

## Training plays a key role in firm's growth

Craig Armitage founded his company while he taught at BOCES 2

By ANDREA DECKERT

The focus on employee training and education is no surprise at C.M. Armitage Electrical Contracting Inc., given its founder's professional background.

Owner Craig Armitage started the firm while working as a teacher in the commercial and electrical trades program for Board of Cooperative Educational Services No. 2. The teaching job followed a long career in the electrical field.

### C.M. Armitage Electrical Contracting Inc.

Commercial, residential, industrial and fire alarm electrical contractor

**Year founded:** 2000

**2015 ranking:** 41

**Top executive:** Craig Armitage, president

**2015 employment:** 53

**Headquarters:** Irondequoit

**Website:** cmarmitage.com

The experience of Armitage and his workers has helped drive growth at the firm.

"Our expertise allows us to bring projects—both large and small—to fruition," Armitage said. "We're fortunate to have high quality, highly competent employees."

The company provides services for residential, commercial and industrial customers, including network cabling and systems for telephone, fire alarms, security, energy management, access and video surveillance.

C.M. Armitage also can serve as a monitoring company for fire alarm and security. Its projects range from residential jobs on single-family and multi-residential units to work on commercial and industrial buildings.

Its notable projects include the Hilton Garden Inn downtown, College Town on Mount Hope Avenue, the Button Lofts apartments on Rutgers Street and the I-Square project in Irondequoit.

Armitage founded the company in 2000. He did jobs after his teaching work was done for the day.

By 2007, however, the company's growth meant Armitage would have



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

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to leave teaching, devoting his full attention to the business. In 2013, the increased work prompted Armitage to move out of his home office and into a building in Irondequoit.

The company has some 53 workers, including former students. Its workforce has grown from 10 employees when the business began.

The ability to find and keep qualified workers remains an industry challenge,

and Armitage supports continuing education and training for his employees.

Another challenge is balancing growth with the ability to continue to provide high quality work to customers, Armitage said.

The company is exceeding industry challenges and is seeing an increase in its sales. C.M. Armitage logged revenues of \$2.8 million in 2015 and Armitage expects that to grow to sales of \$4 million this year.

In addition to training and education, the business excels at providing quality work and establishing long-term customer relationships, he said, adding the business will continue to add to its customer base.

Armitage said the company can provide services beyond traditional electrical work. In the commercial arena, for example, C.M. Armitage can work with customers to develop plans, specifications and budgets.

In the industrial sector, the firm can offer assistance with design, layout and scheduling while maintaining a production schedule and minimizing shutdowns and interruptions.

What has helped the business succeed is putting customers first. When the business began, Armitage did mainly residential jobs, he explained. Today,

the company does more commercial work, but Armitage will always make time for his residential customers.

"People know our expertise and trust us," he said.

C.M. Armitage currently is working on hotel projects in Ontario, Yates and Erie counties as well as the Hive@155, a mixed-use development on St. Paul Street, and a senior living facility in Greece.

C.M. Armitage has done a number of projects for R-J Taylor General Contractors Inc. over the past several years and is working with the firm on a hotel being constructed in Geneva.

Karl Schuler, Taylor's president, praised Armitage's work ethic.

"He's solutions-oriented and has a very can-do attitude," Schuler said. "He knows how to move a project along and get the job done."

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The Rochester Top 100 program is presented by the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce and KPMG LLP. Launched in 1987, it recognizes the fastest-growing private companies in Greater Rochester. The 2016 Rochester Top 100 event will be held Nov. 2. For more information, go to [greaterrochesterchamber.com](http://greaterrochesterchamber.com).

### By the numbers:

The firm expects to grow from \$2.8 million to \$4 million in revenues in 2016.

