

Working At Home



Kathy Walters / Highlands Today

From left: Darand Williams, vice president of D&D Construction Services of Orlando Inc., and Daryl Williams, the company's president at the Four Points by Sheraton Sebring, Chateau Elan. The company is handling the expansion project at the hotel.

By [Bill Rogers](#) of Highlands Today

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SEBRING — The name of the company is D&D Construction Services of Orlando Inc., but the roots of its principals — Daryl and Darand Williams — run deep in Highlands County.

D&D, which has several large-scale projects to its credit, is doing more work in the Sebring area and hopes to line up additional projects locally.

Its focus is commercial construction.

"Our project base has really changed in the last six years, going more to construction management and general contracting, hospitality and entertainment," Darand said.

The company was the contractor for the Residence Inn by Marriott on Little Lake Jackson that was completed a short time ago.

It just began work on the expansion of the Four Points by Sheraton Sebring, Chateau Elan and has another major project scheduled in Sebring this fall.

D&D is doing preconstruction services for Majestic Cove, which is a residential condominium with 69 units with 155,000 square feet of space. Construction on the four-story building on Lake Jackson is expected to take between 14 and 16 months. Work will likely start in October.

The company is working on a few other projects in Highlands, but Darand declined to name them because D&D has not been hired to do them.

"I enjoy very much coming back to Sebring, working here," Darand said. "Growing up here and being away for 15 years and getting to come back and work here is fantastic."

The men initially started a nursery and landscape business in 1985 called D&D Tree Farm and Nursery Inc. D&D picked up an important client — the Disney Co. — early on when it sold plants to the theme park giant.

Daryl called Disney "a great, great client" the company has had for about 20 years. Darand said D&D has had more than 500 contracts with Disney.

D&D's projects include Portofino Bay Hotel at Universal Studios, Gaylord Palms hotel, Animal Kingdom and Cypress Gardens.

"Every park at Disney without question and every resort we have either touched during construction or a rehab of some kind," Darand said.

The father and son said they have a good relationship.

"My specialty is preconstruction services and administration – running the business," Darand said.

And Daryl's?

"Quality," Darand said. "Knowledge in the field is what I would describe. He understands and has 40 years of experience to make sure the company is successful.

"We still discuss business issues, but very seldom do we have hard issues anymore; it's great," Darand added.

But it wasn't always that way as Daryl reminded his son about "those higher teen years."

"I was never stubborn," Darand said.

That drew a hearty laugh from his father.

"We both are (stubborn)," Daryl said.

Construction has a long history in the Williams family.

Clifford Eiland, Darand's great-grandfather, was a carpenter and worked on the construction of the Highlands County Courthouse, Harder Hall and the Kenilworth Lodge, according to Joannah Williams, Daryl's wife.

Otis Williams, Daryl's father, grew up in Lake Placid and also worked in construction all over the country, according to Daryl. He said Otis was one of the superintendents on the first Sunshine Skyway Bridge that connects Bradenton and St. Petersburg. He was the superintendent for the power plant on Dinner Lake in Sebring.

Darand is a native of Highlands County. He was born at the former Walker Memorial Hospital in Avon Park and graduated from Sebring High School. in 1989.

Daryl and Joannah own a ranch off of State Road 66.

Joannah is D&D's secretary/treasurer and Darand's wife, Sharon, is also actively involved in the company.

Daryl and Joannah owned the Nan-Ces-O-Wee Hotel in downtown Sebring during the 1970s.