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What does it take to actually get a building built? - by Kara Gruss and Nancy Greenwald

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The complex coordination required to conceive, design, and construct an office building, a bridge, a home, or a road is a daily challenge for many of us who already spend their working life immersed in the construction industry. But many people who do not have any background in the industry to support them find themselves responsible for developing, approving, promoting, or financing

construction projects. These include town councils, boards of directors, and owners of all kinds, from corporations, to governments, to homeowners, as well as others who enter the industry in creative roles, like marketing or business development. These individuals are certainly not expected to know the details of how to design or construct a building. Yet, they need to have a basic, clear understanding of the different job responsibilities, the terminology, and the process of construction to engage effectively in their own roles.

The Construction Institute of the University of Hartford (CI) has developed a series of presentations for those who need to understand the answer to the question “What does it take to actually get a building built?” Our Construction 101 series has been specially developed to give decision makers the information they need to make informed choices about their construction projects and to help marketing, communications, and business development professionals gain the knowledge they need to increase their effectiveness and to take their careers to the next level.

CI’s Construction 101 Education series resumes this spring with a program on “The Life Cycle & Costing of a Construction Management (CM) at Risk Project.” Construction Management at Risk is only one of the processes (called project delivery methods) that can be selected to assemble a team for a construction project. We will dive into the

specifics of what it takes to that turn an idea into reality from concept to ribbon cutting and close out. Our panel will be rounded out by an all-star cast of key players with different perspectives on the process. They include architect - Christopher William, AIA (CWA), construction manager - Alex Babbidge (Babbidge Construction), Conceptual & Budget Estimating - Lew Finkel, F.C.P.E. (Professional Construction Services, Inc.) and owner representative and chief architect - David Barkin, AIA (State of Connecticut, DAS | Division of Construction Services). We will identify and describe the respective phases of a design and construction project, explain the roles and responsibilities of each player throughout all phases of a CM at Risk project, and clarify how a cost estimate is established and how the entire team works to keep it on budget throughout all phases.

If you are new to the industry, less familiar with the other disciplines involved, part of a facility management team, or involved in administration, marketing or business development, within or supporting the Architectural/ Engineering/Construction world - this series is for you! The program will be held on June 1, on the University of Hartford campus. For more details and registration, visit construction.org and follow the link to programs and events.

Kara Gruss is the chair of the Construction Institute’s education committee, and is the director of marketing and business development for Babbidge Construction Company. Nancy Greenwald is the executive director of the Construction Institute.

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