

Sago Solutions LLC

#1 | 312.82%

Entrepreneurship at its core is about building — a product, a service, a **solution**. When Guillermo Gomez Salas '13 and Ricardo Santos '14 decided they wanted to expand their house painting and mowing jobs into something more, they shifted focus from numbers to impact. As a result, not only did their numbers grow exponentially, but their reach has had major impacts on those they employ, collaborate with and work with.



Guillermo Gomez Salas '13
Co-Owner, Managing Member



Ricardo Santos '14
Co-Owner, Managing Member

They've built the foundation of Sago Solutions LLC — a nod to their last names ("Sa-" and "Go-") — on the premise of adding value and **being a solution** for their clients.

Sago Solutions LLC, a construction contractor based in Houston, leads projects in asphalt, concrete pipes, utilities, drainage and more, all while staying true to the founders' roots in landscaping and construction. Serving municipalities and others in the public sector speaks to the very heart of why Guillermo and Ricardo do what they do — vision, value and critically asking, "What is the **impact** we can have on the lives of people and how can we improve them?"

When they first discussed what it would mean to shift away from their previous jobs and into something they built themselves, both knew it would be hard, but believed with the right support and mindset, they could accomplish this dream of owning their own business together. Although their vision was clear, it took planning and "baby steps" to get to where they are today — going from a one-room headquarters in Ricardo's house to full-size operations within a few years.

With the support of their family, a strong reliance on their faith, and mentorship from Timothy Chinn, Ph.D., a former consulting engineer and professor in Texas A&M's civil engineering department, they were finally able to take their leap of faith.

Not only do their projects improve the lives of Houston's residents through construction and infrastructure support, but they also realized they have an opportunity to share their passion for A&M, higher education and dreaming big with their team members. Earlier this year, Guillermo and Ricardo hosted an on-campus tour in College Station with 83 attendees consisting of Sago team members and their families to show them they too can "dream big."

"We all love A&M," Guillermo said, "so we decided to do a field trip with all our workers. And we said the same thing to everyone — start thinking about how **they** can help people."

Ricardo believes teaching is key to helping the next generation of entrepreneurs, saying, "...to show this to other kids, so we can have a bigger impact on other entrepreneurs, other people, other students... Maybe if one [person] can change, that would be a good result."

Guillermo, originally from Mexico, and Ricardo, a first-generation college graduate from El Salvador, both attribute their success to hard work and humble beginnings. Their parents were major influences in their decisions to pursue higher education and attend Texas A&M, where Guillermo and Ricardo met while both studying civil engineering.

When asked what their advice would be for other entrepreneurs, Ricardo replied, "We put that extra mile into everything we do, and we do it with excellence."

Guillermo added, "We always say, 'Strive for excellence and **always** do that extra mile.' It's like... put the cherry on top of the cake."

What they consistently hold steadfast to is exploring the added value that Sago can offer to differentiate them from other companies. Both emphasized the importance and value of "doing your best, working hard and remembering that you **can do it**."

"It's really good to be able to share our story, and hopefully this helps... that others see how two people basically started from scratch. I remember how it was to get our first loan, how it was to get everything. I mean, we basically started from scratch and now we're [at the Aggie 100]," Guillermo said.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

McFerrin Center for
Entrepreneurship

McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship, Texas A&M University
4123 TAMU | College Station, TX 77843
1700 Research Parkway, Suite 130 | College Station, TX 77845
mcferrincenter@tamu.edu | mcferrin.tamu.edu | @TAMUMcFerrin