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**A PBN SPECIAL SECTION: 40 UNDER FORTY**

## Joseph A. Casali

Maybe it was the entrepreneurial example provided by his father. Or maybe it was the little chip on his shoulder he got when told by a college professor that he wasn't smart enough to become a civil/environmental engineer. But whatever the reason, Joseph A. Casali has made himself a success by sheer hard work and ambition, and the company he founded in 2003, Casali & D'Amico Engineering, now has 17 employees and is still growing.

Casali's success was not preordained. He is the first person in his family to graduate from college, he recounted in his 40 Under Forty application. Not that he didn't need a little persuasion at times. A summer changing tires and pumping gas for his dad seemed to do the trick.

Upon graduation from college, Casali took a job working on Boston's Big Dig. But he wanted more than a commuter job. So he methodically prepared himself for opening his own shop. He started studying for his MBA at the University of Rhode Island (where he had graduated with his engineering degree after a less than stellar first semester), then became the assistant town engineer for Smithfield, getting to know the specifics of public works engineering needs. He then worked locally for Beta Engineering, gaining experience as an engineering consultant, and after nearly two years there he branched out on his own.

Using his experience, Casali built his business on helping residential developers design – and subsequently get the correct approvals – for their projects. From that humble beginning, Casali has branched out to include commercial work, and has hired specialists in soil evaluation and wetlands biology (along with others) to complement his own engineering background. And he reports that the company has been profitable in every one of its years of operation. •



Age: 36 Would like to have lunch with: Warren Buffett  
Favorite book: "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" by Eileen Christelow  
If not in current profession, what would you be: Chef  
Favorite hobby: Golf Guilty pleasure: Cigars and scotch