

Francisco Barrios, P.E., MBA Civil Engineer, Project Manager



Team player. Competitor. Passionate. Genuine. You don't have to know him very long to see that Francisco embodies these words in every aspect of his life. He has never met a stranger and embraces every new opportunity that comes his way.

He says it all began as a kid growing up in Cartagena, Colombia. A natural athlete, Francisco spent years playing competitive soccer on his state team and, as a teenager, was chosen to represent his country as a member of the Colombian National Baseball Team where he travelled internationally playing in the Pan American games. Through the years of play he was always surrounded by family and friends who shared his competitive nature but also knew that playing as a team was the only way to be successful.



Today, he continues to surround himself with successful people that share this mindset but he also spends a lot of time investing in the future. Francisco is involved in many organizations throughout the mining industry and always welcomes the chance to meet new people and expand his global network. He also respects the challenges of getting through school and finding a job so he spends time with students at his alma mater, University of Arizona, helping them learn about mining and

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"I love travelling internationally! It makes me a better person as I am exposed to some of the most remote places in the world and get to learn about how other people live."
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how to "break in" to the industry. These students are the future and he believes time invested now will benefit the industry for years to come.

So how did he go from being a star youth athlete to a professional engineer? Like father, like son perhaps, Francisco enjoyed numbers and chose puzzles and math games for fun. He has always loved the challenge of solving a puzzle which is his favorite component of the mining industry, too. It is a complex industry that brings new challenges every day: cultural and social issues, environmental impact, government regulations, international standards, company ethics...it is always changing.

These challenges are the same reason Francisco thrives in the mining industry. It is filled with a diverse group of people who come from all over the world and have travelled all over the world. They are well-rounded people with interesting stories and they are willing to share them with anyone who will listen. As a lifelong student, conferences are one of Francisco's favorite activities because it is filled with these culturally rich stories while gaining knowledge about business and industry. It's the best of both worlds for him.

Francisco considers himself fortunate because he has worked for companies that have allowed him to pursue his intellectual passion of hands-on, technical problem-solving as a Project Engineer but they have also allowed him to be involved in the business development activities, where he gets to build long term relationships with others in the industry.



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"Mining is a complex industry with new challenges every day."
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Francisco believes the top 3 values required for strong business development are a passion to solve problems for others (you must be invested in them and what they need), honesty (which comes from true passion) and the willingness to talk to anyone; all of which, he says, come naturally for him. He is adaptable and open to change in order to improve and move forward and he is comfortable talking to anyone, regardless of their background. He just enjoys learning about people and helping where he can.



As a part of the Tierra Group team, Francisco is involved in the Tailings Stewardship Services that are offered. He says this may be his favorite part of the job because he sees different facilities and how they operate. He interacts with a lot more people at these facilities and experiences the mine operations through new and varied perspectives. He also believes this Tailings Stewardship work is shaping the future.

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“My passion for business development comes from being able to help clients solve problems, and maybe even more importantly, the ability to bring in new opportunities for my co-workers to grow through those projects.”
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Currently, Francisco is part of a team developing the first world class gold mine in Colombia, a country traditionally known for its coal production. He says it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of his career because he gets to be a jack-of-all-trades and be involved in everything from the initial permitting to the actual construction of the site. The chance to see a mine develop from an idea into a functional site is a privilege not everyone enjoys.

Francisco has had many opportunities to travel the world and experience new things, but one trip stands out above all the others. While pursuing his MBA, his class went on a 10-day international trip where they met with the executives of ten different companies to learn about the challenges, risk and opportunities of doing business in their respective country. On this journey, they visited the Great Wall of China. “It is a symbol of teamwork, sacrifice and quality. It was built by different dynasties, built upon miles of tough terrain and has withstood 3,000 years of wind and rain. It was the most amazing place I have ever visited”, he said.



It is difficult to talk about Francisco without talking about his golf game; although he says he only plays once in awhile. At one point in his career, Francisco found himself living in a small town where he didn't know anyone, so he decided to teach himself how to play golf. He had played periodically as a kid but didn't consider himself a golfer. He would go to the course every day after work and his natural athletic ability, along with determination, resulted in a golf game that has landed him the nickname “Tiger Woods”. It is a nickname he accepts proudly as Tiger is his favorite golfer. And if



you really want to impress *our* Tiger Woods, take him to his favorite course, Pebble Beach.

When asked if he had any goals, Francisco didn't hesitate. In many ways he believes the mining industry is stuck doing things in the same way they have always been done. He wants to be involved in improving technology and training on mine sites, as well as creating more opportunities for women in the industry. He feels the cyclical nature of the industry and lack of technological advances make it hard to attract talent. He hopes to influence organizations in the industry to challenge the status quo to become more forward thinking...even if only in a small corner of the mining world.

One more thing, Francisco's bucket list. He is an avid soccer fan (or fútbol as it is known throughout most of the world) and there are 4 classic match-ups that are a must-see in his lifetime: Real Madrid vs. Barcelona, InterMilan vs. Milan, Boca Jrs vs. River Plate, and Manchester United vs. Chelsea. Look for him in the stands one of these days!