

Fall 2023

Colorado CONSTRUCTION & Design

**City/County
Government
Project Round Up**

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Tom White**

**Women in
Construction
Quarterly**

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A day, a week, a month...

It's always a perfect time to celebrate, encourage, and support women working in or considering a career in the construction industry.

Women in Construction Quarterly

Featuring National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC Denver Chapter #112)

Empowered Women Empower Women



Metropolitan Denver Chapter #112

Strengthening Women in Construction

With 115 chapters in 47 states the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) core purpose is to Enhance the Success of Women in the Construction Industry and in Business. The association is committed to championing women to impact the direction of the construction industry. NAWIC provides education, community and advocacy for women.

What does NAWIC really do?

NAWIC provides support and means as needed for women in the construction industry and to develop leadership skills through professional education and professional growth by becoming involved with the community and offering tremendous networking opportunities. As a member you will find community and advocates to support you and your role as a woman in construction and help to succeed in a traditionally male-dominated field.

All women working in the construction field are eligible for membership, including women builders in the trades, project management, marketing, administration, and executive leadership. Women in related industries who work on construction related business, such as finance, legal, human resources, and other complementary industries, are also welcome.

NAWIC will support you no matter your location or your position with opportunities and camaraderie that will directly strengthen and amplify your career as a woman in the construction industry.

Join the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to become a leader in the construction industry by enhancing your career through education, building technical skills, support, and networking with the most accomplished women in our profession.

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Jacquie McLain
Business Development Manager
FRSTeam by Custom Commercial

Jacquie was exposed to the construction industry in high school and vividly remembers being the only female in Drafting & Design class. Her career counselor thought for certain it

was a choice made for her to side step her academics and recommended she transfer to a more “traditional” easier course for female students. Fast forward the chapter many years later, Jacquie was exposed to various trades from new commercial construction tilt-ups in the Bay Area of Northern California to site development in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Jacquie eventually found herself on the vendor supplier side of the industry servicing manufacturing and construction projects mostly because she listened to the pressures of others telling her that it was not optimum for her to be so involved in the trades; it was more acceptable for women to be in sales. Her passion for the trades was passed on to her eldest son, now an electrician working for the utility company servicing the power grid in Nevada.

Jacquie’s lifelong commitment to mentor young women about how making choices early on in life can serve as a dual agency; they can hold you back and prevent you from accomplishing your dreams or they can become your compelling “why”. Her message to make these young ladies is aware of the plethora of resources and support available for them today versus those of yesteryear. She encourages them to be in tune with their motivation as it’s easier to follow their dream, to do what they love, find a way to get paid for it when you know your “why” and to never listen to the external negatives (or people) that can lead them astray.



Djenita Svinjar
Associate Attorney
BBG Construction Law

Djenita is an associate at BBG Construction Law (Beltzer Bangert & Gunnell LLP) where she focuses on transactional work for her clients. At BBG, she represents general

contractors with review and negotiation of construction contracts, external general counsel matters, and assistance with prelitigation disputes.

Prior to her time at BBG, Djenita was Corporate Counsel for one of the nation’s largest general contractors, an experience she found invaluable and that she credits with introducing her to the industry she loves. Having spent the

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last several years of her career in the construction industry, Djenita is passionate about giving back, educating others, and advocating for women in the industry.

Djenita has spent the last year as Board Member and Treasurer for the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC)’s Denver chapter. In this role, she and her colleagues work to continue NAWIC’s founding vision by advocating for the value and impact of women builders, professionals, and tradeswomen in all aspects of the construction industry.

Djenita is passionate about community involvement and also serves on the boards of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Weld County as well as the Law Committee of the Board of Law Examiners for the Colorado Supreme Court. She is also a member of the Associated General Contractors of Colorado’s Future Leaders Forum.

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Julie Howell
Executive VP of Sales & Operations
Commercial Flooring Services

Born and raised in Oklahoma, her love of the building process started young. At 10 years of age, Julie vividly remembers the day she sat down with a small drafting board, and proceeded

to sketch out an elevation and floor plan of a house. No one had ever shown her how to do this, and of course, it was completely out of scale. (I still have this drawing) Julie remembers being interested in watching a room addition on our house, but never thinking it was a future career option. She attended Oklahoma State University, with an Engineering scholarship out of high school – planning to major in Architectural Engineering, but something just did not click. Julie learned two years in, that there was a degree program in Construction Management, and the light bulb came on...bright. She graduated top of her class.

Julie worked in the Oklahoma commercial construction industry for both large and small private general contractors for over 20 years, as well as the AGC of Oklahoma & OK Department of Career Technical Education. She eventually found her way into operations & project management, in the Flooring Industry.

When her son left for college, she decided to follow my lifelong dream to move to Colorado in January of 2020. Julie quickly connected with a great company, that also had original Oklahoma roots, and has been invested since.

Julie has a passion for speaking with young women about their paths, and always encourage those considering the construction industry to go for what drives them. To take the things that interest them and turn it into something you can love doing every day. It is amazing to her, that although everyone has different journeys of getting to where they land, women in the construction business have stories that are pretty similar. Women also have a common drive to make a difference, to use their gifts, and not allow others to discourage their skills and knowledge because they are women.



Dee Davis
Founder/CEO
Davis Consulting Management Group,
Yellowstone Professional Education

Dee's dad was a civil engineer, but she never considered engineering or construction because she always struggled with math. It wasn't until

much later that Dee had an opportunity to learn the carpentry industry and found that she was in heaven

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building with her hands. After working as a carpenter for a few years Dee had the opportunity to go back to school and jumped at it. She was astonished to find that after learning to build things engineering came easily to her and knew she was where she was meant to be. Before Dee found construction and engineering, she was easily bored in her jobs. The construction industry has never been a problem – Dee exclaimed, "I have never had the same day twice in over 25 years!"

With a distinguished career spanning over 25 years in construction project management and education, Dee has emerged as a leader in the field, celebrated for her expertise and unwavering commitment to innovation, sustainability, and leadership excellence.

Dee embarked on her journey into the world of construction with a passion for building a better future. Armed with a formidable educational background, she has advanced education in leadership, engineering, and sustainability, providing her with a unique multidisciplinary perspective that has set her apart in the industry.

"The construction industry is a great industry that will both challenge and reward you in ways you can never imagine. You will have a huge sense of accomplishment when solving problems day to day on a project and driving by buildings you helped create."

"I have enjoyed every aspect of my career from swinging a hammer to solving engineering challenges and teaching the next generation of talent. I am seeing so many fabulous young women enter our industry and THRIVE. The industry will provide connections to amazing people, lifelong friendships, and a rewarding and lucrative career. It is challenging and so worth it!"



Andrea Janzen
Founder/CEO
Ambition Theory

Andrea is the founder and CEO of Ambition Theory, a leadership development company focused on accelerating the path to leadership for women in construction.

She never imagined that she would work in this industry. The construction industry chose Andrea back in 2018 when a bunch of women in construction signed up for the first cohort of Ambition Theory's Leadership Accelerator Program - which was open to all industries at the time. Since then, she has learned that women bring a unique set of transformational leadership skills that can bring a ton of value to their companies. Ambition Theory helps

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women leverage these skills, articulate their value, move into formal leadership positions, and become influential in their company and the industry.

"We know that women can't take on this work alone and have recently launched training on how men can be allies for women in construction," said Shannon. "We also partner with the National Association of Women In Construction to deliver the NAWIC Leadership Academy and the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) to create the Building Better Women in Construction report."



Allison "Ally" Jencson
 President/CEO
 Frontline Floor Coatings, Concrete Polishing and Epoxy Experts.

Ally is also the Founder of Girder Skirts™, Tradeswomen Supporting Tradeswomen. She has been in the construction trades for 18 years as a business owner and in 2022 celebrated the 10-year anniversary of Frontline Floor Coatings. Ally's experiences in the construction industry from tradeswoman to business owner made her realize the need for more skilled tradespeople, and more female leadership there. Through the creation of Girder Skirts™, Ally provides real world leadership training through Master Classes and keynote speaking for women in construction. Her passion is to help these women step into their unique badassery so they can show up as their best selves at work and at home.

Ally is a natural networker and connector. She is a mother to four amazing humans, grandmother to one (soon to be two!), and married for 17 years to her business partner, Barry.

Some of her recent accolades include the 2021 Don Brown Entrepreneur Award from the Southern Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce, and the 2023 Executive Spotlight Flame of Excellence Award from the National Association of Women in Construction's National Board.

When CCD magazine asked Ally why she decided on a career in construction, Ally replied, "I didn't exactly choose construction, it chose me. Haha! I have always been around construction. My Dad was a Civil Engineer and an architect. I stepped fully into the construction field late in life at age 37 when my husband and I bought out our partner in our floor coatings business. We honed our skills together, learning everything (literally) about concrete polishing and epoxy coatings on the jobsites to create Frontline Floor Coatings."

Ally's experiences as a women in construction may seem all too familiar to some— she expressed, "Being a woman in the field AND being a woman business owner simultaneously.

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On the job sites, I would always get asked if I was "just the help" and in more executive level networking, I would get asked if I was "just the sales rep". In both settings, I was automatically discredited for my gender. Once everyone discovered I was a hardworking and knowledgeable business owner, I got a little more "street cred". This also spurred me to create Girder Skirts™ Tradeswomen Supporting Tradeswomen, where I offer leadership coaching and Master Classes for women in construction."

"Don't allow yourself to feel alone in this industry. I never knew how much I needed female friends in construction until I joined NAWIC (National Association of Women in Construction)."

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Katie Blaaid
Territory Manager
PNA Construction Technologies, Inc.

Katie is from a small town in South Dakota and didn't have a lot of good jobs to choose from but the best ones around were in the construction industry. With her desire to achieve

and will to succeed, you could say the construction industry chose her. Four years ago, Katie decided to further her career by moving to Colorado and pursue her dream career in outside sales in construction.

Katie wishes she had known more about all the great job opportunities in the construction field earlier. She pressed, "Women, don't be afraid to pursue what you want. I was once asked by a woman that I looked up to in my community; "why would you want to work in a male dominant industry?" I told her because I want to succeed and achieve my personal goals, and I am good at it!"

"Why do we hold ourselves back and conform to gender norms when choosing our careers? We are women in construction, and we are here to celebrate YOU, encourage YOU, educate YOU and empower YOU! YOU got this and YOU are not alone."



Lisa Reiswig, MBA
Sales Representative at United Rentals
United Rentals

Lisa has been working within the construction industry for about 21 years. She fell into the industry after leaving a student position with the Bureau of Reclamation in 2002. Lisa

began working for Fastenal Company as an assistant branch manager, and after three years, she left Fastenal and began working for United Rentals. Since working for United Rentals, she has held positions in sales, branch administration, and as a Branch Manager, and is currently a Sales Representative for the Power & HVAC division, helping customers with temporary power solutions, generators, heating, cooling, and air filtration. Since working with United Rentals, Lisa learned about the National Association of Women in Construction, and has been a member since 2007. She has held every chapter board position at one point or another nearly every year since she has been a member.

Some of the challenges she faces being in the industry have been receiving pushback from male customers and coworkers at times, and feeling that sometimes they make things more difficult for her. Also, her male counterparts in sales think that it's easier for her to get in front of customers, which

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causes them to treat her differently. While she has faced some of these challenges, she admits that they seem to be fewer and further between these days. Lisa believes that it's a combination of the older school of thought that "women shouldn't be in construction" going away, and the younger generations moving up and becoming more accepting of women in the industry, and also that she's earning the respect of her customers and coworkers by doing well at her job.

Lisa encourages more women to go into the construction industry as it's a great industry to be in. "It's a rewarding industry to be in. It's amazing to see buildings standing today where there was once an empty lot, and knowing that you had a part in building it. Women are becoming more present on construction sites, and I love being a part of this industry."



Melanie "Mel" Towey
Professional EOS Implementer
Business & Mindset Coach

Mel's childhood desire was to be an architect. Her other childhood desire was to help others. Both strategy and empathy have been intermingled from the start.

Not following a traditional path, Mel built her career within the construction and building materials industry where her enjoyment came from working with entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses looking for quantum leap growth. She has worked in a variety of capacities, from developing and executing growth strategies and managing national sales teams, to Director of Marketing Operations where she led business efforts and managed the construction, design, and operations of showroom spaces nationwide for a leading producer of quartz surfaces. It was in these years that she developed a burning passion for leadership and helping businesses and teams create their path forward.

In Mel's pursuit to integrate all aspects of her life as well as to continue to help others understand the psychology of business, people, and their environment, Mel became a Certified Coach (ICF) as well as a Practitioner in Rapid Transformational Therapy. While looking for her next venture, Mel was introduced to the book Traction. Seeing the benefits of companies implementing EOS, Mel found her next obsession as an EOS Implementer and Business & Mindset Coach.

She supports the personal and professional development of leaders and helps businesses build to their greatest potential, eliminating blocks, and strategically facilitating new dimensions of success - finding joy, freedom, and fulfillment along the way.

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Karen Mitchell
 Owner/Office Manager
 Double M Concrete, LLC

Karen has owned and operated Double M Concrete LLC, a concrete flatwork business serving the Pikes Peak Region since 2001. Currently, she serves as the Pacific Southwest Region Director for

the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC).

Karen faced numerous challenges when it came to establishing and maintaining a presence in the construction industry. These challenges included stereotypes that undermined her credibility as a woman in construction, limited access to networking opportunities, and gender-based discrimination. When she and her husband and first started their business, they operated within a network of contractors who preferred to work directly with her husband.

Karen struggled to be taken seriously by contractors, other subcontractors, and even their own employees. Over the past 22 years, however, much of this discrimination has disappeared as women find their place and their voice in the construction industry. Now, construction is a viable and rewarding career for women. With women now holding leadership positions and trade programs actively recruiting women, there is no better time! Karen's advice for women considering a career in construction is to be resilient, confident, and proactive in addressing any challenges that arise.



Shannon Moller
 Vice President
 M.D. Moller Co, Inc.

When Shannon first met her husband, he was already working as an electrician, so when they were engaged it was imminent that construction would be a part of their lives. Little did she know at

the time how much! Shortly after their marriage, her husband became a Master Electrician and a decision was made to embark on their first big adventure as a young couple to start their business back in Michigan.

"Construction was rapidly growing and the opportunity to build our own business, to be captains of our own future and see where it took us was too good to pass by. We opened in 1999 and moved our business and family to the Vail Valley in 2001. This January we will be kicking off our 25th year as M.D. Moller Co, Inc."

"In an industry that is male based, you need to find your own path to the top. Don't be afraid to stand your ground and stick to what you know."

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Nelly Morales, SHRM-CP, STSC
 Vice President of HR & Safety
 Naranjo Civil Constructors

Construction has always been a phenomenal industry to Nelly. Being part of a team that sees a project from its various stages is a very fulfilling aspect. Especially when it offers

opportunities to create something that makes a significant impact within the community in a positive way – that is what makes construction so rewarding and intriguing for her.

With the full support of ownership, Nelly developed her career in a way she never imagined through various training and professional development programs. She became the VP of HR & Safety, stepped out of her comfort zone and broke multiple barriers that many women in construction battle with due to a very male-dominated field.

Nelly hopes to inspire and amplify other extraordinary women in construction to step out of their comfort zone, and truly see their value and impact they can have in all aspects of the construction industry.



Shannon Vogel
 Founder/Owner
 Reach Social

Shannon is the proud founder and owner of Reach Social, a certified Social Media Strategist, and 25-year veteran of the construction, flooring and interior design industry.

After more than 10 years in flooring sales, interior design and residential and commercial construction, Shannon changed her focus to the marketing opportunities unfolding online. In 2008, Shannon conceptualized and launched one of the flooring industry's first and most successful blogs, essentially introducing the industry to the power of social marketing. Since then, she has made a career of Professional Social Media, effectively strengthening the brand awareness of members of the construction industry across North America.



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