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2021 Ones to Watch: Stephen Furtado, PhD, Executive Director, Global Learning Charter Public School

May 28, 2021 - Spotlights

How do you contribute to your community or your profession? Our school is an integral part of the community and we are well connected. We currently share our space with the community after hours and will expand with the new facility. We have an active neighborhood association that uses our facility. We are also a location for the Cape Verdean Consulate and the Portuguese Consulate to meet. Our new facility will have a significant amount of technology and we envision the possibility for its use for adult continuing education. We have already reached out to UMass to potentially become a satellite for their evening programs.

Who or what inspires you? The inspiration is clear, we need to provide students with a proper education and we need a 21st century facility for them to thrive. This new facility will give our students and teachers the tools they need to meet with success. We strive to have all of our students do their best and we can by providing them with a state-of-the-art facility and the excellent programs we have developed. My inspiration is the children, the parents and our staff.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? To someone involved in educational real estate, don't just look at the current needs of your institution but look ahead to the future needs to provide the necessary resources to ensure success. It is important to understand your community and know the people who will support your endeavor. As a charter school we receive no funding from the state for facilities so we need to raise every dollar of the 8 million. When reaching out with a capital campaign it is vital to know your audience and your community. They need to understand the reason for what you are doing and when they do they are hopefully generous in their support.

Which project, deal, or transaction was the "game-changer" in the advancement of your career? During my career I have been in charge of eight construction projects ranging in degree from renovating schools to building new schools. This current opportunity to create a state-of-the-art STEAM campus in New Bedford came as we needed to expand and create one campus. We were fortunate to have this historic building become available across the parking lot from our existing school. The \$8 million project will include the renovation of the historic building and will expand classroom capacity and increase the innovative curriculum. The expanded classroom space will feature science labs, dedicated art and music space, foreign language classrooms, multi-use classrooms and teacher and community collaboration space that will advance our students' success.

This promises to be the most rewarding build of my career.

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