breadth of his life and accomplishments. "I didn't know it at the time, but it planted a seed," Hynes notes. "I developed a keen interest in the city, which then led me to the real estate business."

Mayor Hynes presided over a difficult period. Like many big cities, Boston suffered a post-World-War-II exodus to the suburbs that resulted in a declining population and tax base and a crumbling infrastructure. Most ironically, the city's once-thriving Seaport was decaying during his tenure. The mayor responded by establishing the Boston Redevelopment Authority (now known as the Boston Planning and Development Agency) and laying

the groundwork for the city's resurgence. Among his signature accomplishments, Mayor Hynes was instrumental in developing the plans for the Prudential Center, Boston's first skyscraper. The adjacent Hynes Convention Center is named in his honor.

"Driving into the city, seeing the Prudential, and knowing that my grandfather had a hand in that, there is a sense of pride," Hynes says. "It certainly influenced my thinking."

Hynes went on to develop a number of projects, including his own skyscrapers, One Lincoln Street (now known as State Street Financial Center) in the Financial District and 101 Arch Street in Downtown Crossing.

"Any project that John Hynes attaches his name to is high quality, and the city embraces it," says Harry Brett, business manager for Local 12. "They are the kind of projects that spur other developers to invest in an area."

While serving as the CEO for Gale International, Hynes oversaw the creation of the audacious New Songdo City, one of the world's largest private real estate developments, outside of Seoul, South Korea. The master-planned city, which is valued at \$35 billion and includes a staggering 100 million square feet of new construction, dwarfs the plans for the Seaport. The experience prepared Hynes for the challenge of helping to transform and re-

imagine the long-suffering South Boston area.

A lifelong Boston-area resident, Hynes has vivid memories of the Seaport. He remembers its vacant buildings and acres of cheap parking. Before the cleanup of the harbor, he remembers the pungent smells that wafted in the air at low tide. And like many Bostonians of a certain age, he recalls special-occasion meals at Jimmy's Harborside and Pier 4.

Back in the late 1970s, Hynes estimates that the two Seaport restaurants were among about 12 eateries in the city that beckoned people to come into Boston. "Today, there are probably 1,200," he says with a laugh. "That's a good indicator of how much the city has changed culturally."

Diners can no longer visit Pier 4 or Jimmy's, but many spots have taken their places in the trendy Seaport. And there are many more on the way to Seaport Square, the 23-acre, 7.6-million-square-foot, mixed-use development that will span 20 blocks. Masterminded by Hynes' Boston Global Investors, the company sold the project to WS Development. BGI remains on board as advisors and consultants. Seaport Square is expected to be completed by the end of the decade.

Throughout his long career working on many high-profile projects, Hynes has had the opportunity to work extensively with union building trades. "John is one of the key players in the city that benefits our workforce," Local 12's Brett says.



John Hynes, III

"I'm a big fan of the unions," Hynes says. "They've always been there for us. I understand the strengths they bring. The workmanship reflects the solid performance that they pitch."

Hynes' father, Jack, passed away in early 2018. But he got to see a lot of progress made in the Seaport. Hynes says that his dad, who delighted in reporting about the city and knew it well, was shocked by the changes and how quickly things evolved in the South Boston area.

What would his grandfather, the mayor, make of the Seaport, a place he would scarcely recognize 50 years after his death? "I think he'd be very pleased, if not proud," Hynes says. Mayor Hynes loved the city and wanted to save it, his grandson contends. And he knew the only way to save it was to grow it.

"People described him as the architect of the new Boston," says Hynes about the mayor. "He's credited with developing a roadmap for the city's future."

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## BUILDING THE SEAPORT

# Who generates more wealth: A plumber or a doctor?

Continued from page 1

in the long run, doctors do eventually rake in more Benjamins than plumbers. However, it takes a really long run for them to get there.

Plumbers outstrip doctors for many years in their respective careers because plumbers hit the ground running and bring home paychecks right away (and decent paychecks at that), while doctors toil away for a long time studying—and amassing massive amounts of student loan debt—before they can generate a dime. In that respect, plumbers would compare favorably against any

profession that requires a college degree, although the contrast is especially stark for doctors because of their extensive and costly training period.

“The cost of college is a huge burden,” says Jeremy Ryan, executive director of the GBPCA. For many recent graduates, he notes, student loans are their biggest expense and sometimes exceed their rent and car combined. “There seems to be a renewed interest in the building trades from guidance counselors, parents, and the students themselves,” Ryan adds. “People are not as afraid to recommend a career in

the construction industry or to pursue it.”

## The numbers are even better for union plumbers.

For this article, we use data provided in an online story published by Student Loan Planner. (Ironically, the company specializes in helping people manage student debt.) It established baselines for undergraduate and medical school tuition, a plumber’s salary at various career stages, the interest rate on a doctor’s debt payments, the amount of money that both the doctor and lawyer invest annually, and other criteria.

Real-world numbers may vary, obviously. But no matter how you slice it, the general principles remain the same. In a side-by-side comparison, a plumber would have a higher net worth than a doctor for many years.

Union plumbers would fare even better than the average plumber depicted in the Student Loan Planner article.

They are typically paid more than their nonunion counterparts. Local 12 provides comprehensive training for all of its apprentices at no additional charge (hence, no student loan debt) and offers ongoing learning opportunities throughout members’ careers. The union offers a full range of benefits, including medical and dental insurance, to all of its members. And unlike nonunion plumbers—and most doctors—Local 12 members receive pensions.

“People are rethinking their career goals and taking a hard look at what they might have to pay for a very expensive college education,” says Harry Brett, business manager at Local 12. “We offer an honest living. Yes, it’s hard work. But over the past few years, Local 12 has opened a lot

of opportunities in different sectors of the plumbing industry.”

## Crushing debt vs. prudent savings

In our illustration, the doctor would receive no income and rack up debt over the first eight years, while the cautious plumber would squirrel away a portion of his or her earnings. In year eight, the doctor would owe over \$300,000, while the plumber would have amassed over \$240,000 in savings.

For the next seven years, the doctor would earn a stipend while in residency and as a fellow, but would still be paying down massive student loans. During that time the plumber would become a master plumber and see a spike in his or her annual salary. In the fifteenth year of our side-by-side comparison, the doctor would still owe almost

\$150,000, while the plumber would have a net worth of more than \$825,000.

The doctor would finally

be free of loan payments at the age of 33. At that point, the plumber would be closing in on \$1 million in savings. The doctor wouldn’t catch up to the plumber’s net worth until they were both 41 years old.

Granted, after that age, the doctor would have more life savings, but the plumber’s net worth wouldn’t be too shabby. If the plumber belonged to a union, he or she could look forward to a retirement free of financial stress.

“After finishing a five-year apprenticeship and training, which we provide for free, a Local 12 member could make around \$90,000,” says Brett. “That’s a pretty good return on an education that they didn’t pay for.”

**Unlike nonunion plumbers—and most doctors—Local 12 members receive pensions.**

| Age | Doctor's Income | Plumber's Income | Doctor's Net Worth | Plumber's Net Worth |
|-----|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 18  | \$0             | \$31,680         | -\$20,000          | \$15,840            |
| 19  | \$0             | \$36,960         | -\$40,600          | \$35,270            |
| 20  | \$0             | \$42,240         | -\$61,818          | \$58,507            |
| 21  | \$0             | \$47,520         | -\$83,673          | \$85,777            |
| 22  | \$0             | \$58,080         | -\$137,019         | \$119,964           |
| 23  | \$0             | \$60,720         | -\$192,500         | \$157,521           |
| 24  | \$0             | \$63,360         | -\$250,200         | \$198,653           |
| 25  | \$0             | \$66,000         | -\$310,208         | \$243,572           |
| 26  | \$55,000        | \$100,800        | -\$295,117         | \$308,586           |
| 27  | \$57,500        | \$103,824        | -\$278,171         | \$379,013           |
| 28  | \$60,000        | \$106,939        | -\$259,298         | \$455,224           |
| 29  | \$62,500        | \$110,147        | -\$238,420         | \$537,610           |
| 30  | \$75,000        | \$113,451        | -\$210,457         | \$626,593           |
| 31  | \$77,500        | \$116,855        | -\$180,125         | \$722,616           |
| 32  | \$80,000        | \$120,360        | -\$147,330         | \$826,153           |
| 33  | \$380,000       | \$123,971        | \$36,777           | \$937,708           |
| 34  | \$391,400       | \$127,690        | \$233,948          | \$1,057,815         |
| 35  | \$403,142       | \$131,521        | \$449,556          | \$1,187,045         |
| 36  | \$415,236       | \$135,467        | \$684,147          | \$1,326,001         |
| 37  | \$427,693       | \$139,531        | \$939,043          | \$1,475,326         |
| 38  | \$440,524       | \$143,717        | \$1,215,647        | \$1,635,704         |
| 39  | \$453,740       | \$148,028        | \$1,515,456        | \$1,807,861         |
| 40  | \$467,352       | \$152,469        | \$1,840,059        | \$1,992,567         |
| 41  | \$481,373       | \$157,043        | \$2,191,149        | \$2,190,642         |
| 42  | \$495,814       | \$161,754        | \$2,570,525        | \$2,402,958         |
| 43  | \$510,688       | \$166,607        | \$2,980,101        | \$2,630,439         |
| 44  | \$526,009       | \$171,605        | \$3,421,911        | \$2,874,068         |
| 45  | \$541,789       | \$176,753        | \$3,898,121        | \$3,134,889         |

Source: Student Loan Planner



## Lopez's path to Local 12

*Continued from page 3*

Inspired by the woman, Lopez applied to Building Pathways and was accepted. During the six-week program, he and his classmates experienced intensive classroom instruction along with visits to different unions, job sites, and companies.

He remembers touring the prefabrication shop at E.M. Duggan, a GBPCA member, and being very impressed. While he hadn't initially considered plumbing, one of the program's instructors told him that it would be a good choice for a career and that if he became a plumber, he could consider starting his own business. At the end of the program, he indicated that plumbing was the route he wanted to pursue.

After graduating, Building Pathways helped get Lopez an interview at Duggan, and the company offered him a job working in its warehouse. He mostly loaded delivery trucks, but was able to see the prefab shop in action and learned a lot about the trade by carefully observing and talking with employees. While working at Duggan, Lopez applied to Local 12 and was accepted in 2018.

Now he is working at Duggan as a first-year apprentice. "I offload the trucks with the prefab systems that I used to load when I worked at the warehouse," Lopez says he sees the same drivers, but at the other end of the delivery. "Now I'm helping to install systems at job sites."

Among the projects he has worked on are Bullfinch Crossing, the 500-foot tower that is starting to rise on the site of the Government Center garage, and dormitories that Emerson College is developing in existing buildings near its downtown campus. Lopez says that he is fascinated to see the construction process come together as different building trades descend on a project. To the untrained eye, it

probably looks like "barely controlled chaos," Lopez notes with a laugh. He loves the fast pace and learning about plumbing on the job.

Lopez also loves Local 12's training center and says that it's been a great experience from the get-go. He is particularly impressed with how much attention the center's instructors give him and each individual apprentice.

As for the future, Lopez says he's trying to soak everything in and learn as much as he can. He is looking forward to making a good living as a journeyman. Beyond that, he thinks he might want to get more involved with Local 12 and perhaps become a business agent one day.

He's so happy with the difference that Local 12 has made in his life that Lopez has been evangelizing to anybody and everybody about construction trades and unions. "I tell people you have to be committed. You have to be all in. But you're going to have a career—a solid career."

It sounds like Lopez is angling to pass on the good fortune he received from his mysterious fairy godmother.

## Hynes

*Continued from page 5*

It is a roadmap that has spanned decades. For the Hynes family, it has spanned generations and come full circle. "For me, actually having a hand in making a contribution to improving the new Boston is great," Hynes acknowledges.

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## A flood led him to plumbing

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prentice. He immediately started getting the training that he knew he needed and has appreciated the opportunity. Roberts says that the instructors are very knowledgeable and do a great job teaching hands-on skills. He adds that the training is more than just basic and that he is learning comprehensive, in-depth skills.

He also likes the cost for Local 12's training center. "We're not paying anything," Roberts notes. "And we're getting paid while we are being trained."

The class schedule is another plus. At the direction of the Education Fund trustees that oversee it, the training center switched from a night school format to a daytime immersion program in 2015. Instead of trudging to the center after a long day of work, apprentices now attend day classes every six weeks for eight hours, five weekdays in a row.

Since he joined the Local, Roberts has been working for GBPCA contractor, J.C. Cannistraro. "It is an awesome shop," he says, summing up his experience with the company. "I hope I never have to leave."

Most recently, the apprentice has been working at Logan Airport. Instead of one project, he has been bouncing around to multiple sites throughout the sprawling airport as it undergoes remodeling and upgrades. For example, the Cannistraro crew has been helping to refresh the Admiral's Club for American Airlines.

Roberts says that he enjoys working on smaller projects like the ones at Logan, because they mix things up and present unique challenges. It's a great way to learn on the job and hone many different skills he adds.

Roberts was also at the Salem Power Plant converting the electricity-generating facility from coal to gas power. He did a lot of fitting, rigging, and testing of the plant's gas systems and says that the work was large-scale. The PSI on some of the systems, he notes, registers over 2,000 lbs., which is, indeed, large-scale.

Since he joined the union, his life and his career have been on the upswing. At the nonunion shops for which he previously worked, Roberts did not receive a pension or annuity. One offered health care, but he had to pay for it out of pocket. (Health care and dental are part of the compensation package that all Local 12 members receive.)

"I tell [nonunion] plumbers, you should see what I'm getting at Local 12," he says. Roberts told one of the foremen at his former shop what he was making as an apprentice. "He was dumbfounded. He looked at me and said 'You make almost as much as me.' He's been a foreman for years. You can't beat being in Local 12."

Beyond the pay, benefits, and promise of a fulfilling career, Roberts especially enjoys the camaraderie he has discovered at the Local. "I have a lot of friends here," he says.

# Plumbers 911 service program expanding

WHETHER THEY ARE IN OR OUT OF THE INDUSTRY, when most people think of Local 12 and the GBPCA contractors that employ the Boston union's plumbers, they think about high-rise towers, sprawling hospital and medical research facilities, and other large-scale, commercial projects. For good reason. The Local's plumbers and its affiliated contractors are on the job at virtually every major construction site in the region. No project is too big for them.

What's less well known is that some contractors also welcome small projects. But that perception is becoming more well known.

Starting in 2015, area contractors and Local 12 mechanics began identifying themselves as Plumbers 911 and offering service to homeowners and other small-scale customers in the Boston-area. Four years later, the program has grown and evolved and is now making impressive inroads in the local market.

The Plumbers 911 program was developed by the United Association (UA), the national plumbers union of which Local 12 is a member. Union contractors in Massachusetts and across the country are offering plumbing services such as water heater installations, drain cleaning, faucet repairs, and bathroom remodeling to homeowners, small businesses, and other clients.

"It's a big component of our residential program," says Harry Brett, business manager for Local 12. "We are committed to residential service."

People seeking plumbing services can either visit the Web site, Plumbers911.com, or call the main line, (877) 754-0970. Operators connect customers with plumbers that are based in their area. A network of contractors, all of which employ Local 12 plumbers with the industry's best training, experience, and talent,



Plumbing contractors gather with Local 12 and GBPCA officials for annual Plumbers 911 meeting.

are ready to handle the calls. The Plumbers 911 contractors are located throughout the region and include: Blue Bear Plumbing in Marshfield, Boston Mechanical in Arlington, O'Connell Plumbing & Heating in Salem, Dowd Plumbing in Stoughton, Drain Shooter in E. Weymouth, and Jeffrey Peabody Plumbing & Heating in Danvers.

According to Frank Amato, Local 12's recruitment specialist, calls to Plumbers 911 have been increasing exponentially as the brand has gained visibility and word of mouth spreads. "We used to get dozens of calls a month," he says. "Now we get hundreds." The volume in 2019 is surpassing the record set in 2018.

Amato, who helps coordinate Plumbers 911, gathered participating contractors and the Local 12 plumbers who work for them together for a meeting in January. He shared info about how the program is growing and talked about marketing and best practices. Amato also emphasized the importance of service from a long-term business perspective.

"There are lots of cranes in Boston now," Amato said, referring to the tremendous surge in new construction throughout the region. "But we all know that it's cyclical. The cranes

might go away, but service will always be there." The calls that contractors receive can turn into loyal, long-term customers for them and can generate referrals as well, he added.

Jeremy Ryan, GBPCA executive director, also addressed the Plumbers 911 contractors and invited them to participate in the organization's programs and resources. A representative from Milwaukee Tools presented the company's newest line of drain cleaning systems. As part of the meeting, the Plumbers 911 contractors moved to Local 12's training center. They participated in hands-on demonstrations of new equipment and learned about the latest technologies and techniques that could help them expand and improve their services.

"Plumbers 911 has been a great success for us," Brett says. "The program offers tremendous benefits to both member contractors and to customers."

He explains that the program gives service plumbing contractors the ability to be aligned with a brand that has the benefits of a franchise such as Mr. Rooter or Roto Rooter, but without the huge investment that those companies demand. It is one of the benefits of being a signatory contractor to Local 12.

For customers, Plumbers 911 offers peace of mind by giving them access to mechanics that meet Local 12's rigorous demands and standards.

"They are the best in the business," notes Brett. "They are going to get the job done right and offer great value. I can't say that for some of the other franchises out there."

## THE PIPELINE

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