

Keckeis new CEO at Messer

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A new CEO is at the helm of Messer Construction, the region's largest local construction company.

Monday, former chief operations officer Tom Keckeis replaced CEO Pete Strange as CEO, board chair and president. The firm had \$670 million in revenues in 2008, ranking it 1th on the 2009 Deloitte Cincinnati USA list of the largest privately held companies in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky.

Its major clients include Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Xavier University Hoff Academic Quad and West Chester Medical Center.

Strange, who has led the company since 1991, has moved into a role as chairman of Messer Inc., a holding company for the construction arm and Messer Financial Services, a 5-year-old investment company.

Keckeis is charged with building the company to a \$1.2 billion operation in 11 regional markets by 2014. Already, the company operates in Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, Indianapolis, Lexington, Louisville, Nashville and Knoxville. Keckeis also leads an entirely new executive team.

Paul Hitter Jr., who spent more than 20 years in financial roles with the company, replaces a retiring Kathleen Daly. She joined the company in 1970 as its first female accountant and served as chief financial officer for 20 years.

Also taking on executive level roles are:

Mark Luegering, who will manage the Messer offices in Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus and

lead its diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Mark Gillming, who will manage the company's operations in Louisville, Lexington, Knoxville and Nashville and lead its safety and risk management efforts.

Tim Steigerwald, who will lead the Indianapolis operations and assist with company-wide sales.

Strange, Daly, Keckeis and Bernie Suer, a senior vice president in sales, have served on the firm's executive team since they organized 100 salaried employees to buy out the Messer family in 1991.

Of the changes, Keckeis said: "It's been a year and a half struggle through this economic time. But there's the same enthusiasm now as when we bought the company."

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YES, at least she's dressed!

NO, I have some rules!

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