

CARIBBEAN BUSINESS TOP 400

LOCALLY OWNED COMPANIES

CMA Architects & Engineers

Has Helped Build Puerto Rico



CMA Architects & Engineers company headquarters in Guaynabo



CMA Managing Partner Jordi Bofill with partners Arnaldo Delgado and José Carro

BY JOANNE C. CURCIO

CMA Architects & Engineers LLP (formerly Capacete Martín & Associates), a local pioneer in industrial and public works design, which also has excelled in the residential, environmental, and commercial fields, has played a significant role in shaping Puerto Rico during the past 45 years.

The firm has had a hand in the design and creation of many of the island's landmark residential and commercial structures and public infrastructure projects, from the original Plaza Las Américas shopping center in Hato Rey to the new City View Plaza in Guaynabo and the San Antonio Bridge in Condado. The firm ranks No. 304 on the CARIBBEAN BUSINESS list of Top 400 Locally Owned Companies.

Engineers José Luis Capacete and Ignacio Martín founded the firm in November 1959,

initially under the name Sacmag of Puerto Rico. They later changed the company name to Capacete, Martín & Associates, by which they have been known for most of its 45 years. In recent years, the name was converted to CMA Architects & Engineers. Today, it is a full-service architectural-engineering firm, organized into nine specialized departments, including architecture; civil, electrical, mechanical, structural, and environmental engineering; and construction, transportation, and firm management.

Since its inception, the multidisciplinary firm has evolved and diversified along with the island's changing economic conditions. In the 1960s, CMA met the growing demand for high-rise buildings, such as one of its early projects—Palma Real in Miramar. In the '70s, Puerto Rico underwent an industrial revolution, and the firm jumped full force into the construction of pharmaceutical-manufacturing

operations. The architectural and engineering company continued to focus on this sector as it reached its peak in the following decade.

CMA had established itself in the area of infrastructure projects by the time the number of new manufacturing operations reached a plateau and began to slow in the 1990s. It successfully completed several highway and public transportation projects and had begun working on the Urban Train project when the world entered the new millennium.

In its more than four decades, the firm has proven its ability to cater to the changing architectural and engineering needs of the island's three main economic sectors: industrial, infrastructure, and commercial. "If our only area of expertise had been industrial, maybe the demise of Section 936 would have been our demise;

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however, because we have several areas of expertise and a varied practice, we have been able to move on to other areas," said Ricardo Herrera, firm partner. "We not only have survived, but prospered because of our ability to diversify."

Another of CMA's advantages is its access to a more integrated process, said Jordi Bofill, managing partner. "Even some of the leading architectural firms on the island have to turn to external consultants in such areas as structural, mechanical, and civil engineering. We have all the key disciplines right here under one roof." With more than 160 full-time employees, including 13 partners who lead the company in their respective architectural and engineering areas of expertise, CMA provides site selection; concept development; preparation of construction document packages, with project drawings and specifications; and construction monitoring.

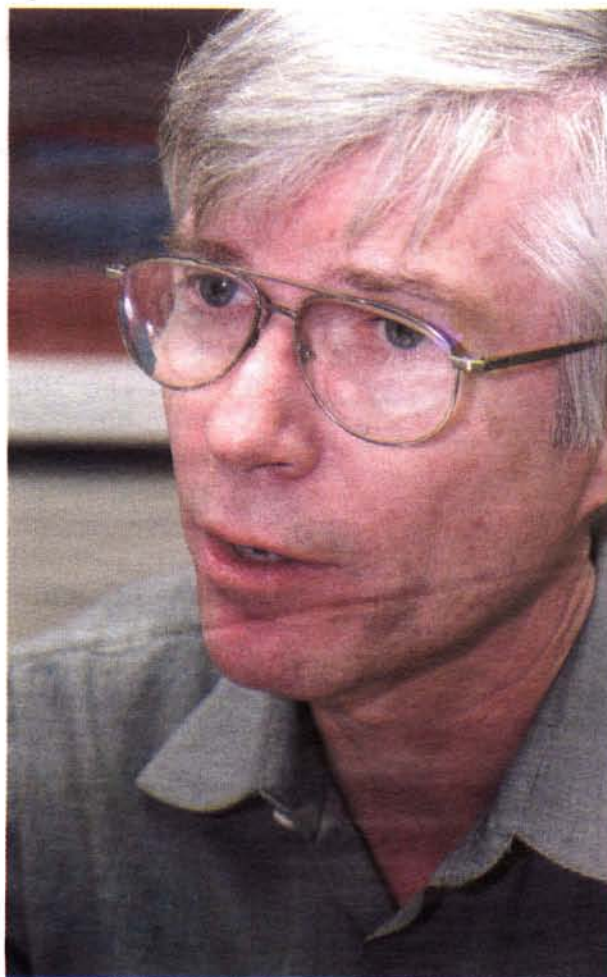
The company, which is listed among the *Engineering News Record* list of "Top 500 design firms," also provides related services, such as environmental counseling, permit requests, feasibility studies, bidding reviews, field inspections, and construction management. The firm occasionally seeks outside consultants for such very specific areas as acoustics and surveying. Partner Arnaldo Delgado said coordination comes naturally with CMA because most members involved in any given project share the same CAD drawings and technology. "Coordination is key to developing a project in a timely fashion," Delgado said.

CMA's architectural division encompasses the design of a variety of facilities and structures, from laboratories and residential developments to commercial complexes, hotels, and resorts. Some of its many notable projects include the American Airlines Reservations Building, Parque de Loyola, and the recently renovated Teatro Matienzo.

The firm's civil engineering division covers site designs, hydrology and hydraulic studies, infrastructure design, water main and sewer-collection systems, and pump stations. This division was responsible for the Costa Caribe Bridge over Bucaná River in Ponce, Los Prados residential project in Caguas, and Ponce Hilton's main entrance.

Its electrical engineering division encompasses substations, power distribution, fault analysis, instrumentation, lighting and security, and communications and controls. CMA's work credits in this field include the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority Convention District substation.

The company's environmental engineering division prepares environmental impact statements; land-use consultations; flora, fauna, wetland, and noise studies; solid-waste permit requests; and designs for water and wastewater treatment, distribution, and collection plans. This CMA division completed a soil remediation project in Canóvanas, flora and fauna



Ricardo Herrera, partner at CMA

studies in Gurabo, and a beach lighting project at Martineau Bay in Vieques, among many other sensitive environmental projects.

The firm's mechanical engineering division covers projects related to heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems; fire protection, piping, and process piping; and clean rooms and plumbing. CMA assists its clients in the permit-request process during the planning and preconstruction phases, as well as those required throughout the construction, use, and operation phases.

CMA's construction services division provides inspection and observation, scheduling, and quoting services. Some projects this division oversaw during construction include the Coco Beach site development and its wastewater treatment plant, the Urban Train's access improvement projects at its Río Piedras and university stations, and several major bridges in San Juan, such as the De Diego, San Antonio, and Guillermo Esteves.

The structural division works with most types of concrete and steel structures, and offers services in prestressed and precast components, seismic and wind evaluations and studies, and structural retrofits. It has worked on such high-profile projects as Torre Chardón Office Tower in Hato Rey and Plaza Gran Caribe Mall in Vega Alta.

CMA's transportation division provides planning and highway design, the design of grade-separated intersections, traffic and parking studies, light-rail design, and toll road support facility designs. It was responsible for such projects as the reversible lanes on major routes PR-52 and PR-18 and the PR-5 route extension corridor in Bayamón.

In 2000, the firm's City View Plaza office complex was named the "Outstanding Civil Engineering Project of 2000" by the Engineers & Surveyors Association of Puerto Rico, which also gave the company's San Antonio Bridge project the same distinction in 2002.

In 2003, CMA received the "Environmental Sustainability Award" from the Puerto Rico Realtors Association for Los Prados development project.

CMA's industrial clients include such major companies as Pfizer, Hewlett-Packard, Exxon, General Electric, General Foods, and Johnson & Johnson. Among its federal government clients are the U.S. Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Postal Service, the Veteran's Affairs Administration, the Food & Drug Administration, and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The firm's local government clients include the Puerto Rico Aqueduct & Sewer Authority, Department of Transportation & Public Works, Ports Authority, Electric Power Authority, and Government Development Bank. Commercial clients include American Airlines, Banco Popular, Empresas Fonalledas, Sagrado Corazón University, and Kmart Corp.

Bofill said CMA plans to continue the tradition begun by its now-deceased founders: the generation in charge assumes the responsibility of preparing the next generation that will lead the company.

"We know you don't make great architects and engineers overnight. We strive to develop the professionals who will continue CMA's legacy into the future," said the managing partner. "Today, we have partners in their 60s and some in their 30s, which illustrates the transition process we have in place. It is this type of thinking and planning that has been paramount to our success since day one." ■

CMA

**ARCHITECTS &
ENGINEERS LLP**

TYPE OF BUSINESS:

Architects & Engineers

HEADQUARTERS:

Guaynabo

MANAGING PARTNER:

Jordi Bofill

EMPLOYEES:

165

YEAR FOUNDED:

1959

2003 REVENUE:

\$17.55 million

RANK ON TOP 400 LIST:

304