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Rebuilding Lives, Redefining an Industry

Written by: Skyler Grey
Editor in Chief | [*Built America Magazine*](#)

When Matthew Thompson stepped off the plane after 13 months in Iraq, he didn't return to a life that looked anything like the one he left.

The war had changed everything.

Not only for the soldiers who served, but for the communities they came home to. Some returned to families. Others returned to silence. Many returned to questions about purpose, direction, and identity.



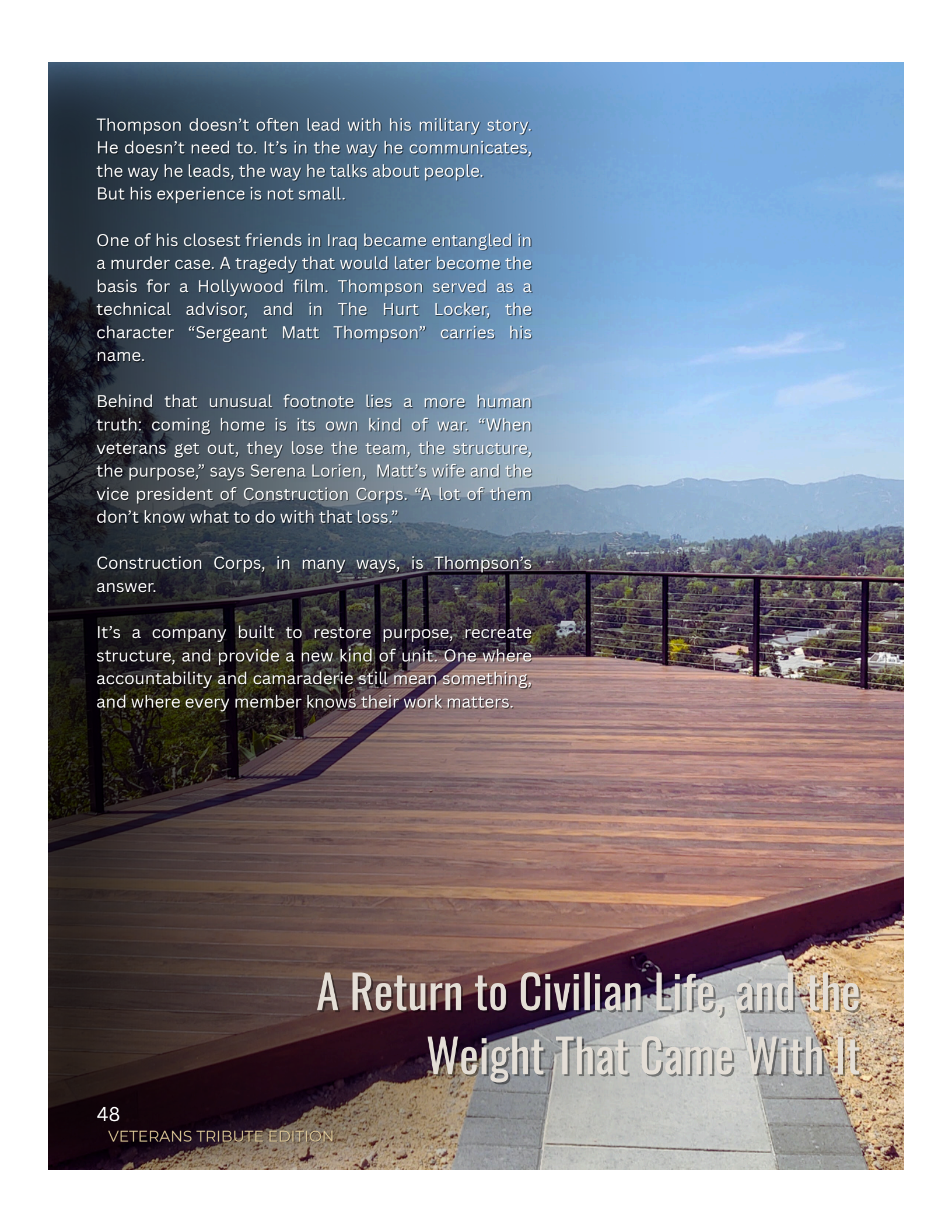
“The military teaches you a different kind of education. Structure. Accountability. Performing under pressure. You learn quickly that every job matters.”

— Matt Thompson | Owner
Construction Corps

Thompson returned with all of that, and with something else: a conviction that structure, accountability, and team cohesion shouldn't disappear when a uniform is hung up.

“The military teaches you a different kind of education,” he says. “Structure. Accountability. Performing under pressure. And that the weakest person can mess up everything if they're not supported. You learn quickly that every job matters.” That mindset, forged in real conflict, sharpened by personal loss, and strengthened by a sense of duty, would later become the foundation of Construction Corps, the veteran-owned, family-run design-build firm redefining how construction can and should operate.

But to understand the company, you first have to understand the man.

A wide-angle photograph of a wooden deck with a dark metal railing. The deck is made of horizontal wooden planks and extends from the foreground into the distance. In the background, there is a lush green valley with scattered houses and buildings, and a range of blue mountains under a clear blue sky. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

Thompson doesn't often lead with his military story. He doesn't need to. It's in the way he communicates, the way he leads, the way he talks about people. But his experience is not small.

One of his closest friends in Iraq became entangled in a murder case. A tragedy that would later become the basis for a Hollywood film. Thompson served as a technical advisor, and in *The Hurt Locker*, the character "Sergeant Matt Thompson" carries his name.

Behind that unusual footnote lies a more human truth: coming home is its own kind of war. "When veterans get out, they lose the team, the structure, the purpose," says Serena Lorien, Matt's wife and the vice president of Construction Corps. "A lot of them don't know what to do with that loss."

Construction Corps, in many ways, is Thompson's answer.

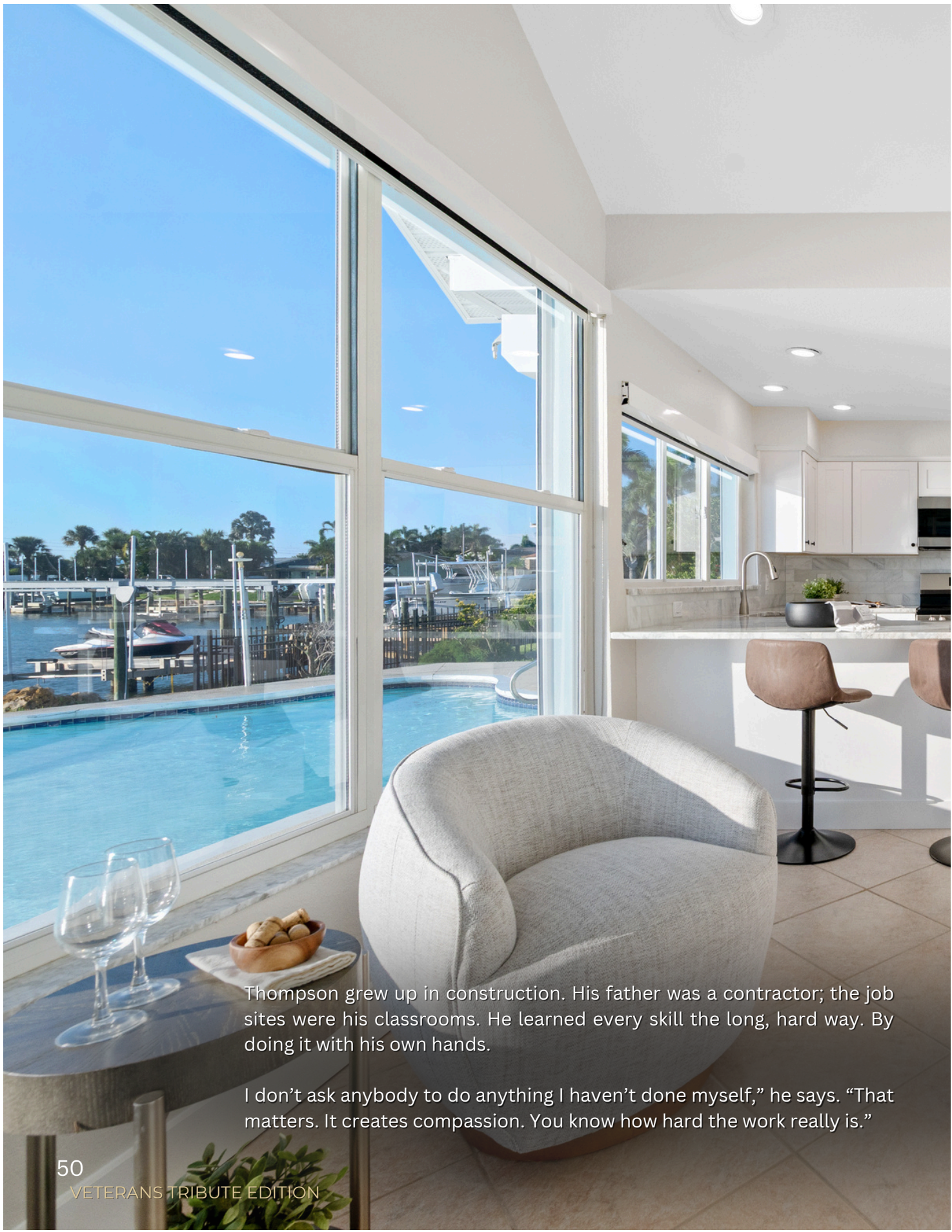
It's a company built to restore purpose, recreate structure, and provide a new kind of unit. One where accountability and camaraderie still mean something, and where every member knows their work matters.

A Return to Civilian Life, and the Weight That Came With It

A professional headshot of Matt Thompson, a man with short, dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a light blue collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.


Matt Thompson
CEO | Construction Corps

“It’s not about the money, It’s about integrity. The money follows when you do things right.”



Thompson grew up in construction. His father was a contractor; the job sites were his classrooms. He learned every skill the long, hard way. By doing it with his own hands.

"I don't ask anybody to do anything I haven't done myself," he says. "That matters. It creates compassion. You know how hard the work really is."



His leadership today is shaped by those early years. From pouring concrete in the sun, hanging doors, to tearing out old framing, essentially building from the literal ground up.

Serena adds, “People feel valued here because they know they’re part of something. Not just a company, a purpose.” That philosophy would become the backbone of their multi-state operation. From California to Florida, and eventually the reason their crews stay with them 15, 16, even 17 years. An almost unheard-of retention rate in modern construction.

A Company That Shows Up When It Matters Most

If you want to understand Construction Corps, don’t look at their licenses — though they hold nearly all of them. Don’t look at their custom-built software system, or their 21 in-house trades, or the fact that other licensed contractors leave their own companies to join theirs.

Look at what they did after the hurricanes. “People were getting taken advantage of left and right,” Serena says. “We couldn’t not step in.”

They didn’t just help.
They gave.

From the Trades Up: A Heritage of Craftsmanship

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, wavy, dark red hair. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a dark blue or purple sleeveless top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Serena Lorian
Vice President | Construction Corps

“People feel valued here because they know they’re part of something. Not just a company, a purpose”



Demolition, remediation, and selective construction work provided at no cost across four homes. Each tailored to what the homeowner needed at the time. \$10,000–\$15,000 worth of equipment loaned out to support recovery efforts. Families who burst into tears, not because someone finished a job, but because someone finally showed up to do the right thing. “It’s not about the money,” Matt says. “It’s about integrity. The money follows when you do things right.”

It’s not charity. It’s *identity*.

A Culture with No Ego and No Exceptions

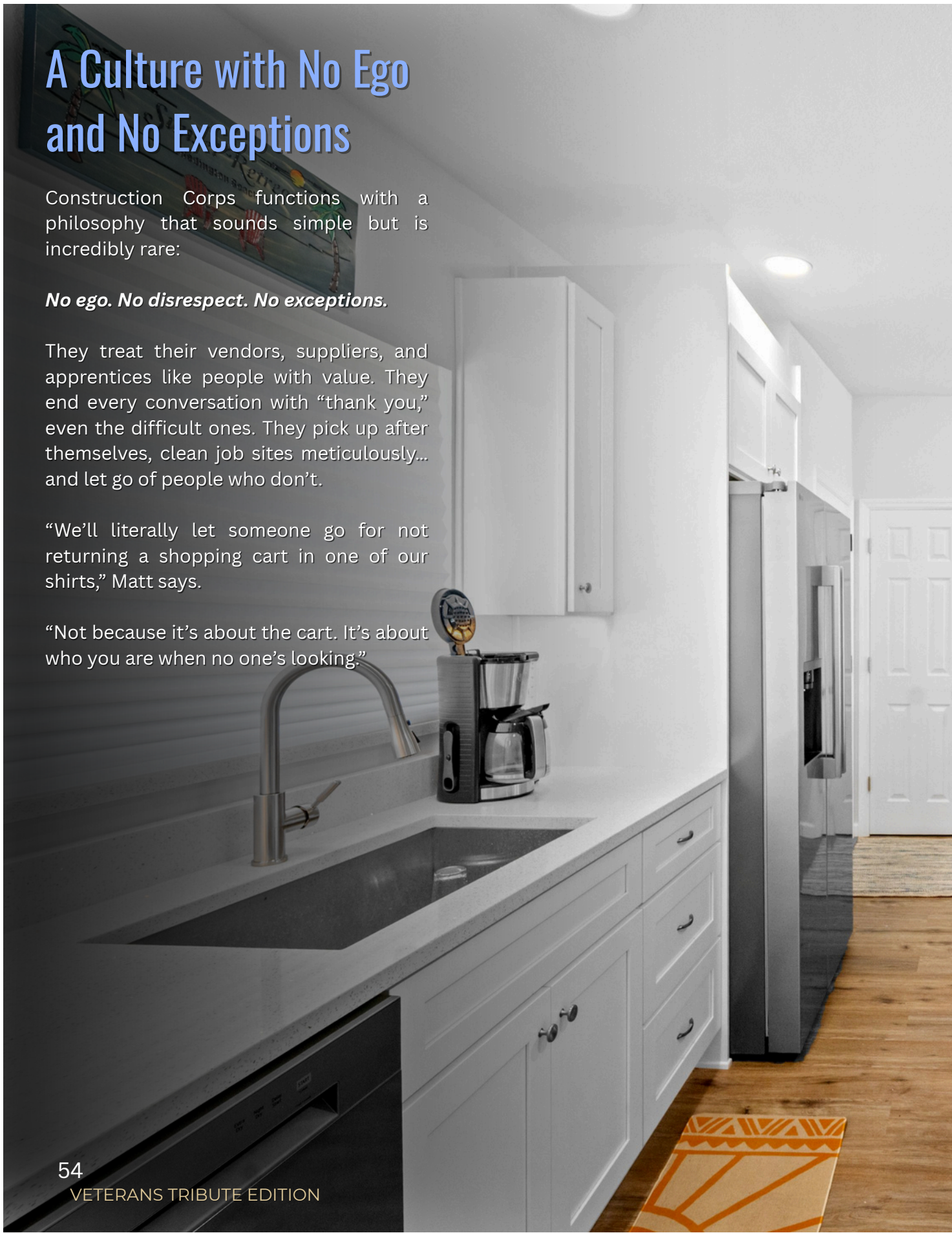
Construction Corps functions with a philosophy that sounds simple but is incredibly rare:

No ego. No disrespect. No exceptions.

They treat their vendors, suppliers, and apprentices like people with value. They end every conversation with “thank you,” even the difficult ones. They pick up after themselves, clean job sites meticulously... and let go of people who don’t.

“We’ll literally let someone go for not returning a shopping cart in one of our shirts,” Matt says.

“Not because it’s about the cart. It’s about who you are when no one’s looking.”



Quality, Technology, and the 40-Eyes Rule

Construction Corps runs its operations through a custom software system — adapted, expanded, and rebuilt to match the way they work.

Daily photos.
Videos.
Blueprints.
Chat channels.
Inspections.
Logs.
Full transparency.

Every project becomes a living, real-time report card.

Every team member can see every detail. “We have 40 sets of eyes on the pictures,” Matt says. “Someone always catches something. And if there’s a mistake, we fix it immediately.” It’s accountability, but it’s also community. It’s the reason their teams sing on job sites. “They want to come to work,” Serena says. “They feel this is *their* company.”



The Future They're Building and the Legacy They Want to Leave

Construction Corps is expanding across Florida, preparing new divisions, and closing in on the final licenses they don't yet hold: roofing and HVAC. But growth is not the goal. "Growing smart is the goal," Matt says. "Keeping the quality, the communication, the accountability." The long-term vision is ambitious:

- Full in-house divisions for every trade
- Statewide design and engineering services
- Multi-region build teams
- A model of how veteran-owned companies can operate with integrity

They hire veterans not out of symbolism but because they understand what veterans need: structure, pride, a team, direction.

What They Hope the World Remembers

“A lot of veterans aren’t sure who to talk to when they get out,” Matt says. “But they can talk to me. I’ve been there.”

Serena describes the feeling she sees on job sites: “They get purpose back. They get camaraderie back. They get pride back.”

When asked about legacy, Matt doesn’t talk about scale or revenue. He talks about people. “A legacy of ethics, craftsmanship, and accountability,” he says. “That you can do the right thing and still succeed.”

And then, softer:

“We want the people we work with to feel like it wasn’t just a transaction. We want friendships. We want to know we made a difference.”

Serena echoes the sentiment.

“A lot of our clients buy lunch for the whole company or give gifts to the crews. People feel connected to us. You can’t fake that.”

In an industry plagued by shortcuts, egos, and corner-cutting, Construction Corps is doing something quietly radical: **They’re proving that doing the right thing doesn’t slow you down, it sets you apart.**



To the veterans they hire and the families they've stood beside, that difference goes far beyond construction.

It is the rare sense that someone is finally in your corner.

Construction Corps builds with the same discipline and honor that carried them through war — and every home they touch carries the weight of that promise.

Some companies build structures.
Veterans build trust.

And Construction Corps is building a legacy strong enough for America to stand on.



Whether you're rebuilding, renovating, or starting from the ground up, Construction Corps brings honesty, precision, and care to every home they touch.

Contact their team today and experience what it means to work with builders who put people first.

To learn more or view their services, visit their website at

www.constructioncorps.com