

# Partners in Excellence



## Gelest 2007

By Jonathan E. Otto



The relationship between Gelest, Inc. and Penn Valley Constructors, Inc. is now over eight years old. In the summer of 1999, Gelest owners Barry Arkles, Jack Platt and Kevin King chose Penn Valley to design and construct their new industrial campus in the US Steel Park in Fairless Hills, PA. That project consisted of a sophisticated manufacturing building and an office/warehouse building which houses both hazardous and non-hazardous materials and included plans for future office and lab buildings.

Gelest, Inc. is a seventeen year old company founded on a platform of Metal Organic and Silicon Chemistry. The highly specialized chemicals and materials manufactured at the facility are used in the microelectronic, diagnostic and pharmaceutical markets. Most of their products require special handling, which dictated the use of classified electrical systems as well as an AFFF sprinkler system,

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Visitors to Gelest's new upscale corporate offices enter through the impressive lobby which features custom light fixtures and an extensive millwork package.





Completed in 2002, the construction of a combined office-warehouse building and specialty manufacturing facility marked the beginning of our relationship with Gelest, Inc. The new facility allowed Gelest to transition from a start-up to a true mid-sized manufacturing company.



The office's exterior combines EIFS, rock faced masonry units and aluminum composite panels with generous fenestration.



Construction of the specialty manufacturing facility required both damage limiting interior walls and explosion venting exterior walls.

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NFPA 68, Damage Limiting Construction and NFPA 69, Vapor Detection and Evacuation Ventilation. These special safety requirements coupled with the distribution of multiple fluids to the manufacturing cells, the installation of a chiller and a 3,000-amp electric service created a very complex project. Gelest, Inc. chose Penn Valley Constructors as their design/builder because of its experience with similar facilities. Construction of the original Gelest project started in July of 2001 and was substantially completed one year later.

In the years that followed, Gelest's business grew beyond their own estimates. Soon it became time to implement the





A granite accent wall mimics the sweeping curvature of the lobby's windows as well as that of the stairway leading to the second floor.

next elements of their master plan. So it was that in the winter of 2005 Gelest returned to us and asked John DenBleyker, Vice President & Project Manager, to assist them in the design of their next expansion.

This project would consist of a new corporate headquarters, a lab expansion, a new manufacturing and maintenance building and a specialized storage building. Work was started in the depth of winter under the direction of Penn Valley Constructors' project manager, David Drabic working closely with Gelest's Business Manager, Matt Edison. George McCardle, a 20-year veteran Penn Valley Superintendent and also the superintendent for the original project, soon joined them.

The design team of Steven C. Tiberio AIA, Mark Hershman, the mechanical and electrical engineer and Interior Options, the designer, created an impressive design both inside and out. The exterior of the building incorporates split-faced block, EIFS, aluminum panels and large expanses of glass to create a powerful statement. The interior finishes include extensive millwork, unique light fixtures, a granite feature wall and a glass enclosed elevator, pictured right.



**For further information, visit:**



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## Recent Completions

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**Accu-Fire Fabrication**, Morrisville, Pennsylvania

In April of 2000, Penn Valley Constructors completed its first project for Vince and Deandra Murphy, owners of Accu-Fire in Fairless Hills, PA. That building was a 32,000 square foot pre-engineered steel building with 40' bays using bar joist to support a 24 gauge standing roof. It was built to house two state of the art welding lines for fabrication of fire sprinkler piping.

In July of 2006, Vince and Deandra called on us again to design an addition that would double their manufacturing capacity. We started work in June of 2007 and delivered the 23,000 square foot addition in November. This addition includes high efficiency T-5 fluorescent lighting and fast action overhead doors to conserve heat.



**Jules Thin Crust**, Newtown, Pennsylvania

Jules Thin Crust is a tenant fit-out of 2,200 square feet in the Goodnoes Corner project completed in late November of 2007. The interior features a full kitchen equipped with baking ovens, walk-in freezer and prep tables to ready the product for display on the line counter. The line counter is constructed of imported granite and back painted glass panels to display the thin crust pizza for the customers. Above the line counter is a suspended canopy consisting of plyboo (thin cuts of bamboo applied to wafer board) and a modern lighting package adding ambiance to the dining area. With high ceilings and views of Newtown's most famous corner, Jules Thin Crust is a must stop for those who enjoy a positive atmosphere and well-prepared fare.

Ewing Plaza is a three story structural steel office



**Ewing Plaza**, Ewing, New Jersey

building with 10,000 square feet per floor. The building includes an elevator, two stair towers and a finished center corridor on each level. Plumbing and HVAC rough-ins are included to prepare for tenant fit outs. The exterior is a combination of EIFS, brick and aluminum framed clear glass insulated windows.

**Isn't it time to call us  
for your next project?**

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