



Graham Architectural's custom window systems are designed for a wide variety of applications.

# GRAHAM IS A CLEAR CHOICE FOR CUSTOM WINDOWS

BY JOANNA MILLER

**G**raham Architectural Products got its start as a custom window system designer approximately 40 years ago, but the company soon decided to stop working for other companies and manufacture its own designs. Today, Graham manufactures aluminum and fiberglass architectural windows, aluminum and vinyl acoustical windows, as well as commercial terrace doors. It primarily serves customers throughout the United States, although several are international, says Vice President of Operations Jean Jameson.

"We are totally a custom-job shop," Jameson explains. "Some are historic retrofits, others are for code compliance. We produce a wide variety of acoustical products for hotels and motels around noisy highways, schools near a train or high traffic and housing around airports."

Graham's product lines include hurricane impact windows and blast-mitigation products. "Unfor-

tunately, these have become necessary items in our society," she notes. "These blast mitigation products are used on military bases, embassies and other government buildings to protect occupants from the effects of an explosion."

As Jameson explains, the company operates in a competitive market and most of its business goes out to bid. "Our products are sometimes supplied for projects that are just window replacement, sometimes they are part of the construction of a new building and the rest are a wide spectrum in between," Jameson says. "Most often, in public bids, projects are generally awarded to the lowest bidder, so it's pretty competitive."

Graham differentiates itself by manufacturing a product the company stands behind 100 percent, she emphasizes. "We like to have it right the first time," she says. "If, for some reason, we don't, we stick with it until any problem is resolved."

## SERVICE COORDINATION

According to Jameson, Graham's customers are primarily glass and glazing contractors and window installation companies. Service is a major focus, she says.

## PROFILE

Graham Architectural  
[www.grahamwindows.com](http://www.grahamwindows.com)  
 HQ: York, Pa.  
 Employees: 300  
 Products: Custom window systems and doors  
 Jean Jameson: "We plan to reduce our lead times even more while still maintaining quality products."

"We have a customer service department headed up by project coordinators," she explains. "They help the customer see their project from the time of quotation to the time of completion. We also have technical support people who can help them with details for shop drawings and product specification."

Graham's sales staff is stationed throughout the United States, she says. They travel across the country to meet with architects, owners and "anyone associated with the project who wants to understand it or help specify the appropriate product for the project."

Most sales employees have in excess of 20 years of experience in the industry, she notes. Inexperienced salespeople are primarily trained on the job instead of going through formal training processes, she says. Manufacturing employees often come to the company as unskilled laborers and learn the processes through in-house training.

"We can train them here and work them through the process," Jameson says. "Many of them have been here for 20-plus years in both the main office and in operations. We have a wide variety of people who come in at different levels of experience."

The company also offers its Graham School to dealers, sales reps and customers in various markets to educate them on

products and processes. New employees whose job deals with service are invited to sit in on that process.

**FASTER AND CHEAPER**

As Jameson explains, the company is "proud to have our windows installed in many prestigious buildings throughout the United States." Notable projects have included:

- The Waldorf-Astoria, Rittenhouse Plaza
- Hilton Hotels in New York, Chicago and Washington
- Schools in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, Miami, Dallas, Minneapolis and St. Louis
- Various government buildings throughout the United States

Like many companies, Graham is facing pressure to lower its prices and produce faster – all in the face of a spike in the price of raw materials. The company is working to implement a new scheduling system which will allow it to become more flexible and offer more competitive lead times, Jameson notes.

"We will also be implementing other manufacturing processes, such as lean, and tying our vendors to these processes," she explains. "We plan to reduce our lead times even more while still maintaining quality products and being as cost-effective as possible." **MT**

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