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## **2019 Women in Construction: Lisa Podgurski, Manager of Business Development at IBEW Local 103 and NECA Greater Boston**

March 29, 2019 - Spotlights

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? My first professional job was in the advertising department for the Boston Herald. Six months into my job, I was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 26. I had no vacation time or sick time saved up by then. But my colleagues, including journalists and people from other departments who didn't know me at all, donated their sick time and their vacation days to help me. What I learned is just how amazing your coworkers can be and how important it is to cultivate that kind of culture in any workplace, where people come together and support each other. I think it's why I enjoy the culture I work in now, a true brotherhood and sisterhood. I respect and prefer to work in that atmosphere.

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? I worried that in such a male-dominated industry, maybe I wouldn't be well-respected or fit in. I was coming from outside the construction industry and outside of unions. But what I found is that there is a real camaraderie within unions, and that the building trades are working hard to create opportunities for women. It's been a great journey.

What was the project or transaction that was a game-changer for you? Getting involved in the solar industry was really a game changer in my career. It opened up a lot of new opportunities for me, and it's how I got my job at IBEW Local 103. I have been able to cultivate many relationships in the renewable energy space and received a Gubernatorial Appointment to the Net Metering Task Force by then Governor Deval Patrick. IBEW Local 103 is very committed to becoming "greener" and renewables are such an exciting field to be a part of right now.

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