

# Building a strong foundation

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Dads turn over the family business to their kids all the time, but Mario Farina has gone those dads one better. After 30 years of running his Orlando construction company, he sold the business to his son, Victor, and went to work for him.

That was in 1980, when Mario was pushing 60 and Victor was in his early 20s. Two decades later, with Mario about to turn 80, Dad continues to work a 40-hour week in his son's employ at Farina & Sons.

"He pays well. I don't ask for a raise," jokes Mario, who is currently working on a major renovation in College Park. Although he dotes on his 10 grandchildren, he has absolutely no interest in retirement. "What keeps me young, what keeps me going, is being busy with young people on the job. I don't worry about my age."

Victor, who has three children of his own, clearly relishes having his father

working with him.

"He wanted to stay in the [construction] field and get away from the paperwork," says Victor, who's now 44 years old. "A lot of old guys are like that. He likes working, and he's in too good of shape to quit."

For Victor, there was never any doubt that he would follow his father into the construction business. When he and his two brothers were no more than 6 or 7 years old, their dad took them out on weekend jobs. "He'd have the subcontractor leave something for us to do — painting, framing, plastering, any part of building a house," recalls Victor. "That's how we learned the trades."

"It happened to be I'm the one who really latched on to it. I always wanted to go to the job. Aside from wanting to be with Dad, it was like being in the biggest playground you could go to."

Fortunately for Victor, Mario didn't follow in his father's footsteps. Mario's father was an opera singer.



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**Cementing bond.** Mario Farina works in construction company he sold to son Victor.