

# Hispanic<sup>®</sup>

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# Beyond the Headlines

Natalie Morales redefines journalism as a co-anchor on NBC's *The Today Show*. P. 26



**At A Glance**

*LOCATION:*  
Orange, NJ

*FOUNDED:*  
1983

*EMPLOYEES:*  
500+

*AREA OF SPECIALTY:*  
Commercial and government contract cleaning

*PROVIDES SERVICES IN:*  
NY, NJ, PA, and MD

*SERVICES OFFERED:*  
All basic services plus:  
+ Window cleaning  
+ Power washing  
+ Metal/ marble restoration and maintenance  
+ Cleaning above/underneath computer floors  
+ Final construction clean up  
+ Carpet shampooing  
+ Stripping and floor finishing

Sergio Artazu founded TUCS in 1983. Located in Orange, New Jersey, TUCS accepts commercial and government contracts from New York to Pennsylvania, focusing on consistency and quality of service. “We have a hands-on operation, and management is always involved with any account,” explains Artazu, who still serves as president of TUCS as well as chairman of the company board. “The other thing that is unique to TUCS is that we have very little turnover and many of our cleaners have worked for us for years. They know that, if they continue training and applying themselves, they have the opportunity for advancement within the company. They can start out as a cleaner, get promoted to supervisor then to project manager, and, if qualified, they can secure a position in management.”

Artazu’s family is from Uruguay, and, though he has never made a conscious decision to hire only other minorities, the majority of TUCS employees are Hispanic. When TUCS opened almost 30 years ago, there were only 20 part-time employees; today, TUCS employs over 500.

In addition to work for the Newark Liberty International Airport, JFK International, and the Philadelphia Airport, TUCS has contracts with New Jersey Transit, multiple universities and primary schools, government and county facilities, medical facilities, and regional rail lines. “In addition to our regular janitorial contracts, we also perform final construction clean ups for several large construction firms,” Artazu adds. TUCS is currently performing a final construction clean up for a New Jersey hospital that is over 600,000 square feet.

“Cleaning is a diverse business because no two customers are alike. They have their own specifications or criteria for their individual sites. Commercial cleaning is very scientific in how jobs are estimated. Everything is based on time management and labor for specific tasks. It is a very competitive business,” Artazu says. TUCS experienced a 50-percent growth in 2009 and last year had a 20-percent increase in sales. Presently, the company’s sales volume is \$26 million annually.

Outside of its contract with the temporary Path Station, TUCS received the Port Authority 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bus Terminal contract two years ago; it is a \$10 million, five-year contract. Located in the heart of Times Square, the Port Authority is one

# Cleaning Up the Big Apple

## Sergio Artazu of The Ultimate Cleaning Service

BY THALIA A-M BRUEHL

Although the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> left New York City and the surrounding areas grieving, it also incited the desire to restore the city, to show the strength and ability to overcome no matter the circumstances. Despite delays, the city began breathing again, inhaling and exhaling the trains, buses, and pedestrians from the outer boroughs as well as the tri-state area.

In 2003, the temporary World Trade Center Path Station opened in lower Manhattan, keeping the flow moving in and out of New York from Hoboken and Jersey City. And while the new station was managing the 57,000 daily passengers, it was TUCS, The Ultimate Cleaning Service, that managed the cleaning for the station itself—a project the company was honored to accept.

**“Cleaning is a diverse business because no two customers are alike. They have their own specifications or criteria for their individual sites.”**



TUCS employee Robert Cambell receives facility keys from Port Authority Bus Terminal Inspector Elizabeth Cartagena. TUCS holds a \$10 million, five-year contract with PABT.



of the world's busiest bus terminals, and the largest in North America. "It is a huge facility composed of two city blocks, 52 new bus loading platforms, and a mall with 70 shops. Not only is it huge, but the beautiful art-deco design contains marble wainscoting, aluminum finishes, and terrazzo floors. It is a [24/7] operation," Artazu says. TUCS' management team cannot manage the site alone due to its scale and schedule; on any given day, more than 200,000 passengers and 7,000 buses travel through the terminal. "As you can imagine, cleaning two city blocks every night is no small feat. Bob Kolakowski, the bus-terminal project manager, has the help of an assistant manager, 8 supervisors, and approximately 150 cleaners."

The spirit of collaboration that TUCS embodies is also visible in the cities and states in which it works. As such, the city that encompasses the company's largest contracts, New York, is more than a home to its inhabitants, it's an identifier, an adjective, a personality, and a goal that all who live there have reached. The Ultimate Cleaning Service is there, easing the transition for many. And though New Jersey may be home to TUCS, it is its work in New York that has made the largest impact in the fast-paced city that requires easy commuting. And for the many who enter through the city's tunnels and over its bridges, TUCS is there to make the ride smoother—and cleaner. *H/E*

