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ROBERT A. AIRD INC.



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Excellence in building envelope contracting **INC.**

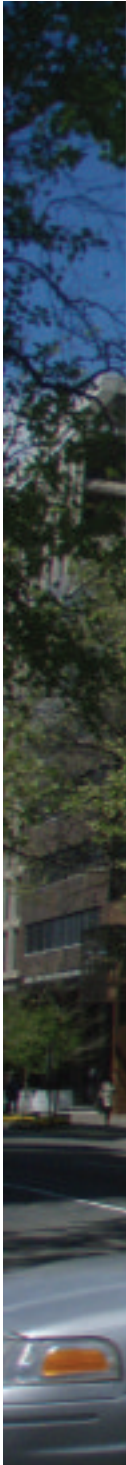
Produced by Nick Randall and Submitted by Robert A. Aird Inc.

Robert A. Aird Inc. (RAA) has been in the building exteriors industry since 1976. Based in Frederick, Maryland, RAA serves the Baltimore/Washington/Northern Virginia market and specializes in commercial building enclosure installations, restorations and retrofits.

The building science and enclosure industry is continually evolving, with better understanding of how buildings function, of new assemblies and of new materials. RAA capitalizes on this ongoing evolution by staying up to date with new developments. To that end, Rob Aird is the instructor for the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industry (AWCI) for its EIFS - Doing It Right course in the U.S. and Central and South America. He also serves on the executive committee of the board of directors of the Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA). The company is also a member of the American Subcontractor Association (ASA).

RAA employs 60 men and women who have gained a reputation for their quality installations and safety on jobsites and service to the customer which sets them apart from other building enclosure contractors. They have won the ASA award for project safety for this region for 2002, 2007, 2008 and 2013.





All RAA foremen are trained in CPR and First Aid and safe scaffold erection and use. Employees are typically in-house, hourly employees, which assures better quality workmanship and safety. Their 20- and 25-year employees are now bringing in their children – the next generation – to carry on the work and reputation they built.

The Washington Building Congress presented RAA with Craftsmanship Awards, most recently in 2015 for interior plaster restoration and exterior insulation and finish system.

RAA's work scopes include water resistive air barriers behind any cladding; stucco; gypsum, Venetian and acoustic plaster; EIFS; spray polyurethane foam (SPF); flashings; windows; doors; caulk and carpentry.

Restoration

A large part of the work RAA has performed in the last half-dozen years has been restoration. Notably, they performed more than \$2 million of plaster restoration on the D.C. Court of Appeals in 2006-07. The architect notes: "You have done a tremendous job restoring the plaster with the intricate mouldings, patterns and designs that were there as well as replicating existing designs in such a way that the building has been restored back to the jewel it was after its most recent major renovation in 1917. The building is truly beautiful and the plaster work is one of the most important elements in having restored the building to its former glory."

More recently the RAA team performed new and restoration work on the circa-2001 St. John Paul National Shrine that features a limestone façade, aluminum curtain walls, copper wall panels, granite feature wall and extensive exterior terraces with granite paving. Water penetration through the exterior façade had plagued the property since its original occupancy. With the function of the property shifting to the display and storage of artifacts, the resolution of water entry issues became paramount. To this end, RAA replaced all the exterior caulk and installed new gypsum plaster throughout the building as well as the mosaic tile backup plaster.



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Still going strong after 40 years

In gauging the success of RAA and each project the company completes, Rob Aird concludes that the firm's reputation is the true measure of success. "Reputation is everything," he says. "We take pride in what we do and it shows. We're typically not the cheapest price because we provide more than the low price does. Our strong reputation and the relationships we have built with owners, architects, developers, contractors and third-party engineering firms are critical to our ongoing success."

RAA is a company that prioritizes offering opportunities for growth to its employees. With baby boomers nearing retirement and millennials entering the workforce, it can be difficult to find qualified workers in such a niche market. With this in mind, RAA offers hiring incentives to employees who bring in qualified workers.

With such a bright future, RAA looks to expand its capabilities. Recently the team has created a new company named Aird Panel LLC and joined a consortium of contractors around the country and abroad to enter the pre-panelized building exterior industry. As manpower shortages worsen and work volume expands, panelizing a building offers various advantages over field-applied exteriors. Erection time is greatly reduced (if half of a current project is panelized and the rigging took six weeks, the field-applied work in equal quantity, could take six months). And panels erection speed makes the building available sooner to interior trades and tenants. Worker safety is better – workers stand on a concrete shop floor doing the work in lieu of hanging from the exterior of the building. The weight of the panels – steel studs welded into a frame with exterior sheathing and water resistive air barrier – weigh about 7 to 8 pounds per square foot. An equivalent precast concrete panel can weigh 10 times as much. And the price of these lightweight prefabricated panels is oftentimes half of competing wall systems.

By remaining current with the latest construction trends and materials and encouraging growth with new employees and the younger generation, Robert A. Aird Inc. will remain ahead of the game as it continues its path and expands into new markets and services. •





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