

# South Florida Hospital News<sup>®</sup> and HEALTHCARE REPORT

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## Building for Babies



Tom Thornton

BY BARBARA R. FALLON

Thornton Construction Company, Inc., an award-winning local firm, recently was awarded a \$5.2 million construction project to update and expand the Family Birthplace at Memorial Regional Hospital.

According to Scott Singer, Assistant Administrator responsible for Support Services, excelling through a rigorous selection process with the Hospital District's Board of Commissioners, a focus on infection control, quality, value engineering, cost and commitment to a partnership was key to the Thornton award. The project consists of expanding a 33 bed unit to a 53 bed unit featuring additional private room birthing suites to meet community demand. It will be a two-phase project scheduled for completion in May 2011.

Thornton has completed thirteen projects with Memorial Healthcare System including six renovation projects at Memorial Regional Hospital – five of those with Saltz Michelson, the architects for the Birth Center.

Tom Thornton, President Thornton Construction explained, "We are proud of our record for personalized service, quality construction and timely move-in completion with some of the largest healthcare systems in South Florida, which generates our repeat customer base of 90%. We are a good fit because the majority of our projects are renovations within hospitals requiring uninterrupted critical operations."

Not only is Thornton experienced with this

type of project having completed a birth center (the LDRP Suite) at Memorial Hospital West, but their familiarity with Memorial operations, contracting requirements, and Construction and Design Department helps bridge the business barrier and eliminate any learning curve. Thornton excels at working in sensitive-needs environments where precision and timing is vital.

"Working in occupied patient care areas is like changing tiles while you are taking a shower," Thornton quipped, "as a result every Thornton worker or subcontractor completes job-site safety training regarding customer protocols, infection control, debris confinement and security in addition to the technical sensitivities of internal renovations regarding plumbing, electrical or HVAC service interruptions."

Thornton cites the family-owned company size as key to this type of project allowing his senior level involvement in monitoring activities, eliminating bureaucratic slow-downs and on-the spot direct resolution of issues, along with turn-key access to management information systems. Having forged solid relationships with the City of Hollywood and with the local construction industry ensures a problem-free process punctuated with efficient operations.

"Several generations of experienced local builders in the office and on-site know local commerce and the special considerations of building in a subtropical climate," he said. "Such knowledgeable practice paves the road either for anticipating issues up-front or being nimble in resolving them quickly," he concluded.

Thornton's team also holds eco-friendly credentials. The majority of project managers are LEED, AP certified, offering the potential for project sustainability certification with the U.S. Green Building Council. Thornton is a certified Minority Business Enterprise with the State of Florida; recently awarded the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's Top 100 Minority Business Award; and, named a 2009 Top 100 South Florida Small Business



Reception Area



Corridor



Patient Room

by Business Leader magazine for their commitment to customer service, deadlines and budgets from preconstruction through move-in.

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