

## **2017 ACE Awards**

### **Douglass Colony Group**

**Category: Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor (\$2 - \$ 6 Million)**

**Project: Country Club Towers**

Colorado has been experiencing an alarming growth spurt greatly concentrated in its capital – Denver. Since 2010, the city’s population has grown by over 93,000 people (15.5 percent), according to the Census Bureau, and while this surge may slow, it does not currently show any sign of stopping. This influx of newcomers demands new and unique housing options to host and welcome new residents to the vibrant city of Denver.

For 20 years, Broe Real Estate Group has had a vision of offering fresh and innovative apartments in Denver’s Washington Park Neighborhood, near Cherry Creek. The ambition of developing over 1,000,000 square feet, however, requires opportune timing in perfect sync with rising demand. Denver’s recent population surge provided just that. In early 2016, two 32-story high rise apartment buildings broke ground, beginning their ascent to what would eventually become Country Club Towers II & III – landmark buildings in a city with an ever-growing popularity.

With Swinerton as the general contractor, Douglass Colony was selected to help make this long-standing real estate dream a reality. Having established itself as the Rocky Mountain Region’s largest roofing, metals, solar, and waterproofing contractor, Douglass took on the project that included roofing, waterproofing, and all paver decks.

The completed towers host 558 sustainable, luxury studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments, accompanied by a 985-stall parking garage, fitness center, shared kitchen areas, a “doggie palace,” a lap pool, a 20,000 square-foot amenity deck, and more.

### **Special Challenges & Obstacles**

Working on high-rise buildings comes with a unique set of challenges. At its fruition, the owner and general contractor laid out an extremely tight and aggressive schedule, meaning that all

contractors on the job would have to establish a rhythm to work as collaboratively and efficiently as possible. For this to be effective, extensive communication and planning is required. Regular meetings were held to coordinate with other trades to discuss access and ensure safety maintained priority on the bustling, populous site.

Wind speed and intensity along with climate changes also pose a great challenge on 32-story buildings. Already at mile-high elevations, as crews rose in levels, the climate changed, and the roofing teams faced different obstacles than those working on the lower levels. This made overall project planning especially difficult. Safety awareness was increased and great caution was taken with rooftop material storage. This led to success, as not a single item was dropped or blown off of the roof.

Douglass Colony, however, was not the only trade using the rooftop for storage space. Nestled in a peaceful neighborhood and neighboring a high end golf course, crews faced a restrictive jobsite with little storage. Many trades took advantage of the roof's additional space to store materials until they were needed, which crowded the workspace even more. Douglass's roofers had to work around the loaded supplies of all trades, mapping and communicating every step of the way.

With many contractors stocking to the higher levels, crane time was a hot commodity, and only two tower cranes occupied the site. Adding to an already precarious situation, the man-lifts did not run all the way to the roof, leaving a minimal number of cranes as the only option. All stocking had to be coordinated, requiring that Douglass Colony ensure all its materials were stocked and on the roof early in the project before the removal of the tower cranes. In its earliest stages, extra measures were taken to guarantee that all required material was ready to go—thus avoiding shortages for the entire duration of the project.

### **Excellence in Project Execution and Management**

An ambitious job always comes with an ambitious schedule. The extremely tight schedule laid out by the owner and general contractor planned for the first tenants to move in to their brand new luxury homes just over a year after the project broke ground—an aggressive goal, albeit not an impossible one. This timeline left no room for error and demanded exceptional attention to

detail, stamina, and determination to deliver consistently high-quality work in short time frames. To facilitate this, Douglass Colony set daily production goals for crews. For example, on the fifth level's amenity deck, crews were expected to set 50 pavers per day—a goal that was met or exceeded for the entirety of the 6,000-paver project.

Six thousand pavers (fifteen truck loads) is no small number—this project required massive amounts of materials, time, and effort. Deliveries for this material demanded special attention in order to prevent overloading the storage areas, all while still having enough material on-site to meet daily objectives until the next truckload would arrive. Once on site, the pavers and their pedestals required a great amount of time and energy to install. Determined not to allow the schedule to fall victim to the cumbersome nature of its materials, Douglass Colony's crews worked 60-hour work weeks for three months of the project to stay on track.

### **Construction Innovations**

As with all Douglass Colony projects, industry-best practices and processes were followed. An extremely heavy material, pavers can be difficult to work with. Douglass Colony worked closely with the architect to ensure that the cumbersome material did not require a sacrifice in design, using teamwork to orchestrate architectural intent and constructability throughout the installation. This project's success is collectively due to the teamwork, skill, and sweat of the dedicated people on the job. Crews worked on all tiers of the cake-like symmetrical building installing the waterproofing, paver decks and roofing, adapting and making changes when necessary. For example, when a revision to the health code ordered that one-third of the already installed pavers surrounding pool areas be raised an inch-and-a-half to meet code requirements, Douglass's team was undeterred from its commitment to meeting the client's goals and to the highest levels of quality and safety. The fact that this large scale project on two 32-story buildings was completed with zero lost-time accidents is a direct reflection of the people dedicated to completing it.

### **Safety & Environmental Awareness**

Douglass Colony embraces a zero-accident culture of safety on every project, but when on high-rise buildings and working with hot fluid-applied waterproofing, a dangerous product, safety

merits special attention. A proactive approach to guaranteeing that every employee returned home safely every day was a central part of the project's planning. Under the leadership of the foremen and tracked by the superintendents and project manager, crews held daily safety toolbox talks and discussed safety planning. As much of the work was situated at the edge of the building with heavy material (i.e. pavers), there were multiple areas with full tie-off requirements, demanding a lot of attention and energy.

Working in a neighborhood near a golf course comes with its own unique environmental concerns. Noise restrictions limited available working time, with quiet hours being strictly enforced. This made it hard to complete the necessary paver cutting or bring in large semi-trucks for deliveries. To add to that challenge, the neighborhood is bustling with pedestrian traffic and bikers and is burdened with extremely narrow streets. Intense caution was used from delivery through installation.

### **Excellence in Client Services**

Going into this project, Broe Real Estate knew that it was entering a heavily saturated market and that the benefits of living in Denver would be equally leveraged by its competitors, so the towers had to offer new and unique amenities. Much of these are found on the amenity deck, which accounts for the largest section of paver work and waterproofing on the project. The stunning, luxurious nature of the complex is only enhanced by this space decidedly interested in facilitating resident socialization and relaxation and putting life at the towers above the rest.

As people continue to flock to the city, they now have an upscale, yet affordable, housing option, and Douglass Colony is proud to have the opportunity to shape Denver's continuously evolving skyline.

















