



Filling the Gap

HG Design Studio is a creative site design firm that takes an inter-disciplinary approach to land planning, civil engineering and landscape architecture.

This summer, the company's leadership decided to open a new firm that they believed will change the market in Virginia. "We knew the field was crowded in civil engineering," said Dave Gerstenmaier, President and Director of Design. "But we also knew we could fill a void in the market."

HG is not new to the industry. They have been a part of the design community in Virginia in some iteration for over 60 years. Founded in 1950 in Richmond as a landscape architecture firm, they have amassed an impressive portfolio for public and private clients and spaces, spanning across a geographic footprint in the Commonwealth from Radford to Virginia Beach, and almost everywhere in between. After starting and growing his own single-disciplined landscape architecture firm in the 80's and 90's, Dave Gerstenmaier formed HG as a result of a merger in 2000, and was responsible for meteoric expansion into new markets like healthcare, private development, and education.

"We have been working side-by-side with civil firms for years, but felt that sometimes there was a disconnect... a gap between the engineers and the landscape architects with respect to design," said Meril Gerstenmaier, who is the Director of Operations and Managing Partner of the firm. "The lightbulb clicked on, and we brought civil engineering in-house to plan and create alongside our l.a.'s. The result has been well received."

In fact, business is booming. Since the start date of June 1, 2016, HG has scooped up some enviable clients, including highly sought-after corporate campuses and developers. One client in particular that is a feather-in-the-cap is The University of Virginia, where they now hold a term contract for ongoing civil engineering projects. "We were elated to be chosen," Dave Gerstenmaier beamed, "especially since they are so discriminating. They really get the synergy that a landscape/civil engineering partnership can bring to a site."

Since hanging their own shingle in June, HG has increased hiring by 25 percent, adding both civil engineers and landscape architects, and converting many of their loyal landscape architectural clients into civil engineering clients. Charlene Harper, PE, the first civil engineer to be hired at HG, is now a partner in the firm as well.

"We knew this concept made sense," Dave Gerstenmaier said, "and it's very satisfying that the market sees it that way too."

CONTACT

Meril Gerstenmaier | Managing Partner

5701 Grove Avenue | Richmond, VA 23226

Phone: 804.740.7500 | Email: merilgerstenmaier@1hg.net | Website: www.1hg.net