

California's Powerhouse Pair: Owners Leveraging Progressive Design-Build for Success

Co-Author Bios

Andrew Dessling

Andrew is Vice President of Operations for McCarthy Building Companies' Northern Pacific Region, where he leads the delivery of large, complex programs with a strong emphasis on integrated design-build and collaborative project leadership. With more than two decades of experience, Andrew is recognized for developing high-performing, cross-disciplinary teams and for the disciplined planning and execution that mitigate risk and produce predictable, high-value outcomes for owners. His portfolio spans major public-sector, education, healthcare, and civic clients, including the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), the Department of General Services (DGS), the Bay Area Metro Center consortium, and Fresno State. Andrew holds a B.S. in Construction Management from California State University, Chico, and is an active champion of sustainability, innovation, and high-performance delivery methodologies across the industry.

Juli Kawahata, DBIA, CCM, LEED AP

Juli is a Project Director for the California Department of General Services (DGS), where she leads the planning and delivery of some of the State's largest and most significant design-build projects. With more than 20 years of experience in the design and construction industry, she specializes in managing complex, large-scale projects that advance the State of California's operational, sustainability, and long-term facilities goals. Over the past 8 years, Juli has directed more than \$1.5 billion in design-build work, guiding multidisciplinary teams through all phases of development while maintaining a strong emphasis on collaboration, technical excellence, and public value. Juli holds a bachelor's degree in Interior Architecture and is a DBIA Certified Professional, a Certified Construction Manager (CCM), and a LEED Accredited Professional. She also serves on the Executive Board of the Sacramento Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), where she supports initiatives that promote leadership, mentorship, and advancement for women across the construction industry.

Mike Meredith

Mike Meredith is a known leader in the PM/CM industry and brings 42 years of diversified experience in program, project, and construction management. He has served as Program and Project Manager on many significant programs for both public and private entities. This includes Capital Outlay Program Manager for the State of California Department of General Services \$3+ billion State Projects Infrastructure Fund (SPIF) Program and managing significant projects such

as the New Natural Resources Agency Headquarters and the Clifford Allenby Buildings in Sacramento. Mike has also served as Project Director for California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) on many projects, including the \$906 million California Health Care Facility in Stockton, and the \$330 million Mule Creek Infill complex. Mike is currently the Principal in Charge of the CDCR Program with Vanir. Mike is a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Construction Technology. In addition, Mike is a Certified Construction Manager (CCM), and DBIA Accredited. Mike is a current National Board member also serving as Vice-Chair of the Owner Advisor committee and is on the Legislative committee. He has deep affiliations with Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA), as a member; and DBIA Fellow. He is past Western Pacific Region Board Executive Council – Owners Council, Director.

Darrell Stelling AIA, DBIA

Darrell is a Senior Principal and Global Justice + Civic Leader at DLR Group. For more than 25 years, he has focused his career on designing justice facilities that promote behavioral, environmental, and social well-being to create spaces that foster healing, equity, and transformation for individuals and communities. Darrell leads integrated design teams in applying emerging trends and best practices in justice design. Working closely with construction and manufacturing partners, he develops industry standards and pioneers technical solutions that advance sustainability and improve conditions for staff and those involved in the justice system. Darrell is an expert in both traditional and collaborative project delivery models and is an active member of the American Correctional Association Facility Design Committee and the Design-Build Institute of America.

Ian Merker AIA, LEED AP BD+C, DBIA

Ian is Associate Vice President of CannonDesign in Sacramento, California. His expertise of innovative planning, programming, and design collaboration, as well as efficient construction administration provide successful projects in his practice. He has been recognized for advocating the value of design, mentorship and climate action with the Young Architect Award and the Presidential Citation from AIA California. Ian is currently a commissioner for the Sacramento Preservation Commission.