

Christine Michel
CNJ Mechanical Contractors, LLC
MBE/WBE

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Christine Michel, Founder and President, CNJ Mechanical Contractors,
LLC

WBE’s Airport Contract is Helping Grow Her Business

Christine Michel is an entrepreneur at heart. She owns two businesses. She started First Source Payments Solutions, LLC, a sales organization for credit card companies in 2006. When the financial market started showing volatility and a global financial crisis ensued, Michel engineered a plan B for herself. She decided to pursue a business venture in construction, an industry in which her husband worked as a union pipefitter.

Keeping with the family theme, Michel used her first name Christine, and her son’s first and middle names, Nicholas John, to title her company: CNJ Mechanical Contractors, LLC (CNJ).

Her plan B company is landing some class A contracts. In September 2020, Michel joined Murphy Mechanical Contractors, Inc. as the subcontractor for the Airport’s A/C Chiller Maintenance & Repair Services Contract. “This is our first introduction to work at the Airport and a great opportunity to perform on a large contract,” said Michel. Michel will serve as the MBE on the three-year, half million-dollar contract.

Michel's company is performing HVAC, mechanical installations, process piping and fabrication jobs on contracts throughout the St. Louis region. A \$1.3 million contract to work on the new MLS stadium is beyond her wildest dreams. She loves soccer but admits to not knowing initially if the team would play on grass or turf until she looked at the construction plans.

CNJ is contracted to install piping on the soccer playing field and the practice field in the 22,500-seat stadium. "I found it interesting that the piping is used to keep the roots of the grass field at a temperature for optimal growth," said Michel.

Michel is honored, and her employees are thrilled to help build the new soccer stadium. "A lot of the guys on our staff are former soccer players and my son is a high school soccer player," Michel says. She has six employees and plans to hire an estimator project manager soon.

She adds, "It's not every day that you get to help build a soccer stadium in your hometown or help construct a high-tech building for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education." In August 2020, CNJ provided mechanical work on the Eureka High School STEM addition. "That was a big job for us. We ran gas piping and hoods in the classrooms and VAV (Variable Air Volume) units throughout the building and installation in the mechanical room," she said.

New mechanical contracts keep rolling in for CNJ. "We seek out scopes of work, bid on them and we win," Michel said. The company is gearing up for a fabrication project at Washington University. "Fabrication can be something as simple as manufacturing pipe hangers or as complicated as modules and skids."

The larger mechanical projects will help Michel reach her next stage of growth. "We have a 5,000 square foot warehouse and it has always been

my goal to reach a point where we are utilizing the space and generating revenue from it.” CNJ is in an industrial area on 4500 Fyler Ave. off South Kingshighway.

In the beginning, Michel only imagined success, but now success is becoming a reality. She believes the company’s transparency sets her apart from the competition. “We do such a good job, and it shows. I think 95% of the time on our jobs, we are asked back for more work,” she stated.

As CNJ marks its fifth year in business, Michel says her work has just begun. “I feel like you have to have a footing. And I feel like I am just kind of getting there,” she said.

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