

BUILDINGWOMEN

Strategies and solutions for women in the building industry

2020 VOL. 3



ANGELICA RIVERA

This New Orleans builder has a passion to succeed

A publication of NAHB

ALSO

Lessons from
Leaders: Who
Needs a Shero?

Technology
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Join our discussion on Facebook and LinkedIn.com
Search for the group "Official NAHB Professional Women in Building Network"

Perspectives

What Difference Do Our Differences Make?

This has certainly been a year of awakening, change, adaptation, learning, and so much more. I am proud to have witnessed our members sustaining connections and caring for each other during the coronavirus crisis. Thank you for continuing to be generous with your time and talents and for using Zoom, Skype, and other virtual platform technology, not only for board meetings and committee meetings, but also to celebrate baby showers, weddings, social hours, brunch meetings, and more.

The focus of this issue of *Building Women* is “Diversity.” The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “diverse” as “differing from one another” or “composed of distinct or unlike qualities.”

We are each uniquely different, beautifully complex, and equally valuable. PWB councils across the country welcome members with unwavering appreciation for each person’s talents and contributions. We support the greater good of our industry, and most importantly, we support each other. We network on a professional and personal level. We teach, educate, mentor, and we help one another grow. Members of PWB have developed a kindred spirit that has united our differences and elevated our presence within our local HBAs and the overall home building industry.

I am grateful for PWB’s commitment to ensure all members have an equal opportunity to participate in the organization at local, regional, and national levels. Our collective goal should be to celebrate our diversity. Our differences make us powerful, impactful, and inspirational. Our differences make us Professional Women in Building. **BW**



Betsy Sheppard
Chair, NAHB Professional Women in Building Council

BUILDING **WOMEN**

Chartered in 1955, the NAHB Professional Women in Building Council (PWB) consists of a network of local and state councils and national members. NAHB PWB is dedicated to promoting, enhancing, and supporting home building and women within the industry.

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NAHB Professional
Women in Building

A Century of Activism

PWB Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the Women's Right to Vote

By Carrie DeWeese, Emily Boyd, and Stacy Beers

Have you ever heard of Harry T. Burn? Well, you should get to know him! The year was 1920; Burn was a 24-year-old, freshman Republican in the Tennessee General Assembly. It was Burn's first term and he was new to the legislative process. Women's right to vote – the 19th Amendment, or “Female Suffrage” – was a hot topic.

Those who wanted to ratify this constitutional amendment were called “rats”.

To ratify the 19th Amendment, 36 out of the 48 states needed to vote “yea,” and the “rats” were one state short. Four states had yet to vote; only Tennessee agreed to call a special summer session.

They met in August 1920. Burn had originally intended to vote for the amendment. After listening to the other elected officials and having received misleading telegrams from his constituents telling him his district was overwhelmingly opposed to women's suffrage, he began to side with the anti-suffragists.

Twice, the Tennessee General Assembly called for a vote, and

twice, they were deadlocked. Burn had a letter in his pocket from his mother, Febb Ensminger Burn. Just before the third vote, he read the letter, which contained the following:

“Hurrah and vote for Suffrage and don't keep them in doubt. I noticed Chandlers speech, it was very bitter. I've been watching to see how you stood but have not seen anything yet... Don't forget to be a good boy and help “Mrs. Thomas Catt” with her “Rats.”

She was referring to Carrie Chapman Catt, who championed the women's suffrage movement, “led an army of voteless women in 1919 to pressure Congress to pass the constitutional amendment giving them the right to vote and convinced state legislatures to ratify it in 1920,” according to biographer Jacqueline Van Voris.

Burn followed his mother's advice and his vote broke the tie to ratify the amendment. In defending himself against allegations that



Suffrage Follows Lady Liberty Eastward in “The Awakening”

Suffrage wins in Washington, California, and Oregon were followed by hard-fought victories in Arizona, Kansas, Nevada, and Montana. By the end of 1914, more than 4 million women had voting rights equal to men in 11 states, all in the West. Henry Mayer's 1915 illustration was the centerfold of a special suffrage issue of *Puck* magazine, guest-edited by New York state suffrage groups.

he had been bribed to vote in favor of passage, Burn inserted a personal statement in the state's House Journal. Among his reasons: "I knew that a mother's advice is always safest for a boy to follow and my mother wanted me to vote for ratification."

He also said he "appreciated the fact that an opportunity such as seldom comes to a mortal man to free 17 million women from political slavery was mine."

While we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the 19th Amendment, it granted only some women the right to vote. For years after the amendment was ratified, many women — including African-Americans, Native Americans and many immigrants — continued to have difficulty casting ballots until the Voting Rights Act passed in 1965.

Sharon King Davis, a retail developer in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is an aficionado on the subject of women's suffrage.

"I cannot stress enough that our votes matter!" she said. "We had a 72-year-long struggle to have the right to vote and it depended on one 24-year-old man in his first session. We have our right to vote, and it was decided by one vote."

Now, more than ever, our voices count. Our vote means something. Exercise your right!

Member Experiences

What was your most memorable election?

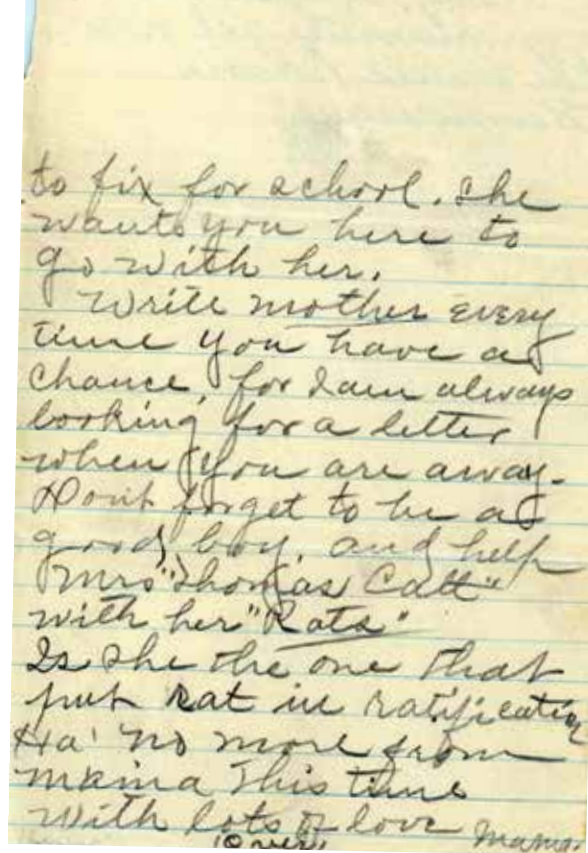
"The election I remember most is the one between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. It was 1960 and you had to be 21 years old to vote. In school, we studied the campaign. At home, our family watched, listened, and read about the candidates. However, when it came time to vote, I was not old enough. This was so disappointing. I made the commitment that once I was old enough, I would always vote in every election, and I have."



Carole Jones
NAHB Michigan State Representative
Past Chair, NAHB Professional Women in Building Council

"I cannot stress enough that our votes matter! We had a 72-year-long struggle to have the right to vote and it depended on one 24-year-old man in his first session. We have our right to vote, and it was decided by one vote."

—Sharon King Davis



Harry T. Burn was carrying this letter from his mother in his pocket when he cast the deciding vote for suffrage.

Which do you consider the most important election you've participated in?

"I believe that every election is the most important. No matter if it is your local city council member, your state representative, even your favorite nonprofit board. We have to give our opinion when asked; we have to cast our ballot every time. The more voices that are heard, the more likely we are to affect change. I know that a single vote out of 320 million people makes it seem like you're not going to be heard. But what if all 100 million people who felt the same way, chose to vote, instead of staying home? What an impact that would make."



Deana (Moore) Vidal
PWB, BIA Bay Area, Communications Chair; Young Professionals, BIA Bay Area, Founding Member

Two Ways to Get involved

Elections have a lasting impact. That's why it is so important for NAHB members to be engaged in the political process every step of the way.

BUILD-PAC, NAHB's bipartisan political arm, is critical to NAHB's success on Capitol Hill. BUILD-PAC's mission is to elect

pro-housing, pro-business candidates to Congress who will protect and promote the home building industry in Washington. Consider making a \$20 (or more) contribution to BUILD-PAC and please credit PWB.

When we reach out to members of Congress, we have an impact on the decisions they make. BuilderLink, NAHB's national grassroots program, advances the housing industry by connecting members of Congress to the people who matter most: their constituents.

Register now to speak up for housing and take action through CapitolConnect™, BuilderLink's legislative activation tool. **BW**



Carrie DeWeese is a Realtor in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the 2020 president of the PWB Council of the HBA of Greater Tulsa.



Emily Boyd is director of land acquisition at TRI Pointe Homes in and is secretary/treasurer of the PWB Council of BIA Bay Area in California.



Stacy Beers is chief financial officer at Pacific InterWest Building Consultants Inc. and is the 2020 NAHB PWB Legislative Subcommittee Chair.

National Housing Endowment Assists Students

The National Housing Endowment, the philanthropic arm of the National Association of Home Builders, is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the housing industry develop more effective approaches to home building and enhancing education and training for future generations of leaders in residential construction. The National Housing Endowment offers several scholarships, including the NAHB Professional Women in Building/NHE Strategies for Success Scholarship. This fund encourages students to further their education in housing industry-related programs.

Through the Strategies for Success program, PWB members in May distributed \$10,500 awarded to four college students: Brittany Lacy, Kristin Lorentzen, Brinley Mathern, and Abigail Trainor.

Learn about the NAHB PWB/National Housing Endowment's Strategies for Success Scholarship Fund and the NAHB PWB Building Hope Scholarship Fund that help defray educational costs for students taking building-related courses. Learn more about the Strategies for Success Program at NationalHousingEndowment.org.



PWB Spring Leadership Meeting Highlights

NAHB Professional Women in Building held its Board of Trustees meeting and subcommittee meetings during the NAHB Virtual Spring Leadership Meeting June 18-20. During the board meeting, members welcomed the Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association as the first PWB Council in South Carolina and the Madison Area Home Builders Association in Wisconsin. We welcome these new councils to the PWB community!

During the meeting, Carmel Ford, an economist with the NAHB Economics and Housing Policy Group, presented the results of the 2019 Women in Residential Construction Survey. Some key highlights are:

- Current membership in the PWB Council correlates with higher company earnings.
- Median dollar volume expected by current council members in 2019 is \$4.0 million, compared to the \$2.4 million expected by those who have never been a council member, and about \$2.3 million for past members of the council whose memberships have expired.
- Nearly half (46 percent) of the respondents said their title in the company was "Principal/Owner."
- 81 percent of women at companies with dollar volumes under \$500,000 have the title of principal/owner, compared to only 8 percent of women at companies with revenues topping \$15 million.



SHARE YOUR PWB PRIDE!

PWB wants to hear your Professional Women in Building story/testimonial. Post a video, Facebook message, Tweet, or Instagram story about yourself, your council, or about a professional woman in building in your community. Use the hashtag #PWB Proud to celebrate women in the industry.



PWB Celebrated Women in the Industry During NAHB Professional Women in Building Week 2020

NAHB Professional Women in Building Week 2020 was held Sept. 14-18; the theme for 2020 was "PWB: Diversifying the Construction Industry". The theme ensured PWB uplifts and celebrates the following long-held priorities:

- educating the next generation of women entering this industry,
- supporting women in the trades,

- elevating women's leadership in the industry,
- increasing diversity in the industry, and
- growing and sustaining the PWB community.

Visit the [NAHBNow.com](https://www.nahbnow.com) blog to review PWB Weeks' exclusive stories, tips and resources.

It's Time to Apply for the NAHB Professional Women in Building Awards

Applications are now open for the NAHB Professional Women in Building Awards. The PWB awards program recognizes professionals and organizations for their contributions to the home building industry through their respective councils.



NAHB PWB Woman of the Year

This award is presented in collaboration with the National Sales and Marketing Council and presented at The Nationals' Gala held during the International Builders' Show. It is the highest level of recognition presented by NAHB to a woman for accomplishments in the building industry and/or throughout the NAHB Federation.



"I am so inspired every day by the women in this industry who are chasing their dreams and making them a reality. PWB has taught me patience, understanding, balance, and, most of all, guidance in becoming a leader. You have led me to believe in something bigger than myself and gave me a dream to become that leader. You have proved how sacrifice and dedication can get you where you want to be." — Judy Dinelle, 2019 NAHB PWB Woman of the Year

NAHB PWB Member of the Year

This award recognizes a PWB member whose accomplishments at the local, state, or national levels benefit the home building industry and her community.



"It was an honor and privilege to be awarded National Member of the Year. I have always said you get out what you put into something, but I feel like I have gotten significantly more than what I have given. PWB has given me friendships, connections, opportunities, and a feeling of belonging. We all work a little harder and contribute a little more when we feel a part of

something and PWB has provided me just that. I've grown professionally and personally. The PWB sisterhood is unique and absolutely incredible. The home building industry is better as a result!" — Angela McKay, 2019 NAHB PWB National Member of the Year



NAHB Professional Women in Building Council of the Year Awards

These awards celebrate the breadth of innovative and diverse programming conducted in local councils. Whether legislative and political advocacy, fundraising, or community outreach, virtual or in person, PWB wants to recognize your council's impact in your community and on the current and future workforce of the residential construction industry.

Small, medium, and large council winners receive a trophy and their winning status will be posted on the NAHB PWB Awards web



Events of Note

NAHB PWB Monthly Subcommittee Calls

PWB members are encouraged to join national monthly subcommittee meetings. You can find the schedule at nahb.org/womeninbuilding under the documents section.

PWB Regional Outreach Discussions

Region A - Sept. 30, 12:30 p.m. ET

Region C - Sept. 29, 1:30 p.m. ET

Region D - Sept. 29, 4:00 p.m. ET

Region E - Oct. 1, 4:00 p.m. ET

NAHB PWB Fall Virtual Subcommittee Meetings

Oct. 13, 1:30 p.m. ET Membership Subcommittee

Oct. 13, 3:30 p.m. ET Communications and Education Subcommittee

Oct. 14, 11:30 a.m. ET Legislative Subcommittee

Oct. 14, 1:30 p.m. ET Area Trustees Subcommittee

Oct. 14, 3:30 p.m. ET Awards and Recognition Subcommittee

NAHB PWB Annual Awards Competitions

Deadline is Sept. 25.

Apply at nahb.org/awards

NAHB Fall Virtual Leadership Meeting

Oct. 19-23

nahb.org

NAHB PWB Fall Virtual Board of Trustees Meeting

Oct. 20, 4:00 p.m. ET

Women in Residential Construction Conference

Oct. 28-30

pbprwomen.probuilder.com/2020

Dates are subject to change.

pages and the NAHB Now blog, in *Building Women*, and on the Council's social media channels. Finalists will also be recognized.

Minding Your Business

An Unexpected Journey to Advocacy

The daughter of immigrants, Teresa Palacios Smith is helping minorities with their careers and homeownership

By Courtney Stewart

The conversation on diversity has never been as intense, or as needed, as our world's current conversation surrounding the subject. While it quickly became one of 2020's hot-button issues, it's not a new concept to some of the biggest companies and most forward-thinking leaders in our industry.

One of the people who has long been championing diversity in the workplace, and in real estate, is Teresa Palacios Smith, chief diversity and inclusion officer for HomeServices of America and HSF Affiliates LLC at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices. In this position, she is tasked with helping to grow Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices' female franchise owners, train and develop company leaders from diverse backgrounds, and expose the brand to as many different people as possible. She also serves as the liaison to many associations and organizations that Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices has a relationship with, including NAHB's Professional Women in Building Council.

While Palacios Smith's journey to her current position wasn't linear or even expected, looking back, it seems that she was destined to help minorities in both their careers and in homeownership. She started in broadcasting sales; after relocating to Atlanta, she began working for a recruiter. While she loved helping others, she quickly realized she didn't enjoy the high-stress world of recruiting.

Since she was a young child, she'd always recognized the importance of real estate. Palacios Smith is the child of immigrants from Colombia. After arriving in New York City, her father worked numerous jobs. They soon moved to Miami, when her father landed a job with Delta Air Lines.

The entire family, which included Palacios Smith's sisters and two aunts, lived in a two-bedroom apartment. Like many of us, her family's dream was to own a home, and thanks to her father's work ethic, they were able to realize that dream. At 8 years old,

Palacios Smith was the translator with their Realtor throughout the entire process. Her father worked multiple jobs and couldn't be involved with the house-hunting process and her mother didn't speak English.

Palacios Smith recalls the day they closed on their new home:

"I will never forget the sight of my dad's hands shaking as he used the key to open the door to our home," she says. "My sisters



"The feeling and emotion that I saw my parents experience that day is the same one I want to help others experience as they find their home."

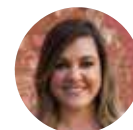
and I all ran through the house, full of excitement, and despite the home being a small ranch with three bedrooms and just one bathroom, we felt like we were in a castle! And my mom, of course, went straight to the kitchen and dining space, where she cried from happiness to have her own kitchen and space to entertain. I didn't realize the significance of my parents' smiles at

the time, but looking back, I recognize their happiness as pure pride and joy at knowing they'd made it in America. The feeling and emotion that I saw my parents experience that day is the same one I want to help others experience as they find their home."

Today, Palacios Smith not only helps facilitate homeownership through her work with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, she also helps women, people of color, and minorities become business owners and leaders in our industry to better represent the communities in which they serve. She was instrumental in starting the Atlanta chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP) after being encouraged to attend the NAHREP's national conference by Dan Forsman, president and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Georgia Properties.

Because of her involvement with NAHREP, she saw the exodus of minority Realtors post-recession and switched her focus from helping buyers and sellers to helping minority agents do business during difficult times. Palacios Smith then went on to become the national president of NAHREP. Gino Blefari, who was CEO of HSF Affiliates, now CEO of HomeServices of America, saw what Palacios Smith was doing. Recognizing the need for someone to help grow diversity within their company at the national level, she created the position that Palacios Smith holds today.

Most recently, Palacios Smith created the Women Who Lead series, a Facebook Live streaming event held every other Wednesday. The series features women leaders having a casual conversation about important topics, current events, or whatever is on their minds. The series can be viewed at [Facebook.com/WomenWhoLeadSeries](https://www.facebook.com/WomenWhoLeadSeries). **BW**



Courtney Stewart is a senior account manager at Denim Marketing.

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Attending IBS is an essential opportunity for professional women in building to connect with other talented women in residential construction, tackle challenges at every career stage and learn relevant solutions to keep your business thriving in 2021 and beyond.

Join us at IBS!

LEARN MORE | [BUILDERSSHOW.COM/PWB](https://buildersshow.com/pwb)

ANGELIC RIVERA

This New Orleans builder has a passion to succeed

By Pat Curry

“**W**hat in the world made me think I could do this?” Angelica Rivera asked herself. She had moved from Orlando to New Orleans to

help her husband run his new framing company. She knew no one in town, she had no experience in construction, and she was working in an industry filled with men who made it clear that she was not welcome.

“I’d go to meetings and there would be 25 men and me,” Rivera says. “One person told me, ‘Angelica, you should be home with your kids. This is not a business for you.’ That was a moment I sat down and cried. I thought, ‘Maybe he is right.’”

But then she thought about how far she had already come in her life and all the obstacles she had overcome. A native of Colombia, she had moved to the United States in 1995 as a teenager to finish high school in Orlando, where she had relatives. She got a job as a hotel housekeeper; over six years, she worked her way up to become first a supervisor and then a district manager in charge of 20 hotels.

Still, she knew she could do better. At that time, the housing boom was in full force. Rivera went to community college, studied to become a mortgage broker, and quit her job to go into business for herself. It was 2005. In just 10 years since arriving in America, she was a business owner. Plenty of people scoffed at her, but she was undaunted.

“Most of the people said I was crazy to open my own business,” she says. “I was making good money and had good benefits.

But one important person understood why she wanted to go out on her own — her father, the man who had instilled an entrepreneurial drive in her.

“When I told my dad I was quitting, he said it was the best thing I could do,” Rivera says. “He is the one who put the seed in my mind that you can do amazing things by yourself instead of

MA





working for someone else and giving them all your potential.”

For two years, her mortgage brokerage business did well. Then, the housing market crashed and she lost everything. Her husband, Roman Lopez, had gone to New Orleans to work with friends who were rebuilding homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

Rivera closed down her business, packed up the house and the children, said goodbye to her beloved Orlando, and headed west to join him in March 2008. They never would have imagined then that within just 10 years, they would be named to Inc. 5000’s annual list of the fastest-growing private companies in America.

Overcoming obstacles

As a company, Colmex Construction started out as framers, but soon realized the need for good, honest contractors to help home owners who had been bilked by unscrupulous crews. (The company’s name combines their home country, Colombia, and the home country of Roman’s first two employees, who were from Mexico.)

“There was a lot of fraud,” she recalls. “There were some companies that would go into homes, take the people’s money, and leave. People were asking us to complete their houses. We saw a niche, so we decided to do turnkey projects. My husband started the process to get his contractor’s license, and I started reaching out to organizations to learn more about construction. That is how we started growing.”

Everything was against them, Rivera says. She knew nothing about building houses and they had no money to start a business. They took classes and started networking.

Over time, the company developed a reputation as a solid, reliable builder. On the residential side, Colmex focuses on affordable housing. About three years ago, they expanded into commercial properties and government projects.

“We provide job opportunity for the community; that fulfills my passion. That is the beauty about this. It’s not just one person that gets the benefit. It’s the whole community.”

“We have a pretty strong estimating group, so we bid on a lot of government and public bids,” she says. “We’ve done a couple of school renovations and a couple of multifamily projects as well. We get a lot of calls for residential because we were recommended or organizations call us back to work with them again.”

What she loves most about construction is that it not only serves her clients, it also benefits the community with employment and beautification. A house is the most important investment for a family and she loves being part of that.

“We provide job opportunity for the community; that

fulfills my passion,” Rivera says. “That is the beauty about this. It’s not just one person that gets the benefit. It’s the whole community.”

A family culture

While many successful business owners can point to individuals who helped them along the way, Rivera says her company has been assisted more by certain organizations, including Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses, a nationwide program that helps entrepreneurs take their companies to the next level.

“That was a milestone when we did that program,” she says. “It taught me how to delegate.

Before that, I was doing everything myself – running around like chickens without heads. We did a growth plan to see where we wanted to be.”

The key to their growth and success, Rivera says, is their company culture and their great team members. Colmex has a family culture that celebrates its employees and invests in their future. Each of them is an expert, she says, and she is very proud of them.

“We are all connected,” she says. “Everyone works with passion. From the lady who cleans the building to the VP, we all have a purpose.”

They celebrate birthdays and holidays, and the entire company takes an annual vacation with their families. They go to the beach for four days, and Colmex pays for everything.

Having capable people doing their jobs well gives Rivera the opportunity to be involved in the business and home building community; she chairs the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana Foundation and is a board member of the Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans.

She found a particularly warm welcome — and kindred spirits — in her HBA’s Professional Women in Building Council.

“PWB was the first time I felt like I wasn’t alone,” she says. “At one point, I had a lunch and actually had a conversation with 10 women in construction! And if you see someone who is going through something you have been through, you can give them advice. Those are the kinds of groups that really support you.”

Her advice for young women just entering the housing field is to ignore the naysayers completely.

“Don’t listen to people who say you can’t do it; that is why they are where they are,” she says. “Always surround yourself with smarter people. If you’re the smartest person in the room, you’re in the wrong room.”

Helping other entrepreneurs

One of Rivera’s early goals was for the business to have its own office. “It was so expensive,” she says. “That was one of the dreams that got pushed to the side.”

So, when the company was able to buy a 10,000-sf office building for its corporate headquarters, Rivera made sure the floor plan included 1,500 sf for a business incubator, so other small companies could have an office. Now run by a nonprofit, the incubator includes everything a new entrepreneur might need in terms of facilities, including a receptionist, a training room, and a conference room.

“It’s one of the things I feel most proud of,” she says. “I knew it was something that was needed. That has been a really valuable achievement for me.”

Well-earned accolades

In 2018, Colmex joined the ranks of such companies as PopSockets and Home Chef to be named to the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest-growing private companies in America, with 188 percent growth. They were the highest-ranked Louisiana company on the list.

The following year, Colmex was recognized again, this time receiving the 2019 Entrepreneurial Success Award from the U.S. Small Business Administration Louisiana District. Plus, Colmex Construction was named to CityBusiness’s 2019 “Excellence in Construction”

“Everyone from here loves their city to death. I think I drank some of the Mississippi water. They say if you do that, you’ll never leave.”



list and to Telemundo 42 and Gulf Coast Bank’s “Heroes Locales” list.

This year, Rivera was appointed to the Retail and Small Business Task Force of the Resilient Louisiana Commission. The task force will be analyzing Louisiana’s economy and helping to create a plan to help small businesses that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rivera is excited to be able to help her adopted hometown recover from this latest adversity. She freely admits that she didn’t like the city at all when she first arrived, but that has completely reversed and she considers herself a true New Orleanian.

“When I met the people, I fell in love with them,” she says. “Here, everyone knows each other; they collaborate with each other. Everyone from here loves their city to death. I think I drank some of the Mississippi water. They say if you do that, you’ll never leave. This city is unique and so rich in so many aspects. My kids love it.



“If you actually write it down, and make it a goal instead of a dream, it will happen.”

My kids go to a French school – they speak French, Spanish, and English. I love the history and how everyone is so proud of the city.”

Ever the entrepreneur

This summer, Rivera decided to use some vacant space in their building to bring a little bit of Colombia to New Orleans. She opened the Golden Gate Bistro, a restaurant that serves authentic dishes like the ones she grew up eating.

“We were only using 70 percent of the space,” she says. “I didn’t see any Colombian restaurants in the area, and I love it, so we opened one. I still don’t believe we did it!”

Looking ahead, Rivera says the company’s goal is to replicate their business model in other states; they’re working on getting their contractor’s license in Florida.

The hardest job

With four children — her sons are 23, 13, 11, and 5 — Rivera says she has had to learn to find balance between her personal and professional life. In the early years of the business, they ran the company out their house. She would get up at 4 a.m. to do housework, start cooking breakfast, and then go to her office at 6 before stopping to get her boys ready for school.

“I was so tired,” she says. “I wasn’t getting things accomplished, I was frustrated, and I couldn’t spend quality time with the kids. When I had the opportunity financially to hire someone to help at home, that was the first thing I did. Then, the time I spent with the kids was quality time.”

Since she and her husband work together, they also make a point of separating their personal and professional lives. “When we go home, I’m his wife, not his boss,” she says. “And if something happens at home and we get to work, it’s totally professional. That’s hard to do.”

As a team, she and her husband sit down at the end of each year, review the year, look at the year ahead, and set personal and professional goals. One of the things that came out of a goal-setting session was a decision to take two vacations each year, one with their children and one by themselves. Last year, the couple took a trip to Europe for two months.

“That was a blessing,” she says. “Before that, we went to Hawaii with the kids. If you actually write it down, and make it a goal instead of a dream, it will happen.”

For anyone wondering how the president of one of the country’s fastest-growing companies took two months off to go to Europe, Rivera says it had been a goal of hers since she opened the company in 2008.

“I’m getting to a point where I learned how to delegate,” she says. “I love to spend time with my kids, pick them up from school, and help them with their homework. We waste a lot of time with things that are not important. Every morning, I do the important things first. I do have a list with over 60 things I have to do. I choose five of those to accomplish. I learned to be more efficient with my time to be able to accomplish more.” **BW**

Pat Curry is managing editor of *Building Women*.

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LESSONS FROM LEADERS

WHO NEEDS A SHERO?



BY STEPH REED

In 2019, I came across the profile of a dynamic female plumber out of New York named Judaline Cassidy. I saw her organization, Tools & Tiaras, online and wanted to know more about it and those involved. I was also curious to see if they could use our children's activity book from Professional Women in Building of Greater Des Moines.

As I read about Judaline, I became completely in awe of her story. She was born in the island country now known as Trinidad and Tobago. She started her career in plumbing at the John Donaldson Technical Institute of Trinidad, now known as the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She was one of the first three females selected to pursue plumbing there.

She has been a proud member of the Plumbers of New York City, Local Union No. 1 for the past 20 years. Judaline was the first woman accepted into the Plumbers Local Union 371 Staten Island, New York, and the first woman elected to the Examining Board of

Plumbers Local Union No. 1. She founded the nonprofit Tools & Tiaras to advance the interest of young girls and women who want to pursue nontraditional careers.

Judaline is an amazing mentor and leader to other women and young girls. She fought through poverty and dyslexia to become the successful woman she is today and wants to make sure other women know they can, too.

As Judaline and I began to exchange messages about ourselves and the organizations we were involved in, I quickly recognized the passion she displayed as one that I and many of my PWB sisters share as well. She wanted to know more about NAHB's Professional Women in Building and specifically the activity book we created. She was following us, too! We quickly decided we each had things that could be shared to help one another and our local missions. To say our first phone call was fun, exciting, and passionate would be an understatement!

Q. Who or what inspired you to get into plumbing?

A. I was inspired to get into plumbing because it was one of the free options that were left available to me after I finished secondary school in Trinidad and Tobago. My great-grandmother passed away, thus removing the financial assistance I would have received to pursue a law degree at university.

Q. What was it like to be the first woman to be accepted into Plumbers Local 371 Staten Island, NY, and the first woman elected to the Examining Board of Plumbers Local No. 1?

A. One of the best benefits of becoming a union plumber, besides the pay, is equal pay. In terms of being the first, I wasn't really thinking about that. I just honestly was trying to become a plumber.

Q. What is your biggest wish for young girls in your Tools & Tiaras program?

A. I want and need all the princess warriors that participate in our program to truly embrace our mantra that "jobs don't have genders" and know unequivocally that the world and society needs them to be our leaders of change.

Q. If you were to give another woman advice about the skilled trades, what would you say to them?

A. My advice to any woman considering a career in the skilled trades: 1) Do some research on what trade piques your interest. 2) Take an inventory of your strengths and your absolute 'why you want to do it'. Trust me, it will make the difficult days easier to get over once they arise. 3) Then go for it with all the grit of your younger self.

“JOBS HAVE NO GENDERS!”



She sent me the coolest signed poster of herself, titled "Who Needs A Shero?" And she added "Jobs have no genders!" to it. It is framed and hangs proudly in my office. She also sent several copies that can be passed out to other young women. In return, I sent her our activity books for her to pass out at her Tools & Tiaras camps. We are constantly sharing and promoting each other's pages and ideas.

As if she wasn't already doing enough, Judaline also recently started her own podcast called "Tradeswomen Talk". She asked me to be on one of her podcasts to talk about Professional Women in Building, the activity book, and getting youth into the skilled trades. What an honor! This podcast can be found at <https://bit.ly/2WzTDbg>. Her podcasts feature men and women who promote women in the skilled trades industries.

One of my favorite things about this story is how it displays a progressive "shero" and the skilled trades industry working together to promote one another and our organizations, while creating a dynamic and unified platform for all women! **BW**



Steph Reed is a builder and Realtor in Ankeny, Iowa. She is an area trustee for the NAHB Professional Women in Building Council.



TO BUILDING CONSTRUCTION CAREERS

BY LORA VASSAR

Construction and all of its supporting industries are a career path full of great opportunity and reward. There were more than 350,000 job openings for skilled labor before the pandemic. Today, the lack of skilled labor is one of the industry's top priorities. Massive opportunities, combined with on-the-job training, parity in pay, and limitless possibilities, create an attractive and unparalleled prospect for achieving the American Dream, while building the American Dream.

Our industry — deemed 'essential' in many states during the

coronavirus pandemic — is hiring and is desperate for skilled labor. Every one of us involved in the construction industry has experienced the skilled labor shortage and knows this has been the case for many, many years. We are keenly aware of the reasons for this chronic issue; what has changed dramatically in the last few years is the creativity our industry is using to reduce the deficit.

Our messaging through public outreach has changed. We have recognized the need and implemented more training programs nationally and through local networks and job fairs. Specific train-



Our diversity is our strength

Every day, we go to work, attend school, and live our lives side by side. Our individual experiences come together to help us learn more about the world around us, and ourselves as well.

We're proud to be a part of the diverse communities where we live and work.



ing, whether designed for veterans, youth, women, LGBTQ+, or immigrants, are achieving great results in graduating ready-to-hire individuals. Through this evolving process, diversity has become a welcomed byproduct. The stereotypical face of our industry is slowly changing.

The industry is embracing diversity unlike any other time in history, as it continues to recognize the national demand for skilled workers and industry professionals. According to a 2018 article by Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), “There is a marked demographic shift in construction company ownership toward minorities and women. By the end of 2020, more than 50 percent of businesses entering the construction industry will be minority- or female-owned.” While not yet achieved, this benchmark is the direct result of many years of dedication, innovation, and hard work by leaders in our industry.

NAHB’s own Home Building Institute (HBI) is one organization leading the charge to train the incoming skilled labor force for the construction industry. HBI’s current training programs include Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training (PACT), Job Corps, apprenticeships, and the Military and Veterans Program.

These programs are all designed to identify, teach, inspire, support, and place individuals in rewarding construction careers. And NAHB is not alone: ABC, Associated General Contractors, unions, and trade bureaus have all developed programs to fill our skilled labor shortage.

Although the paths that lead to these programs vary widely, all are geared toward helping individuals achieve rewarding careers in construction.

Sgt. Kristy Stringer’s story is just one example. After serving nine years in the military, Stringer enrolled in HBI’s Building Construction Technology (BCT) program, was awarded the Shirley Wiseman Award for Exceptional Promise, and is now employed full time in construction. She credits her BCT training with equipping her with valuable knowledge and skills she uses today.

Another program recognizes that not all individuals can or will be college-bound; HBI’s Job Corps programs across the country provide training in 10 residential construction trades, employability skills, and job placement services for ages 16 to 24. HBI has partnered with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Job Corps for more than 40 years. Today, HBI Job Corps programs are located at 65 sites and growing.

Electrical apprentice Jaylen Fields is smart, loves learning, loves working with her hands, and likes people. She has a fierce desire to be seen as an equal in the field and in the classroom. She is a team player, and believes that being a part of bringing solutions,

improvements, and client satisfaction is an immense reward in this industry. With attaining her journeyman’s electrical license, she sees an opportunity to open her own company, and perhaps create a legacy for her young family.

Fields sought a career in construction after graduating high school at 16 and getting an associate’s degree from community college. With her new degree, she entered the nursing field in the direct care segment. After several unpleasant experiences, she left nursing to work for a solar company.

Eager to prove herself and loving the opportunity to learn, she fought to be viewed equally, despite being the only female. Soon after her introduction to the construction industry, she felt she had finally found home. She then won a scholarship to a local trade college for her AA in Electrical Trades, which she has since completed.

Again, she was the only female in her class. While she readily admits the job has areas that require all of her determination, the constant learning and satisfaction at the end of the day keeps her engaged. She is now working for the electrical company owned by one of her teachers after being hand-selected for her determination and drive for excellence.

Fields acknowledges the wide gulf between the classroom and field work, and has chosen the residential field over commercial as her favorite. She values the joy her job brings to her company and her clients.

Fields’ story is being repeated in regions everywhere. More individuals from diverse backgrounds are discovering the rewarding and lucrative opportunities in our field. A vast network of pathways exists to welcome them. Our skilled labor pool is growing, just not at the speed we need today. So, how do we increase the volume of potential candidates?

The one constant need in all training programs seems to be engagement at the local level. The programs and resources are fully developed, proven, and ready for implementation with support at the highest levels. This is where our membership, especially from the PWB Council level, is tremendously effective. PWB Councils are formidable at engaging, inspiring, networking, supporting, and challenging each other. And, we can still make a greater impact by sharing the satisfaction and inspiring others to choose construction as a career. **bw**

THE INDUSTRY IS EMBRACING DIVERSITY UNLIKE ANY OTHER TIME IN HISTORY, AS IT CONTINUES TO RECOGNIZE THE NATIONAL DEMAND FOR SKILLED WORKERS AND INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS.



Lora Vassar is the owner of ARCH Design, a full-service design/build remodeling firm in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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NAHB Professional Women in Building Week celebrates the achievements of the talented women in the residential construction industry and encourages more women to follow in their footsteps to enrich the home building profession. All members across the NAHB Federation can play a role in promoting, enhancing and supporting women in the industry by actively bringing awareness to the opportunities and successes careers in construction provide.



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HOLLY O'MALLEY:

A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL MAKING AN IMPACT ON PWB

By Leah Fellows



As you get to know her, and the positive force she is in the industry, it's no surprise that Holly O'Malley, who is in charge of business development and relationship marketing at Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery in Bozeman, Montana, won the award for "One to Watch" this year at the NAHB Professional Women in Building Awards.

O'Malley began her career with Ferguson about a year and a half ago as inside sales after spending nearly two years with a plumbing company. The 2017 winner of the "One to Watch" award for NAHB PWB, Sarah McDaniel – based out of Denver with BAC Appliance Center, a Ferguson enterprise – was a rainmaker taking business development and relationship marketing to a whole new level for her company.

With the success of her unique position, she was tasked to help replicate her role across the company. McDaniel went to take a look at the Bozeman branch of Ferguson; "there's a personality type that goes really well with this position and a level of passion and energy I was looking for," she says. She knew she could teach the technical stuff to anyone, but was looking for that right personality.

"As I was talking to Holly, it was a no-brainer," McDaniel says. "She was all the things I was looking for and that right personality." Before joining the Ferguson team, O'Malley was an award-winning social media marketer in the ski industry, working for Bridger Bowl, a world-renowned community-owned ski area.

With her dedication, commitment, background, and experience, O'Malley was quickly identified as a workplace leader and promoted to the role she currently holds.

When O'Malley met with McDaniel and learned what she did,

she thought, "Wow, this is something I really want to do," O'Malley says. "It kind of takes all of the things that I've learned over my career and melds them into one very community-focused role for a very large corporation, and really just checked all the opportunity boxes."

Tasked to create genuine relationships with builders, designers, plumbers, and architects to foster new clientele and encourage sales growth, her friendly personality and strong connections to the community allowed O'Malley to help her sales team crush their 2018/2019 sales goals by over a million dollars. She's helped pave

the way for significant sales increases throughout the next fiscal year; she did it by creating lucrative industry partnerships and fostering brand awareness for her company through innovative networking, event marketing, and community outreach.

Part of the rainmaker role held by both women is to identify areas of impact and influence. McDaniel says, "We were looking to see if we could have an impact and influence in [the Bozeman] market. I strongly believe that the best way to build influence is through building goodwill. If you can create an opportunity for goodwill within the industry or community you are trying to build influence in, it's a good way for creating value and having impact."

As McDaniel was visiting the area to help get O'Malley established in her role, they would meet with potential clients and industry peers, asking, "How can we help? Where is there a

need?" A common theme was the need for a sense of belonging and a community.

As O'Malley learned more and more from McDaniel, the idea of building a Professional Women and Building Council was born.

"When I first learned about all the PWB's across the country,"

I strongly believe that the best way to build influence is through building goodwill. If you can create an opportunity for goodwill within the industry or community you are trying to build influence in, it's a good way for creating value and having impact."

O'Malley says, "I wondered, 'Why don't we have something like this here?'" While the HBA was supportive, there was a low expectation of attendance. But the end result blew them out of the water. With guidance from McDaniel, the organizers set up a community breakfast and invited all their female contacts; they expected an attendance of 10 people. They were stunned and thrilled when nearly 40 women and one man showed up to the event. "At that moment, we realized it wasn't just something we wanted," O'Malley says, "it was something we desperately needed."

In the beginning, they created an exploratory committee. The Denver PWB Council shared its board structure, and 2017 NAHB PWB Council Chair Juli Bacon made the trip from Washington state to Montana to help with the launch meeting and the building of a steering committee. The synergy between the experience of the established Metro Denver PWB and the enthusiasm for the new SW Montana PWB helped make it an easy launch of a brand new PWB. O'Malley became the chair and began building out her executive team. "Holly took it on, and they just really ran with it," McDaniel says.

"It was really cool," O'Malley says. "Our board asked Sarah to play an advisory role, so she really sits as kind of our past president since we don't have one. She's been instrumental in answering questions and helping us navigate challenges and find our footing."

The local HBA was incredibly supportive from the start, which is a key ingredient for a successful new PWB.

"My biggest goal was bringing people together and having the women in our industry and our community feeling like they did have a place they could come and they fit in and other women knew where they were coming from and they could have the tough conversations," O'Malley says. That was the kind of environment she really wanted to foster.

After only three years in the building industry, O'Malley has already achieved so much on a professional and volunteer level. Nominated as Associate of the Year at her local HBA for her commitment as president and founder of their PWB and her service on SWMBIA's Membership Committee and Parade of Homes Committee, she is often the first to volunteer to take on tasks and attends all of the HBA events. As the president of SW Montana's PWB, O'Malley grew its council immediately to 38 members, adding 15 new members and 10 renewing members to the local HBA in less than six months. Her efforts have allowed SMBIA to boast above-industry average membership retention and provide new, reoccurring membership dues that are the lifeline of the HBA organization.

Not only is she bringing in more memberships, but she has also single-handedly raised \$16,000 in sponsorships for the educational programming, giving her council the ability to develop and execute high-quality programming free of charge to both PWB members and non-PWB members.

"A lot of the resources for women in business here come with a high fee," O'Malley says. "With such support and sponsorships, we've been able to offer the majority of our programs entirely free, not only to our members, but to our entire community, which has

been great in our recruitment efforts and bringing more people in." The influx of sponsorship support has given their council the ability to pursue a wide range of programs.

A key to raising money to help with their programming was putting together sponsorship packages with levels that ran annually instead of trying to find a little money here and there for an event. "Finding vendors, reps, and industry partners that believed in what we were doing was important," O'Malley says. "We had a lot of support from female reps that was quickly followed by national reps. It was about that initial buy-in that has made our sponsorship so successful." It's important to acknowledge their sponsorships at events and develop it as a partnership for them.

"My biggest goal was bringing people together and having the women in our industry and our community feeling like they did have a place they could come and they fit in and other women knew where they were coming from and they could have the tough conversations."

In addition to her roles with HBA, O'Malley also was asked to step in this year as president of the Big Sky NKBA chapter, where she helps foster partnership opportunities for the HBA and continue recruitment of SWMBIA and PWB members. "I'd love to see collaboration between the two organizations," she says as she talks about the overlap in her roles as president of both groups. She explains that NKBA can improve on its educational programming and can learn from PWB.

O'Malley is passionate about the community and believes that using her role at Ferguson to facilitate good is the piece of her work that gives it purpose. She is a huge supporter of Thrive, a local nonprofit organization that serves more than 7,000 families annually with mentoring, education, and support. Ferguson is a major sponsor for Thrive's two largest fundraising

events, the Main Street Speakeasy and the Thrive Golf Tournament.

During the golf tournament, she was able to convince a professional golfer to donate his time to hit balls at the Ferguson Sponsor Hole to raise additional money. She and her team raised an extra \$600 during the event, significantly more than any other hole. O'Malley uses her connections to help recruit other sponsors for Thrive and within the last year, she has been an instrumental part of more than five other major sponsorships and one custom playhouse donation.

O'Malley volunteers her time in many nonprofit groups and with the local chamber of commerce. She completed the chamber's 10-month leadership training and regularly attends events and leads groups.

"Community dedication is probably a good requirement to be a rainmaker at Ferguson," O'Malley says with a laugh, "so I think that's a passion that Sarah and I both share."

With everything she does both at work and on a volunteer basis, she is mindful about burning the candle from both ends and makes sure to take time to spend time with family, travel, and do all the things that help her relax and reenergize. "It's super helpful that I get a lot of energy and a lot of spark from what I do on a daily basis at work. I absolutely love what I do." **BW**



Leah Fellows is an online sales trainer for the home building industry.

Coast to Coast



WASHINGTON

NAHB PWB members present a NAHB BUILD-PAC contribution to Jackson Maynard, candidate for 10th Congressional District Representative in Washington state. Pictured from left are NAHB Associate National Associates Chair Linda Mosier-

Vaudt, Building Industry Association of Washington President Sherry Schwab, and NAHB PWB Past Chair Darylene Dennon.

OREGON

Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland PWB members are grateful to NW Natural for sponsoring them during the 2020 HBA Golf Classic. The KP 50/50 raffle and sale of face masks raised \$600 for GirlsBuild.



CALIFORNIA

California Building Industry Association hosted a virtual brunch entitled "Ready for What's Next? Women on the Move," with speakers Sheryl Palmer, Chairman/President/CEO of Taylor Morrison; Joan Webb, CMO, the New Home Company; Layne Marceau, NorCal Division President, Shea Homes; and Dan Dunmoyer, President/CEO, CBIA



IDAHO

Snake River Valley Building Contractors Association PWB Council met via Zoom with special guest speakers 2020 PWB Chair Betsy Sheppard and 2020 PWB Region E Chair Meg Thompson.

MONTANA

HBA of Southwest Montana PWB Council members volunteered to help Habitat for Humanity Gallatin Valley build a retaining wall and do some construction clean-up.



NEVADA

PWB of the Southern Nevada HBA distributed scholarships to four deserving students. The council also thanked trade partners that donated their Win Pull sponsorship money to their scholarship fund to help students such as these.



COLORADO

With guidance from Habitat for Humanity construction volunteers, volunteers from the PWB of Western Colorado built and installed the framing for interior walls of Habitat for Humanity Mesa County's 82nd home. The volunteers enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by the Bank of Colorado in Grand Junction.



IOWA

PWB and Remodelers councils from the **Home Builders Association of Greater Des Moines** teamed up to increase the value of membership and networking at an event led by Jenni Pierce. She shared a great perspective and out-of-the-box thinking on cybersecurity.



PENNSYLVANIA

The **HBA of Bucks and Montgomery Counties** and the **HBA**

of **Chester and Delaware Counties** hosted a Synergy Awards show via Zoom (125 attendees!) to highlight member organizations' star projects and accomplishments.

The **HBA of Bucks Montgomery Counties PWB** (locally known as PWB Greater Philadelphia) got creative with its programming during the pandemic. They used Instagram Live every Thursday for five-minute presentations on insights into Caesars-stone materials.



OKLAHOMA

The Brian D. Wiggs Homes crew treated members from the **Home Builders Association of Greater Tulsa PWB Council** to the royal tour of their beautiful home, and they took off their shirts to reveal their PWB support!



GEORGIA

The **Greater Atlanta HBA PWB** hosted a virtual program, "Social Media Tips

for 2020: How to Pivot in the Pandemic," presented by April Voris, Partner and Chief Zealotry Officer at GRM.

FLORIDA

The **Northeast Florida Builders Association PWB Council** didn't let the pandemic slow it down. They held a virtual contest open for children to submit photos of houses they built. Congrats to the winners!



New Members

Welcome to the new PWB members who joined between April 1 and June 30! Be sure to take advantage of all that NHAB Professional Women in Building offers. #PWB Proud

- Christine Ahern, Parisi Construction Co. Inc., Verona, Wisconsin
- Rikki Altenburg, Paragon Engineering Consultant, Littleton, Colorado
- Lloyd Anderson, Armadas Exterior LLC, Gresham, Oregon
- Jennifer Arteaga, OJ Drywall, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Misty Ashworth, Ferguson Enterprises Portland, Oregon
- Lurenda Avery, Webb Concrete & Building Materials, Birmingham, Alabama
- Vicki Barnett, Young and Meathe Custom Homes, Petoskey, Michigan
- Deborah Barone, Staging Designs By Deborah, Williamston, Michigan
- Diane Baum, Baum Environmental Group Inc., Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Marni Bell, Bekins, Grand Haven, Michigan
- Ann-Marie Bergman, Traffic Engineering Services Inc., Elm Grove, Wisconsin
- Linda Bernaski, Palatial Homes Inc., Oakhurst, New Jersey
- Deb Bialozynski, Miller Mobility Products Inc., Waukesha, Wisconsin
- Patricia Blackburn, Blackburn Plumbing, Burlingame, Kansas
- Anita Blender, Blender Realty LLC, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
- Kathleen Bonkoski, Aspen Homes Inc., Pewaukee, Wisconsin
- Janea Bruner, Tomlinson Sotheby's International Realty, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Cassandra Brunson, Design+ By Cassandramichelle Inc., Winston Salem, North Carolina
- Rebecca Bruton, Baum Environmental Group Inc., Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Monica Bunch, Sifer Consulting, Brookfield, Wisconsin
- Tim Caird, No Leak Home Improvements LLC, Plymouth, Michigan
- Kaitlyn Campanile, Davison, Eastman, Munoz, Paone, PA, Freehold, New Jersey
- Kimberly Chairiez, First American Title Company, San Jose, California
- Michelle Chierchia, General Plumbing Supply, Edison, New Jersey
- Clara Childress, James Hardie Building Products, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Colin Clark, Pierce Flooring & Cabinet Design Center, Bozeman, Montana
- Amanda Clark, Builders First Source, Saginaw, Michigan
- Melissa Clarke, Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr, Princeton, New Jersey
- Cheyenne Cobb, Pierce Carpet Mill Outlet, Bozeman, Montana
- Julie Davies, Weather Shield Mfg. Inc., Waukesha, Wisconsin
- Sophia Debardeleben, Taylor Morrison, Folsom, California
- Erin Deweese, Brian D. Wiggs Homes Inc., Jenks, Oklahoma
- Teddie Dezarn, Integrity Insurance & Bonding Inc., Damascus, Oregon
- Cindy Dillon, Chinowth & Cohen Realtors, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma
- Jenn Donnelly, Summit Funding Advisors LLC, Atlanta, Georgia
- Michelle Eldridge, Virginia Tile Co., Plymouth, Michigan
- Trish Endres, Gerhards Kitchen & Bath Store, Delafield, Wisconsin
- Kelly Fedewa, K. Fedewa Builders Inc., Saint Johns, Michigan
- Carolyn Feigin, DW Smith Associates LLC, Farmingdale, New Jersey
- Melissa Filzen, MSS-Ortiz Inc., Durham, North Carolina
- Christine Fish, Nonn's, Middleton, Wisconsin
- Chelsea Fisher, Constructive Solutions Inc., Bozeman, Montana
- Mary Fisher, Coeur d'Alene Wood, Post Falls, Idaho
- Susan Frazier, Chinowth & Cohen Realtors, Skiatook, Oklahoma
- Michelle Geiger Kennedy, Superior Woodcraft Inc., Doylestown, Pennsylvania
- Ashley Gosal, Bosa Development, Bellevue, Washington
- Tiffany Gray, T.A.M.G. Realty Inc., Roswell, Georgia
- Doug Greenwalt, Reclaimed Michigan, Waterford, Michigan
- Sarah Griffin, Tomlinson Sotheby's International Realty, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Jesus Gutierrez, Habitat For Humanity-Orange County, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- Erin Hannah, Notch & Nail LLC, West Des Moines, Iowa
- Nancy Haskin, Renaissance Development, Oregon City, Oregon
- Amy Hughes, Netwave Interactive Marketing Inc., Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey
- Kay Hutmacher, Royal Building Products, Grayslake, Illinois



- Jonel Jackson, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Los Altos, California
- Kendrick Jones, Summit Funding Advisors LLC, Atlanta, Georgia
- Cathi Kerns, Kerns Custom Homes, Saginaw, Michigan
- Elizabeth Kim, Parkland Communities Inc., Alpharetta, Georgia
- Laurie Kinnebrew, Homes By Indianwood Inc., Pelham, Alabama
- Darin Kriebel, Palette Builders Inc., Oxford, Michigan
- Laly Lacerda, Dushi Marble & Granite LLC, Stamford, Connecticut
- Maureen Ladley, Ladley & Associates, Berkeley, California
- Cindy Larkin, Harbor Homes Inc., Pewaukee, Wisconsin
- Jennifer Lazzarini, KOMPAN Playgrounds, Walnut Creek, California
- Alexis Lightfoot, Professional Grounds Management, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Erica Marty, Halen Homes LLC, Brookfield, Wisconsin
- Claire Mayfield, Jim Norton Chevrolet, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma
- Jessi McCloud, JLM Construction, Belgrade, Montana
- Kathy McLaughlin, Venture Building Co. Inc., Sterling Heights, Michigan
- Rosaura Melendez-Baltzer, Tomlinson Sotheby's International Realty, Dalton Gardens, Idaho
- Julie Metzger, Villani Landshapers Inc., Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin
- Kim Michaud, Capital One (Spark Business) 2% Cash Back, Dousman, Wisconsin
- Lacey Miller, KB Home, Phoenix, Arizona
- Maegan Miner, Triad Bank NA, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Justin Moore, Diamond Dust Construction, Bozeman, Montana
- Tiffany Nelson, Haven Design Works, Suwanee, Georgia
- Riley Nix, MLA Geotechnical, Austin, Texas
- Denise Nott, Ledyard, Connecticut
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- Elliott Pike, ELM Construction LLC, Birmingham, Alabama
- Karen Rainge, Providence Bank, Fairview Heights, Illinois
- Laura Ransbottom, PF Unlimited, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Rhonda Rehbein, Platinum Realty, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Amber Reynolds, Taylor Morrison, Las Vegas, Nevada
- Sandra Rhodes, Scana Energy, Atlanta, Georgia
- Christopher Rigney, Sunspace By Spectrum Remodeling, Macomb, Michigan
- Rich Robinson, Member Rebate Program, Manasquan, New Jersey
- Rachael Ruggles, HighPoint Design Build Group, Pewaukee, Wisconsin
- Katie Ryan, Kreativ Stone & Design LLC, Shakopee, Minnesota
- Jodi Sauerbier, *New Homes And Ideas Magazine*, Durham, North Carolina
- Carmela Seslar, Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, Woodbridge, New Jersey
- Heather Siade-Cox, Victory Homes of Wisconsin Inc., Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin
- Laura Simpson, Baum Environmental Group Inc., Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Geraldine Smith, All Inclusive Construction and Building LLC, Branchburg, New Jersey
- Carolyn Spicer, Spicer Construction Inc., Prairieville, Louisiana
- Mary Spicer, Hunt Hale Jones Architects, San Francisco, California
- Ellen Struck, Sunpower Corporation, Richmond, California
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- Wanessa Vaccaro, Mon Group Properties Inc., Shrewbury, New Jersey
- Colleen Vacelet, Intreegue Design Inc., Halethorpe, Maryland
- Loreen Vickers, Bella Vita Homes Inc., Bradenton, Florida
- Mitu Walia, Klein Financial Corporation, Palo Alto, California
- Ruth Walls, Element Appliance Company, Las Vegas, Nevada
- Sasha Wellmaker, Tomlinson Sotheby's International Realty, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Brittany Wells, Cobalt Enterprises, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Mary Welsh, Creative Custom Homes, Rathdrum, Idaho
- Natalie Wendling, Design Basics, Omaha, Nebraska
- AJ White, Don White & Son Sodding & Landscape, Des Moines, Iowa
- Michelle Williams, LifeStyles, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Kathy Young, DR Horton Homes/Emerald Homes, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Mary Jo Young, Drees Homes, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Jackie Zach, Action Coach, South Milwaukee, Wisconsin



Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices executive leadership team members pause for a photo with some of the network's new-home sales leaders. *Back row, left:* Gino Blefari, Chairman, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices; Teresa Palacios Smith, VP of Diversity & Inclusion, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices; Dounia Fadi, COO, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Gulf Properties; Kimberly Mackey, Director of Building Relations, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group; Lori Lane, SVP & Managing Broker, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Georgia Properties; Mary Lee Blaylock, President & CEO, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties; Kathryn H. Redican, VP of Operations, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England, New York and Westchester Properties; Chris Stuart, CEO, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices. *Front row, left:* Rosalie Warner, SVP Network Services, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices; Pam Hendrickson, Co-Owner, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices South Sound Properties; Stephanie Newlands, Senior Partner and Broker, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Toronto Realty; Kim Bakey, CEO, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices First Realty; Kyria Jefferies, V.P. Director of Program Development, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beazley, REALTORS®

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Celebrates Professional Women in New Construction

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices stands for excellence in new-home sales across America, and it applauds the work of the network's new-home sales leaders, who provide insight and guidance to their clients and the industry overall.



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Executive Officer Pearls of Wisdom

NAHB PWB asked several executive officers of home building or building industry associations a few questions about their experiences with Professional Women in Building. Questions ranged from the value of PWB on the local level to their thoughts on how the industry is changing with regard to women and minorities. Here are the pearls of wisdom they shared:

Jeffrey Smith **Executive Vice President/CEO** **Tulsa Home Builders Association**

Since the Tulsa Home Builders Association founded our PWB in January 2020, we have seen an increased amount of engagement for our female members. Our January and February events had 35-plus in attendance, with many members who are not otherwise engaged in our association. Finding ways to engage members is crucial to providing a great product for your members and having successful retention rates.

The value our PWB council brings to our association is substantial when you look at the men and women who are now engaged within their council and have not otherwise been engaged in the association in the past. Our PWB has given several women the opportunity to serve in leadership roles that they might not have otherwise taken advantage of and it is refreshing to have seven out of our 11 Association Executive Committee members be female.

The industry now better understands the need for diversity in membership and leadership. We are seeing more minorities in our industry than ever before and that includes those who have worked their way up to business management and ownership levels. These minorities need to be engaged in the association and need to be involved at the leadership level of the organization to better service the entire membership.

Sarah Foster **Executive Officer** **Home Builders Association of the Upper Peninsula**

Professional Women in Building has allowed women-owned business/members and female employees to get more involved in the industry and given them a louder voice. They have brought fun events and projects to the local HBA. They have given the local female students going into the industry new opportunities for scholarships and mentors. It has also gotten rid of the stereotype that PWB is just for girls! They have had a male on their council for years now. Our local PWB works with other female-based organizations such as U.P. She Builds and Zonta.

Keri O'Shea **Executive Officer** **Builders Association of Central Pennsylvania**

Our PWB council is educating the next generation through accessible means during the pandemic with online activity pages and interactive contests. They are empowering young women to pursue careers in the construction industry through annual student award opportunities and engaging women through networking to foster a supportive environment in the industry.

Bill Garrison **Executive Officer** **Northeast Florida Builders Association**

Our PWB Council added a new flavor to the association by giving women a place to express their voice, provide support and encouragement to other women, and bring their own ingenuity and creativity to the forefront. The council gives women a chance to be seen in a leadership role in this very male-dominated industry.

The PWB added another layer of much-needed diversity, brings women's issues and perspectives into the forefront, and is a very visible opportunity for women to be actively involved in the association. What I have noticed is our PWB is more energetic, more imaginative about projects and outreach, and overall adds a new depth and vitality to our councils. Though the council is only three years old, it has quickly become a shining star among our councils (we have a total of seven councils, whose chairs serve on our board of directors).

Fortunately, I do see more acceptance of women and minorities in the construction industry and, like many social changes, it is happening quickly. New, young leaders are more open to and encouraging of this trend. Outreach by PWB and similar efforts is helping. The trick now is to take this momentum and keep pushing to make women and minorities aware of the opportunities and help them find their place in the industry. **BW**

Are you interested in starting a PWB Council in your community? Reach out to Claudia Richards, NAHB PWB Director (crichards@nahb.org), to learn more about the process of chartering a council.



A Step-by-Step Guide to Increasing Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

By Kristin Johnson

The construction industry has long been known as a homogenous population. In recent months, our society has witnessed events that have given us the opportunity to reflect on this norm and make strategic efforts to increase diversity and inclusivity.

Juli Bacon, entrepreneur and owner of multiple businesses or serving the construction industry, shares why businesses failing to make diversity and inclusion a priority will struggle to keep up.

“Diversity builds innovation and business growth and can potentially build new products and services,” Bacon says. “Diversity can be in race, sex, and age, not just in experience, skills, and knowledge. Businesses failing to take action are missing out on key opportunities for growth.”

The increase in unemployment rates due to COVID-19 has hit minority groups at disproportionate numbers. As businesses begin to hire new employees, they have a unique opportunity to quickly diversify their workforce by tapping into this market.

“While implementing non-discrimination policies and encouraging workplace trainings that focus on respect and inclusivity are a great start, they are not enough to create meaningful change to the demographics of the industry,” Bacon says. “To increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace, businesses must be intentional about their efforts and ensure that the effort is not only supported by management, but is a priority of the business.”

Here is Bacon’s step-by-step plan to increasing diversity and inclusion in the workplace:

1. Get your house in order. If your business has complaints of harassing behavior, it is difficult to recruit more diverse employees. Regular training and a full company management effort and support of anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies is critical.

2. Be strategic. Businesses need to make diversity initiatives a part of the organization’s strategic plan with both short- and long-term goals.

3. Review the hiring process. Examine your recruitment and selection process from beginning to end to determine if your practices may be unintentionally biased. Review job descriptions and ads for gender-specific terms or other wording that may discourage diverse applicants. Train your managers to screen resumes without bias and ask interview questions that lead to information on the ability of the employee to perform the job, not information about their protected classes. Expand your recruiting sources to include those that target diverse populations.

4. Assess your digital footprint. Review the company website. Do your pictures show the story you want of a diverse workplace or does it show the workplace that you have? Do you support causes that would attract a diverse workforce? What are your social media posts telling others?

5. Have open, honest discussions with employees. Talk to your employees and ask for help in building a diverse workforce. Ask why you don’t attract a diverse group of applicants and what you can do to help bring the entire company around to promote diversity.

6. Go all in. If you are looking to be diverse in practice and not just in theory, that means being open to all of the protected classes, not just some.

7. Take action and monitor. Don’t wait to take action until you have a perfectly outlined plan. Employees and candidates want to see that you are taking steps to get to where you want to be. Adjust the plan based on successes.

Bacon encourages you to make the investment to implement these steps, just as she did. “While these steps are not groundbreaking changes, my hope is that if all of us took deliberate steps to increase diversity and inclusivity in the construction industry, we can quickly increase the representation of minority groups in our workplaces.”

Bacon is focusing her passion for bringing diversity to construction in her building company, Bacon Building and Maintenance. She is currently building a holistic curriculum for an apprentice program that focuses on recruiting, training, and placing women, minorities, and disadvantaged youth into the construction industry.



Juli Bacon

Juli Bacon is president of JB Consulting Systems, a boutique human resources and business consulting firm, with clients in more than 20 states around the country. Bacon and her team provide anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training and strategic planning assistance, as well as other business services. For more information, visit jbconsultingsystems.com, call Linda Robison at 800-317-1378, ext. 14, or email lrobison@jbconsultingsystems.com. **BW**

Kristin Johnson is a senior HR consultant at JB Consulting Systems.



Technology Toolbox

Technology Saves the Day for Home Shows

Despite the pandemic, HBAs have found ways to introduce buyers to their members' homes

The COVID-19 pandemic has inspired creativity with home shows across the nation. Several home builder associations have come up with ways to hold their home shows this year in some form to create the ultimate experience for their builders and the public!

HBA of Durham, Orange and Chatham Counties, North Carolina

All-digital was the choice of this HBA with their show this year. The company that facilitated their tour was AerialLook, which touts an immersive, always-open house format. They used Matterport, a 3D platform that lets you turn a space into an accurate and immersive “digital twin.” The real selling feature for this was their Mattertags™, which enabled builders to tag the unique, high-performance features in their homes, as well as link to other digital media, such as educational YouTube videos. They had 1,290 total users with 4,558 page views. Homes can still be viewed at www.HighPerformanceHomeTour.com

Clare Daniel
PWB of the Triangle

Snake River Valley Building Contractors Association, Nampa, Idaho

This team got creative with a mixture of onsite tours with limited numbers of 150-400 a day (slightly higher than other years), while the rest was online through virtual tours. The event was a great success; the mixed tours gained positive feedback from the public and builders alike. Matterport software was also used for this website tour. You can view the homes at https://srvbcavirtual.com/virtual_tours

Mercedes Mascorro
PWB of Snake River Valley Building Contractors Association



Home Builders Association of Greater Des Moines, Iowa

The Des Moines Home Show Expo generally attracts about 15,000 people. This year, the HBA tried something new to accommodate the public and give the builders the best of in-person and online experiences. Approximately 1,100 people were allowed through with social distancing guidelines; the rest were offered online tours with pictures and 3D tours of each home powered in part by Matterport with Mattertags designed by the Website Guru, PW Imaging, and Lightsmith Media. The first week alone yielded over 1 million views! The HBA had a 350 percent increase in traffic to its website, <https://www.dmhomeshow.com>

Steph Reed
PWB of Greater Des Moines

Home Builders Association of Greater Austin

In place of in-person visits, each of the luxury homes is available to visit via virtual tours and through HGTV-inspired films, personally led by the builders and members of their teams, including decorators, architects, and master craftsmen. For those interested in purchasing a Parade Home or building a custom home, private, one-on-one tours with the builders were available by appointment. <https://www.hbaaustin.com/parade-of-homes>

Erin Scott
HBA of Greater Austin **BW**

One Woman's Journey, Brick by Brick

By Joyce Duerfeldt

Lynn Donahue's story began in New Bedford, Massachusetts, with a turbulent upbringing. In her memoir, *Brick By Brick: A Woman's Journey*, she shares how she left home without getting her high school diploma. After hopping from place to place, she realized she needed a steady job to support herself and went to work tending bar at her father's tavern. While she was there, she saw a small advertisement in the local newspaper, recruiting women for the trades with a pay rate of \$17 per hour. To make \$17 in the 1970s, she would have had to work about six hours, plus tips, in the bar.

Facing adversity and never giving up, no matter the circumstances or mistakes, is her hallmark. Lynn read every book she could find on brick laying and business. Lynn overcame obstacles in her path, including men who happily shared their opinions of women in nontraditional roles, such as the trades.

Goal-setting was an important part of her success. With each goal, she would use daily reminders to stay on course. Each time she met one goal, she would set a new one. She clearly broke through the "brick ceiling" through her resourcefulness, creativity, and determination.

The sense of appreciation, self-worth, and accomplishment is captured in Lynn's evolution through her work in the trades. Building something and knowing it will last your lifetime brings a very different sense of self and confidence than the service roles typically allowed to women. She accomplished more than most men, not only mastering the trade, but the business of the trade.

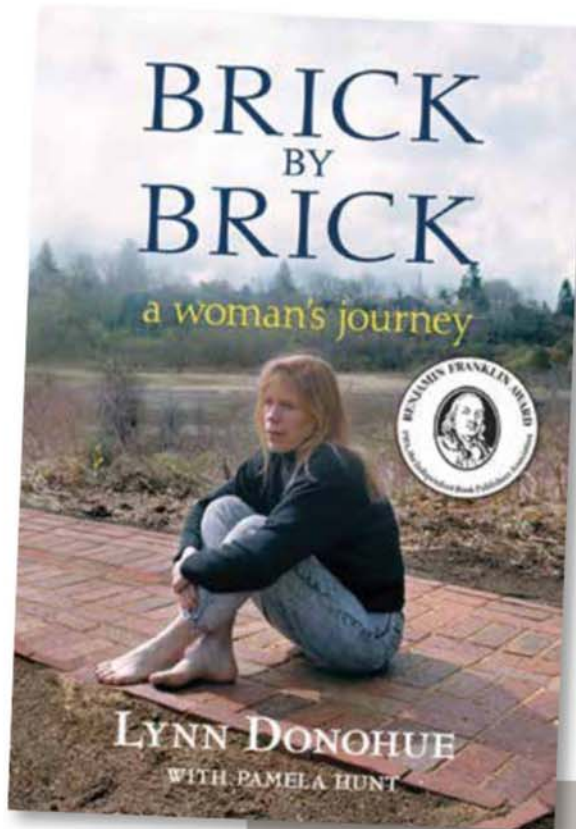
Facing adversity and never giving up, no matter the circumstances or mistakes, is her hallmark. Lynn read every book she could find on brick laying and business.

The trades are a way out of despair and stagnancy, and a road to independence and success. How do we educate women to the discipline and personal growth in the trades? Stories like Lynn's are about self-awareness and putting hope into action. Taking risks slowly and steadily will win the race.

Lynn Donahue's book is an inspirational story of a floundering, rebellious teenager's transformation into an accomplished, highly respected tradesperson, business-woman, wife, and mother. **aw**

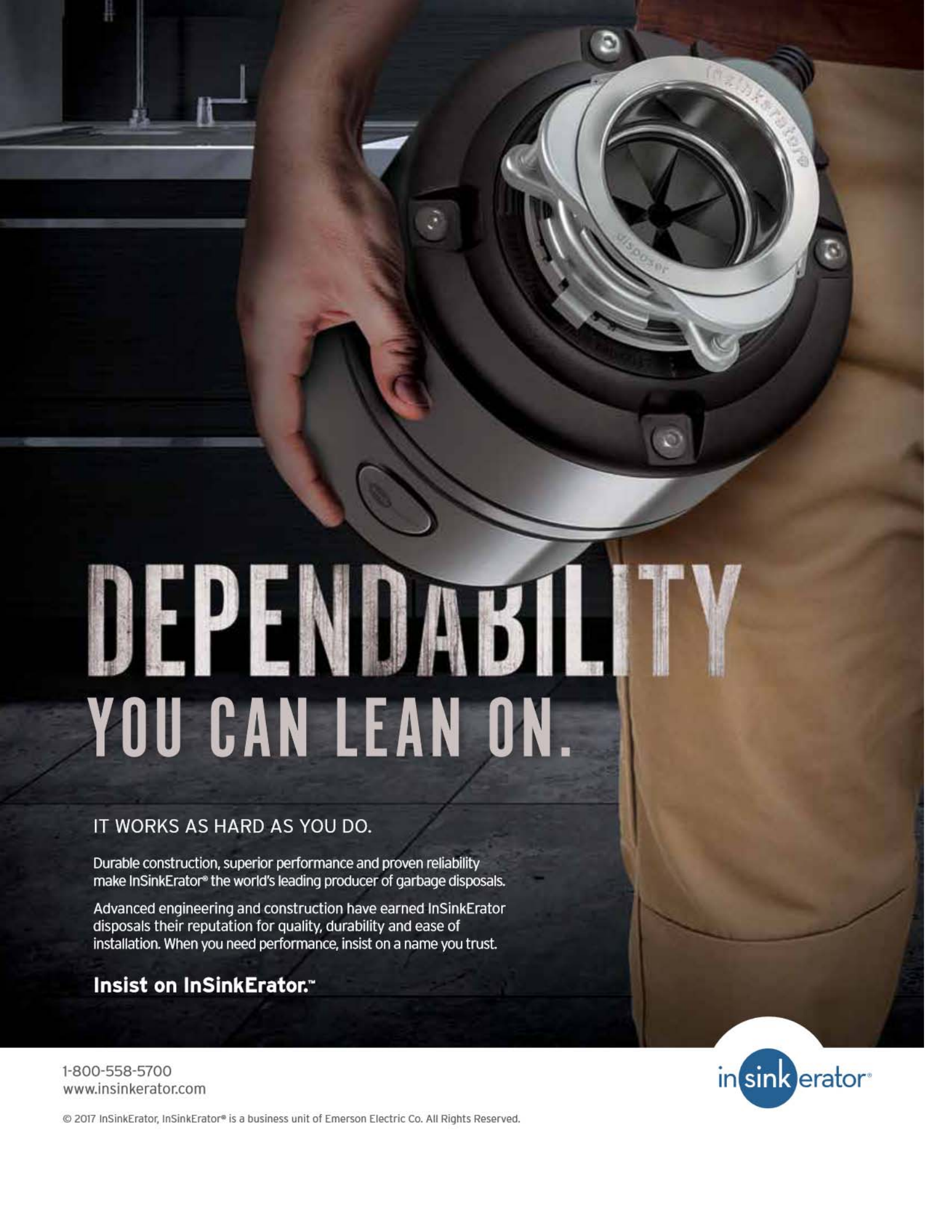


Joyce Duerfeldt is office manager for NationWide Contractors' Alliance Inc. and is a 2020 NAHB PWB Regional Trustee.



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