



Julio Juarez, C.I.P.
Geological Engineer
General Manager, Lima

When Julio finished his secondary education, his thoughts were not directed toward the mining industry. He wanted to complete a degree quickly and move into the work force as soon as possible. His longtime passion for engines made automotive mechanics a natural fit for him and he finished his degree in just two years. Although he was employed immediately fixing engines for the Peruvian Ministry, he soon realized things would be easier if he could open his own shop...but that would be a long and arduous process. After some time working in shops to make ends meet, Julio decided something had to change.

It was about this time that Julio's uncle told him about his career as a mining engineer. He was intrigued by what he heard and began pursuing his degree as a geological engineer. Four and a half years later he graduated and immediately started work as an intern for Geotécnica on a water dam grouting project. It was a grueling schedule of 12-hour day shifts one week followed by 12-hour night shifts the next week. After 60 days on he would enjoy his 15 days off in Arequipa spending time with family, helping care for his daughter and trying to rest. After the internship

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Julio's first love is cars so he became a mechanic, but when he wanted to make a living he turned to mining.
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he was hired as a geotechnical supervisor and worked for another year on different projects in Peru doing geotechnical investigations, drilling and grouting. After Geotécnica he was selected by Cerro Verde for an internship as a becario for six months in the geological department. The work soon felt mundane and he sought another direction.

Unfortunately, Julio was about to learn a lesson about the cyclical nature of the mining industry as a downturn made mining work tough to find. He taught auto mechanics for a few months and applied for a U.S. visa lottery during this time. The extensive paperwork process took nearly 6 months but the result lead him to Chicago, Illinois. A friend of his was working at a resort in the area and helped Julio secure his first job in the United States as a House Man and quickly as a

supervisor. Upon arrival he was grateful for his language aptitude and a summer exchange program because he had to gain command of the English language quickly to be successful.

Julio was grateful for the work but soon missed mining and contacted a former friend who had done geotechnical work in South Peru. Jim Gill was running his own small engineering business in Colorado and needed a Spanish speaking engineer for work with a Mexican client in Colorado and other clients in the United States. Julio was hired as a junior geotechnical engineer and conducted geotechnical investigations, foundation design, topography, civil design and was a field supervisor on various projects; mainly for local clients. After a few years, the work dried up due to economic recession and Julio was introduced to Matt Fuller, a co-founder of Vector Colorado, where he spent a couple of years working on many projects in Central and South America and the United States.



Years of travel had taken its toll on his family and Julio decided it was time to move back to Peru. He was introduced to the manager of Vector Peru who hired him to work from Lima. Although he still travelled, with Lima as his home base, the schedule allowed him much more time at home with his daughter. Ultimately, he became the Assistant CQA Manager overseeing 80-100 staff working in the field at any given time. Just before Vector Peru was acquired by Ausenco, Julio was approached by GRAMSA, owned by a colleague of his who had collaborated on projects with Vector Colorado and Vector Peru, and decided to become a minority partner. He led an engineering team of 15 people, developing mostly engineering designs for tailings dams, leach pads and process plants for clients locally and throughout South America.

GRAMSA prospered with revenues doubling the first couple of years but that success brought new career challenges for Julio. His management philosophy differed from the majority owners and he became concerned about the quality of work and company morale. GRAMSA's reputation was declining and although Julio tried to influence shareholders to make the necessary changes he was unable to gain enough support.

He needed to make a change and was receiving offers from mining companies but wasn't excited about returning to the tough rotation schedule. As luck would have it, Matt Fuller and Pete Kowalewski, co-founders of Tierra Group International, Ltd., were looking to open an office in Peru. When Matt approached Julio about the opportunity he was eager to join the team. In June 2014, Julio launched the Lima office with the help of 1 administrative assistant. Within the first year he had hired 2 engineers and used sub-contractors to fill the gaps resulting in a profit after just 9 months.

It has been quite a journey, but if you get the chance to observe Julio now, it would be hard to believe he hasn't spent his entire career in the mining industry. From his wide knowledge of mining infrastructure design and connections with engineers and support staff, to his client relationships, he continues to develop strong business relationships throughout South and Central America, Mexico and beyond. After 4 years, the Lima office now employs 15 full time staff in the office and 35+ field CQA personnel around the world. Julio knows reputation is very important in the mining industry of Peru and company growth must be done responsibly and carefully to maintain relations with clients and staff. He considers integrity the foundation of Tierra Group International, SAC and its strong reputation with clients, as well as current, and former, team members, illustrates that value.

Julio attributes some of that success to the unique collaborative structure of Tierra Group which allows it to coordinate work across all offices, regardless of physical location. "Everyone's contributions are what make a company strong. The Lima office has the right personalities in place right now so they are well positioned for continued success. If people are happy and comfortable, they will do good work."

As Julio reflected on his journey to this place, he shared his admiration for Dr. Pablo Meza, a Geotech professor at San Agustin National University. In addition to being from Julio's hometown of Arequipa, Dr. Meza holds degrees from universities throughout the world and could have contributed much to the industry as a practicing professional. However, he desired to share his knowledge and became a professor to improve the quality of education at the university.

Julio maintains a full schedule as he is also pursuing his MBA in International Finance and will be spending time studying in Spain next year. However, Julio still has a passion for cars; preferably old-fashioned ones, and when time allows he continues to work on them. A few years ago, he purchased a 1955 GMC Pickup Truck that currently sits in pieces in his garage shop. The curiosity to take things apart as a kid sticks with him today. He laughs when he thinks about the disassembled truck and remembers his mom talking about him "taking stuff apart and never putting it back again". Soon he hopes to put that truck back together again.



Julio is happiest spending time with his daughter, who is now living and studying in Lima. They share an aptitude for languages and a hidden karaoke talent which they showcased at a recent Tierra Group function. One of Julio's fondest memories is scuba diving with his daughter in Cancun, Mexico.

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Julio appreciates the value of education and continues to invest in himself. He is currently pursuing his MBA in International Finance which will lead him to Spain next year for additional study.
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