



NEW BEGINNINGS

In the native tongue of the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, it's called E-No-Ki-Ski-Eh-Pi-I-Ki, or New Beginnings.

The three-year-old construction and labor program is dedicated to helping at-risk tribal members learn a new trade and maintain employment. It has helped more than 115 tribal members since its inception, according to Rene Trevino, manager of New Beginnings. At the same time, the program serves to improve the reservation's infrastructure and reduce its dependence on outside contractors.

Nestled on the U.S.-Mexico border near the banks of the Rio Grande and just south of Eagle Pass, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas is a longstanding Indian nation deeply devoted to its culture, traditions and community. The New Beginnings program reflects the tribe's commitment to its members and the land on which they live.

For some time, the tribal council had been looking for ways to increase the employment rate of its members. Trevino is a young tribal member who returned to his home determined to develop an opportunity that would give other at-risk tribal members second chances. He approached the tribal council about cultivating a program and soon after E-No-Ki-Ski-Eh-Pi-I-Ki, or New Beginnings, was born.

"It's all about helping tribal members in their personal growth, improving their self-esteem and teaching them a new trade," Trevino said.

In recent years, the tribal council has invested heavily in the reservation's infrastructure. The tribe has made considerable investment in tribal projects over the last three years, including an 180,000 square foot, 249-room hotel, a 90,000 square foot expansion of the Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino, Texas' only casino, as well as building a medical clinic, 2,500-vehicle parking lot, community center, government building, gaming commission



building, convenience store, roads and 40 homes in a new subdivision. So far, the construction division has produced more than 400,000 tons of material.

"The tribal council noticed that there was a lot of opportunity for the tribe to make some money off of its own projects," Tribal Administrator Don Spaulding said. "They thought, 'Why are we paying somebody else to provide this material?' So they figured we'd try to get into the aggregate business since there was so much base material needed and there was so much readily available here on the tribal land that belongs to the tribe."

But creating a construction division that could run an aggregate processing plant with little experience and equipment was no easy task. The material comes from a caliche pit on the tribal land and is a calcium carbonate mineral classified as a Texas Department of Transportation Type 2 material, often substituted for crushed limestone in road building and construction in southern Texas. "It's a sandy material with a lot of fines that compacts really well," Spaulding said. "It's good material, and we've been using it everywhere."

After comparing a number of manufacturers, the tribal council made a trip to visit T-K-O Equipment and the tribe developed a relationship with Larry Smith, manager of T-K-O Equipment in Texas, and John McGimpsey, regional sales manager for KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens.

"With the help of Larry and John, we were able to determine what kind of equipment we would need, and we developed a pretty extensive inventory of machines," Spaulding said.

Initially starting with a Kolberg 271 K Screen, the tribe soon realized they would need higher production equipment to produce the wide variety of material the reservation required, including a 3"-minus for select fills and sub-base for roads, a 1 ½"-minus flex base, oversize material from 4" to 9" for gabion baskets, as well as 2", 1 ½", 3/8", and 5/8" for landscaping stones and pipe bedding.

From there, the tribe purchased two KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens 30" x 80' radial stackers, two KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens 30" x 60' horizontal conveyors, a KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens Fold



'n Go 2516 and a KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens SuperStacker™. It is also considering purchasing a variable frequency screen for finer materials, Spaulding said.

"One of the reasons we went with the FT Fold 'n Go 2516 is the flexibility it offered us with the different materials that we produce," Spaulding said. "It allows us to screen material up to 3-4" and we've had as small as 1 millimeter harpwire screen on that machine. It's really just been phenomenal on the production – we're really happy with it."

By combining the Kolberg 271 K and the Fold 'n Go 2516, they have been able to make a multitude of products by running both machines together, Spaulding said.

"We've made as many as four different products by using both of those machines in conjunction with each other," he said. "It also offers us the flexibility when we just need to make a small amount of material that the 271 K can handle and we don't have to shut down the production on the Fold 'n Go 2516."

"We're doing a lot more than we ever though we could do," Spaulding added. "We're really proud of the tribal members working out here, they're learning a lot. And we're really proud to be associated with KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens. The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas wants to support products that are made here in the U.S., and the service we get from T-K-O Equipment and KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens has been outstanding. It's just night and day compared to other manufacturers."

In the future, when the tribe has completed its ongoing projects, Trevino hopes the construction division will be established enough to sell material commercially as well as produce enough material for the tribe's projects. But his ultimate goal, as well as the tribal council's, is to keep the E-No-Ki-Ski-Eh-Pi-I-Ki program running and continue to provide a new beginning for tribal members.

"We've got the machines now and plenty of material," Trevino said. "I've seen a lot of growth around the reservation, and I want to keep it going. There are a lot of people who have experienced life's difficulties and just need a second chance."

