



## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### Gelberg Signs

# 'The union helps us grow'

As far as anyone can remember, Gelberg Signs has always been a union signatory. "It was union when my two brothers and I bought the company in 1988," says Luc Brami, "It's been union at least since the 1960s."

Luc's brother, Guy, adds, "We wouldn't have it any other way. With the union, we know our employees are the highest skilled artisans in the area. And the union contracts help us make the best use of our human resources."

Gelberg Signs opened in DC in 1941, and never relocated outside the city. It is probably one of the oldest family-run businesses in the District.

Brothers Luc, Guy and Neil Brami spent a good deal of their childhood at the sign shop. Their father, Georges, started working for William Gelberg shortly after he arrived in DC from Tunisia in 1959. He was an artist by profession – an Impressionist painter. But he discovered he could not make a living at it, so he turned to sign fabrication as an outlet for his creative talents. He worked his way up at Gelberg Signs until he was running the shop.

Today, Gelberg Signs is one of the region's leading designers and fabricators of commercial signage, with up to 76 employees working in a 50,000 square foot manufacturing facility.

It produces a wide array of exterior and interior signs, canopies, building identification, menu boards, dimensional lettering and electrical signs. Gelberg employees go to page 22



**"With the union, we get more opportunities to bid on jobs."**

The Brami Brothers (left to right): Luc, Guy, Neil

*Installing a Gelberg designed and fabricated sign on the new MARCC headquarters.  
Se instala un letrero diseñado y fabricado por Gelberg en la nueva sede de MARCC.*



*Guy Brami uses latest technology for creative sign designs.  
Guy Brami usa la ultima tecnología para el diseño creativo de letreros.*



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do everything there is to do with signs – and they do it expertly. They design, develop, fabricate, install and service signs. They make metal, acrylic and wooden signs from start to finish, including casting, welding, drilling, printing and assembly.

In recent years, Gelberg has produced signs for Marriott, Aramark, AARP, Sodexo, Rappaport Management Co., HMS Host, Mattress Discounters, Maaco Enterprises, Roy Rogers restaurants, DC Public Schools, The Yards in SE Washington, and much more.

They designed and fabricated the signs along DC's Heritage Trail, which point the way to walk to historic sites and give information about them. They designed, fabricated and installed the sign on MARCC's new headquarters building.

"We're growing," says Guy Bami. "With the union, we get more opportunities to bid on jobs. We have instant credibility with general contractors." By far, the best example of this was Clark Hunt Smoot's awarding Gelberg go to page 24



**"The union gives us instant credibility with developers and general contractors"**

*Local 1694 President Larry Kokoszka fabricating a sign.  
Larry Kokoszka fabrica un letrero.*

### NICE GUYS FINISH FIRST

If Gelberg Signs were a movie production company, they'd count 2008 as an Oscar-winning year, because:

- The D.C. Chamber of Commerce named the company as the Emerging Business of the year.
- Gelberg Signs won a Nice Guys award from the ACACIA Federal Savings Bank for offering paid internships and careers to graduates of the Artisans Program of Covenant House Washington -- at-risk DC youth. Program Director Larry Gold said, "As an invaluable employment partner of the Artisans Program, Gelberg Signs has done more than just 'talking the talk.' They have truly 'walked the walk.'"

### LAS PERSONAS BUENAS SALEN GANANDO

Si Gelberg Signs fuera una compañía productora de películas, declararían el año 2008 un año en el cual se ganó el Premio Oscar. En el 2008:

- La Cámara de Comercio de Washington, D.C. nombró a esta compañía la Empresa Resplandeciente del año.
- Gelberg Signs ganó el premio Nice Guys del ACACIA Federal Savings Bank por haber ofrecido cursos de internados pagados y carreras a las personas jóvenes marginadas de DC graduados del Artisans Program de Covenant House Washington. El Director de Programas, Larry Gold declaró, "Como un invaluable colaborador de empleo del Artisans Program, Gelberg Signs ha cumplido mucho más que sólo hablar. Han verdaderamente cumplido con sus promesas." "