



MASTER CRAFTSMAN

Electrician Jeff Dilandro

Look beyond those landscape lights illuminating estates in the Hamptons night, past that garage door going up so the Maserati can gain entrance, further than the power surging into the sound system and giant screen in that home theater. Behind all of them, without fanfare, is the mark of a craftsman. If the workmanship was world class, it may well have been Jeff Dilandro's.

The founder and president of Southampton-based Ocean Electric, Dilandro has made his mark by approaching this craft as part art, part science, and part business, all flowing in a well-honed circuit. He's now the head of one of the East End's largest and most respected electrical companies, handling everything from new construction to emergency repair, generator installation to lightning and surge protection often via decades-long relationships with commercial and residential clients. By his soft-spoken demeanor, though, you'd never know the depth of his skills, his success.



—*~*—
“Seeing a job where it starts and seeing where it finishes is always rewarding.”
—*~*—

And you wouldn't be alone.

“I was about 28 years old and I went to the wedding of a fraternity brother,” Dilandro recalls, “and one guy—a very brilliant guy who has many patents but didn't have a lot of people skills—comes up to me and says, ‘Hey, I'm sorry to hear, Jeff.’ And I said, ‘Sorry to hear about what, Paul?’ And he replied, ‘Well, I heard you were just an electrician.’”

He gives a knowing nod of his head and goes on. “‘Yes, Paul, I'm just an electrician,’ I said. And he went, ‘Wow, you were one of the leaders of the fraternity and it seemed you were destined for success—I thought you'd do better.’ I said, ‘Well, I appreciate that Paul, but I'm happy.’ And he walked away.”

“My wife said, ‘Why didn't you tell him you have a successful business?’ And about an hour later he comes back and says, ‘Hey, I was just talking to Mike, and he says you're probably the most successful fraternity brother here.’ I asked if I could explain something to him, and then I went on and explained there's so much more to success than money. Now a lot of times when people ask me what I do, I say I'm just an electrician.” He smiles.

Being an electrician wasn't in Dilandro's plans when he graduated in 1982 from Towson State University with a business degree. But a job offer in which he didn't see a future he wanted and experience working construction between semesters with his father (a civil engineer, just like Dilandro's two older brothers) inspired him to head back to school to pursue electrical engineering at the University of Maryland. “I was good at math and science,” he recalls, “and using that ability, and my construction background as well, pouring concrete to digging ditches, it worked.”

LEGACY

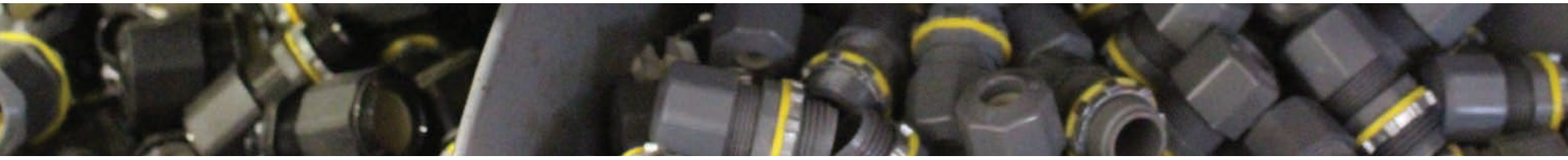
Rooted in the county of Telemark, Norway, where a commitment to fine craftsmanship inspired its founders, Telemark Inc passed their legacy down through generations by building homes with unique qualities that can be both seen and felt.



TELEMARK
The Mark of Excellence *in* Building

telemarkinc.com

MASTER CRAFTSMAN



Indeed. He went to work for his electrician uncle in East Quogue at age 23 and, four years later, they were partners in the largest electrical firm on the eastern end of Long Island, which Dilandro eventually took over and continued to expand. More than three decades later, some things certainly have changed. “Documentation now is critical,” he says. “There are very rigorous fixture specifications; some fixtures need remote drivers depending on how they function, how they work with the lighting control system in the house. There’s a lot of technical stuff that we didn’t deal with years ago. You have to make sure procurement of the materials is proper, that the proper lights are being bought. There’s a lot more on that end than when I first got into the trade, when it was just a simple dimmer on the wall.”

For all the evolution, certain aspects remain that continue to bring great satisfaction. On one hand, there is the challenge electricians get to meet in answering a call for which they are uniquely trained. On a construction project, for example, “most of the time, you’ll get a set of plans with what their intention is for lighting, and layout for devices, switches, outlets, but what they don’t provide is the path and layout for all your circuitry,” Dilandro says. “That’s where you need to have some skill and understanding of the structure, the framing, and what’s the best route to run your main wiring. That’s a big skill factor.”

Then there are simpler joys. When he speaks of them, it’s with a slower, softer tone, a reverence people reserve for recalling moments they know few outside their circles get to experience. “It’s kind of nice to be in a house early,” he says like a farmer who recounts watching fog roll up over the fields as the sun rises. “We put all the rough wiring in, and then of course at the end you go

through the process of the final trims and hanging the high-end fixtures... you go through that process and you’re able to see the finished picture, and that’s pretty nice. Seeing a job where it starts and seeing where it finishes is always rewarding.”

Dilandro wants future generations to carry on his sense of duty to the trade, to experience the same feelings of accomplishment and reward he has. He is dedicated to giving every electrician working for Ocean Electric that chance, making sure they receive ongoing training and education in every aspect of the job. Additionally, “I help mentor them on their marriages, on their responsibilities as men, with their children, how they should live life,” he notes. “I create super electricians, with book knowledge and field knowledge. You invest in people and care about their future.” This philosophy extends beyond the workplace, as Dilandro supports various community efforts and serves on the board of directors of the Timothy Hill Children’s Ranch, a safe haven for hundreds of children suffering abuse, neglect and crisis.

He reflects for a moment, his mind passing through the years that have brought him to this moment. The hands may be a bit slower today than when he started back in the 1980s; he may have other aspects of the business to focus on rather than being in the field as much as he once was. But the passion never wavers for his craft. “Cutting in panels, I enjoyed running the circuits in a home, running the wires, laying out the pathways we were going to take. There really wasn’t any of it I didn’t like. Putting in fixtures, cutting into boxes because you have to rough it and then cut the boxes and prep them so after sheetrock you can put the devices on. I don’t think there is an aspect of the electrical trade I don’t enjoy.”

