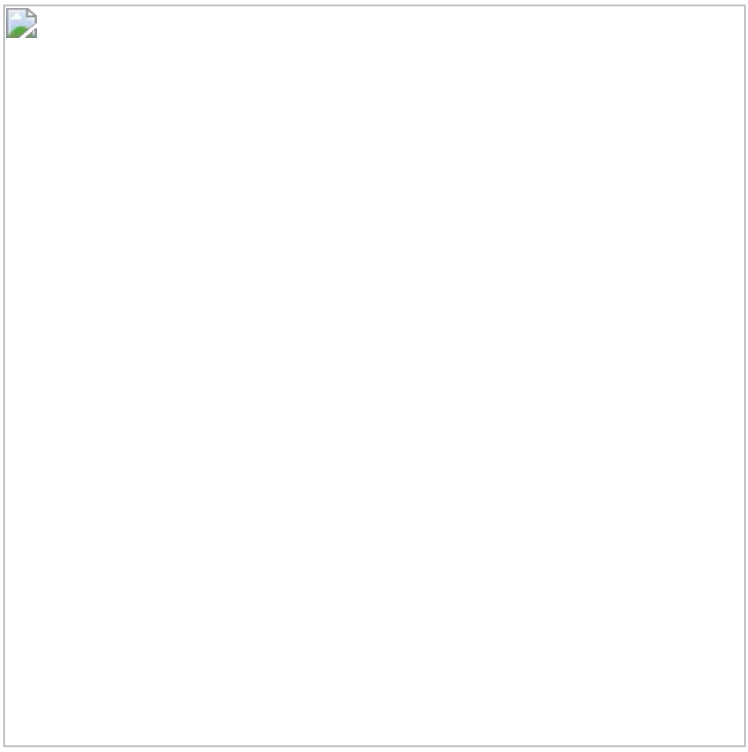
LithiumAmericas

NEWS RELEASE

Faces of Thacker Pass: Meet Nathan G., Co-Owner Of Apex Janitorial

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Nathan G., co-owner of Apex Janitorial

At Thacker Pass, every story matters. Faces of Thacker Pass aims to share behind-the-scenes stories of our people, their diverse roles and the vital parts they play in advancing Thacker Pass.

Local contracting: Apex Janitorial helps keep Thacker Pass facilities clean

Having a clean working environment means a lot to people – a challenge made even tougher when your environment is an office trailer on a construction site.

Apex Janitorial, a less than two-year-old business from Winnemucca, was hired earlier this year to clean and maintain Lithium Americas' and Bechtel's offices, warehouses and lunch facilities at Thacker Pass.

We recently caught up with 25-year-old co-owner Nathan G. of Winnemucca.

Where are you from, Nathan?

I was born in Winnemucca. My mom is Filipino and came to the United States on a work visa in the '90s. Due to some immigration issues, she had to return to the Philippines while my stepdad raised me. My mom is here now but I spent the first 12 years of my life going to Manila every year to visit her.

How did Apex Janitorial get its start?

It's a pretty boring story. I was a "tramp miner," going from mine to mine. Once when I was in- between jobs, my girlfriend was getting annoyed with me being at home and I was getting tired of not doing anything. So, I decided to pull my entire 401k and start a business.

I was trying to think of something that would be future proof. Cleaning is something that is always required whether it be in someone's house, someone's business, office, garage, you name it. For the commercial side of cleaning, it's seen as more of a necessity. If the economy takes a downturn, I still have work on the commercial side. So, in my mind, cleaning was a no- brainer. And I worked as a janitor as a teenager. It was simple for me to start and it was economy-proof.

What attracted you to Thacker Pass?

I'm really invested in the mining aspects of this county. I love mining. Thacker Pass is a new big project that the whole town has been talking about for years and I wanted to be involved in it. It is THE thing that is happening right now.

Describe what Apex does at Thacker Pass?

Sanitation of touch surfaces, dusting, mopping, sweeping and trash disposal. Producing a clean environment for people to work in. We work in a desert; no one wants to work in an office full of sand. Our job is to make sure it feels and looks like an office.

Tell me about 'Nevada bug dust'- the fine, powdery dust we have here in the high desert?

t's everywhere. It's staticky, sticks to desks, people, walls, everything. We can come in and clean something and the bug dust will be there the next day. I worked in a mine once where we would have to shovel the stuff and every day it would be up to your ankles. It's like a non- Newtonian fluid. It flows, it's so fine.

What are some things about the work that people would not know about?

Handling smells. A lot of people don't know about enzymes and how they eliminate smells. You notice how the area around a microwave here doesn't smell like food? Smell management. It comes down to destroying food proteins. We use the green enzyme on everything to try and kill the sources of the smell.

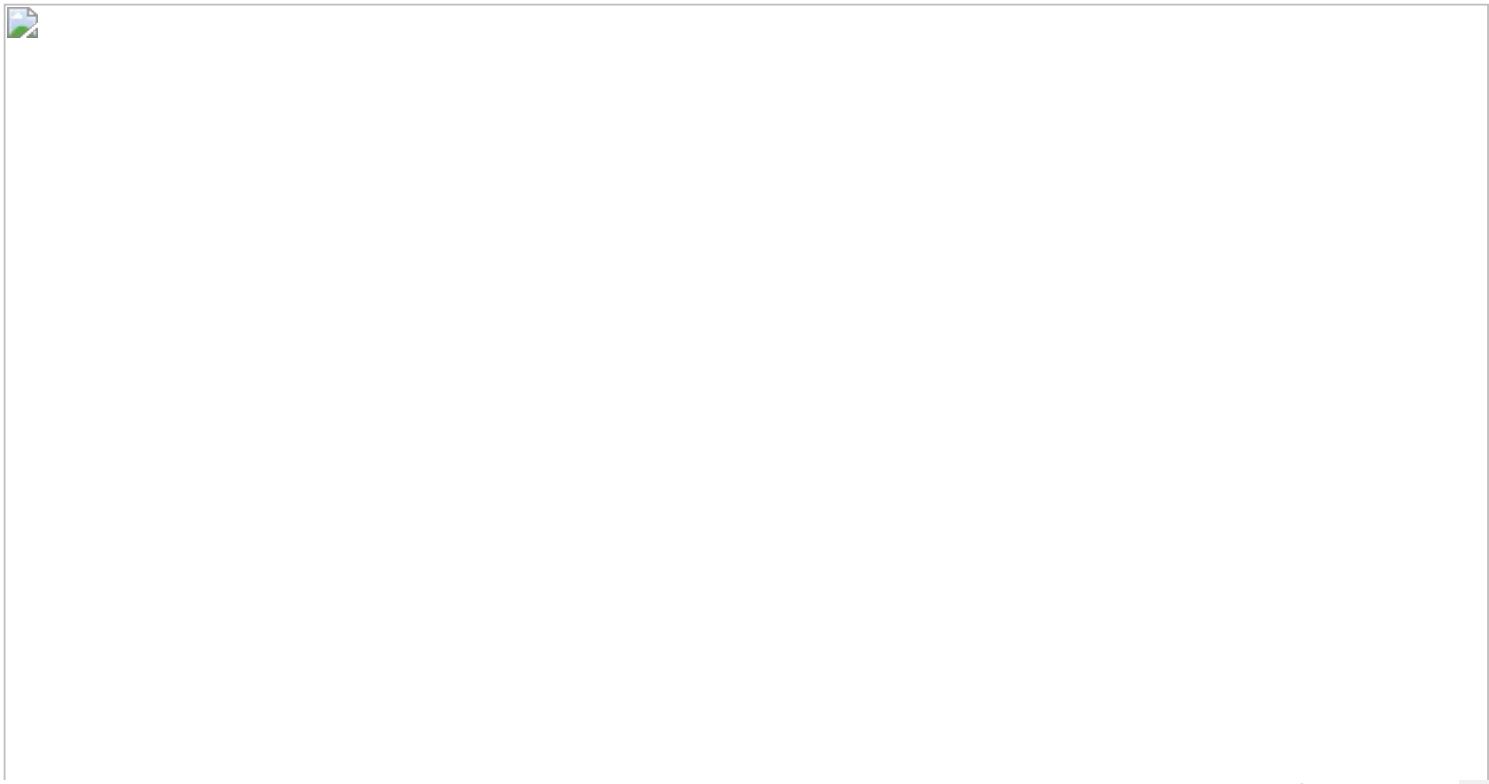
Why is it important for the project to hire as many local people and companies as possible?

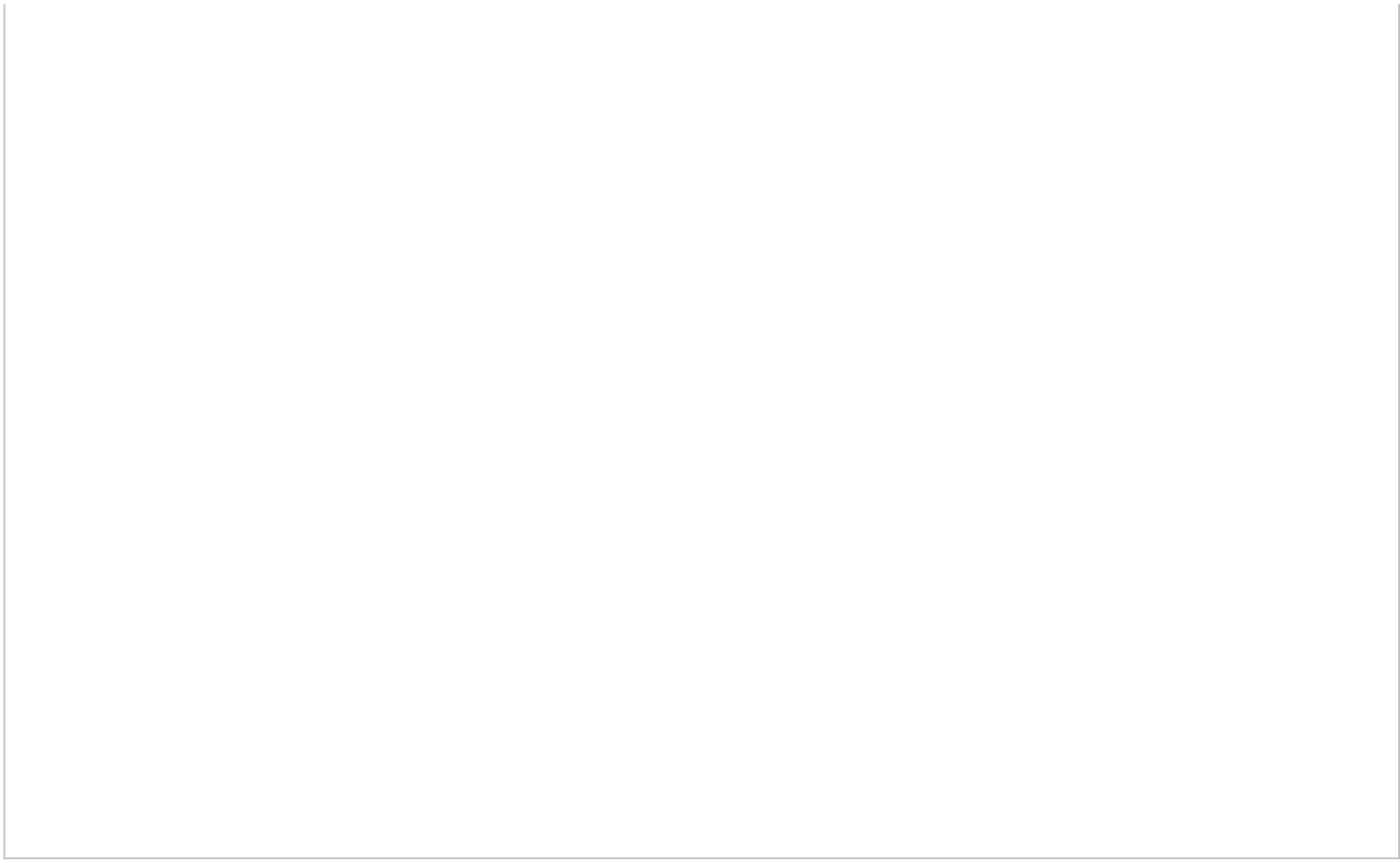
To ensure that the local community is taken care of and supported. We live here, this is our home. You want to work with people and support them, show that you care about the people and the land out here.

How many people work for Apex and where do you like to hire from?

We have 11 people total including my mom and dad. I hire through word of mouth and through the local government job office in Winnemucca. Lithium Americas gives me recommendations on who to hire; they have a working relationship with the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe.

I have a lot of people who work for me that have different ethnicities. I encourage people to embrace who they are and display it on their work shirts. So for me, I display my ethnicity as a Filipino and with the American flag. Nathaniel, he's part Irish, so on his shirt he has the Irish flag. I have others with the Fort McDermitt Tribe flag, the Mexican flag and the American flag.





Apex Janitorial celebrates their team's diverse backgrounds and strengths. From left to right, Nathaniel L., Nathan G. and Mackenzie S. proudly display the flags representing their heritage.

What are your future goals for Apex?

Apex is my pride and joy and I want to expand it. My goals are to expand to Reno, maybe some commercial contracts there. Our niche is commercial buildings and now construction sites. I want to improve my relationship with Bechtel and hopefully get more contracts with them in the future.

Bechtel's manager for contracts administration, James Craw, says of Nathan:

Lithium Americas' strong desire to involve the local and regional communities has been a key consideration for us when developing sourcing strategies for Thacker Pass. Nathan is genuine, honest, passionate, entrepreneur, focused on the wellbeing of those that worked for Apex and willing to listen and learn. I knew immediately that Nathan and his business were worth the investment Thacker Pass has made in Apex. From a personal perspective, it will be fun watching Nathan and Apex grow their business as they deliver with excellence for Thacker Pass.