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Minorities Build the American Dream

Talk with Fresh Coat Painting franchise owners Jesus and Estefania Walls and Raul and Paolo Castaneda and three similarities quickly emerge—their tenacity, optimism, and dedicated perseverance to the daily operation and long term growth of their painting franchises.

Former salesman Jesus Walls bought his Fresh Coat franchise in the fall of 2006 and opened with one painter on staff. Six months later, seven more painters joined the team and today, Jesus employs a full-time project manager and 20 to 30 painters to cover his exclusive territory in Dallas, Texas. “Our sales goal for 2010 is to break a million dollars, and I think we’ll do it,” he says, describing an upcoming \$200,000 commercial job painting the interiors of four public schools.

For new Fresh Coat owners Raul and Paolo Castaneda, hearing about Walls’ success boosts their hopes that in a few years, their franchise could be hitting the same sales numbers. “I believe our sales will be above average for 2010 especially because of Raul’s experience and connections in the construction business,” says Paolo, who moved from her native Uruguay eleven years ago. The couple opened their Fresh Coat franchise in mid-August and a few days later booked their first commercial painting job at a Starbucks near their home in Bronxville, New York.

Hispanic-owned businesses like Walls’ and Castanedas’ are booming across the United States with the largest group (30%) being in construction, repair and maintenance. According to the US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the growth rate of Hispanic-owned businesses is three times the growth rate of all other businesses in the US. But Raul and Paolo do not think of themselves as minority business owners. Says Paolo, “Raul is from Mexico and moved to the United States fourteen years ago—we love our Hispanic roots but we consider ourselves multi-cultural in our business approach.”

“For people from every walk of life, owning a franchise is a great opportunity to have their piece of the American dream,” says Fresh Coat president Ralph Martin. “At Fresh Coat, we’re proud our franchises are low-cost, can be home-based, and are very recession-resistant.”

According to the US Census Web site, Texas, where Jesus Walls lives, has 447,000 Hispanic-owned businesses, the third largest of all the states. “Most of the guys we employ are Hispanic

or minority descended,” says Jesus. “They work really hard and I believe that’s helped us transcend barriers. We conduct ourselves in a professional, respectful way. We focus on delivering excellent service to our customers. They expect quality and that’s what we provide.”

Raul and Paola say it was the flexibility Fresh Coat offered that sold them on the franchise. For Jesus Walls, it was all about owning a business and being his own boss. He finds the networking and selling part of the job exciting and fun. “When someone says ‘no’ I don’t take that personally—it just means I’m closer to a ‘yes.’ I’m looking to meet people all the time and get our Fresh Coat name out there. As for quality, I make sure it speaks to the level of my expectations,” he says. “I’m very strict about how I run this business and how we do our jobs. We believe if we work hard, our customers will come.

The American Dream couldn’t be defined any better than that.

About Fresh Coat

Founded in 2004, Fresh Coat painting is based in Cincinnati, Ohio and is one of four brands (Home Helpers in-home non-medical senior care services, The Growth Coach business coaching, and Caring Transitions relocation and liquidation services) backed by an expert franchising team led by Gary D. Green, one of America’s top franchisors. In 2010, *Entrepreneur* magazine ranked Fresh Coat a “Top Home-Based Business” and included it in the prestigious *Franchise 500* list for the third year in a row. Fresh Coat is a member and/or affiliated with the International Franchise Association, the Small Business Association’s Franchise Registry, Vet-Fran and MinorityFran. For information, call 866-708-9355 or visit www.FreshCoatPainters.com

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