

Paul Jacobs Celebrates 30 Years with Shalom Park

When people drive down Shalom Park Drive and enter the campus, they are always struck by the incredible facilities of Shalom Park. While part of a team, Paul Jacobs, Facility Manager, has been putting his imprint on that first impression for the last 30 years. Paul is admired by campus institutions for his tireless energy, commitment to excellence, maintenance skills, and extensive management experience.

After 30 years on the job, Paul is a veritable fixture at the Park. But it wasn't always that way. Paul was working in facilities maintenance at Jacaranda Country Club in Fort Lauderdale, FL. Over the years, he went to night school to become certified in heating and air (HVAC), and earned his electrical journeyman card. Paul and his wife, Janet, decided they did

not want to raise their family in south Florida. After having spent their honeymoon in the North Carolina mountains, they decided to move to Charlotte to raise their family. Barry Handman, past CEO of both the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Charlotte and Foundation of Shalom Park (FSP), called Paul at 3:30 PM on Christmas Eve to invite him to Shalom Park for an interview. Butch Rosen, then on the FSP Board, and Bill Gorelick interviewed him in person the next month. Paul said, "Give me six months, and I'll have this place in shape." Every few years after that, Paul would call up Butch and just say, "I'm still here ..."

Paul and Janet have three children, Kevin, Brian, and Lorraine. While it was not part of a grand plan, Brian Jacobs is also part of

the Foundation of Shalom Park maintenance team. When Paul and Janet's son, Brian, was in high school, he started working part-time on campus in housekeeping. Brian pursued a degree in horticulture and continued working at Shalom Park under Hoke White in grounds keeping. Brian took a brief hiatus while he worked at an electrical supply company, but after a year or so, Brian was back at Shalom Park, where he now heads the grounds keeping team.

Paul Jacobs is responsible for housekeeping, grounds keeping, and facilities maintenance. "Each day is always different," Paul shares. "I get up early and love coming to work every day."

90% of the Park's repairs are done in-house. "Our approach helps control costs," Paul says. "We have an experienced staff that is very flexible. Our skills complement each other's." With the facilities management software, Facility Dude (purchased in 2014), Shalom Park partner institutions can enter a Work Order anywhere on campus. FSP maintenance can track hours, labor, and parts on orders, schedule work and estimate completion dates. Paul proudly shares, "We complete 77% of our Work Orders in seven days or less, which is above the national peer average."

Over the years, Paul has seen a lot of changes. Before Phase II of Shalom Park was built in the early 2000s, Paul's team had to switch out furniture from the religious

school to the preschool three days per week. Camp Mindy was built 17 years ago, then the "new" Howard R. Levine gymnasium and the David Silverman Fitness Center were constructed 15 years ago, followed by the Bubble Pool and the Barbara L. Levine Parking Pavilion. But even now, there's never a shortage of tasks to do. Over the winter months, the Foundation of Shalom Park maintenance team changed out 6000 lightbulbs in exchange for more efficient varieties. With Duke Energy rebates and improved energy efficiency bulbs, the swap will

save the Park over 40% on its lighting costs.

The Foundation of Shalom Park maintenance team has employees that stay over 300% longer than the national average. Housekeepers usually stay at an organization less than five years. Kevin Sobota, a Foundation of Shalom Park steward in housekeeping, has been clocking in at Shalom Park for more than 25 years.

"I continue to be impressed by the loyalty and integrity of the team," says Paul. "It's a trustworthy group that enjoys working together. It's like family." ☆

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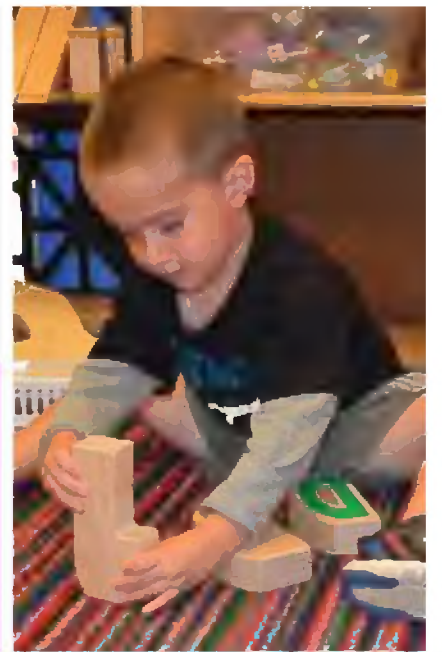
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Paul Jacobs, 1987



Paul Jacobs, 2017

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