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2018 Women in Construction: Jane Kaplan Peck, Kaplan Construction

March 30, 2018 - Spotlights

Name: Jane Kaplan Peck

Position: COO / Majority Owner

Company: Kaplan Construction

Years in the A/E/C Industry: 16 years

What associations or organizations are you a member of? CREW Boston; Associated Builders & Contractors; Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Group; Brookline Community Mental Health Center.

Why the A/E/C Industry? My parents founded Kaplan Construction just a few years before my birth, so my childhood evolved alongside the same timeline as my parents' burgeoning business. This meant accompanying my father to the jobsite, inadvertently shadowing my mother during office field trips, and listening in on work-related discussion at the dinner table. Basically, it is in my blood and I was biologically destined to work in this field. I am also a self-professed "systems" geek; I love technology, economics, and anything that requires a high level of organization. All of this made the A/E/C industry a perfect fit.

Advice/Keys to Success: It's all about your team! Work can be challenging but it doesn't have to be unpleasant. Assemble a team with whom you enjoy working and who will support each other. It's also important to remember that you cannot be an expert in everything, so find trusted advisors who will help you. Stay humble and self-aware.

What was your most notable project in 2017? The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the historic Tropical Foods supermarket at 2101 Washington Street in Roxbury. The immense complexity and economic importance of the project made it particularly special. The history-rich building required extensive renovations to create 30 units of mixed-income housing, all while being in accordance with National Park Service standards. It is the outcome of an eight-year effort by the Roxbury community and the City of Boston to bring economic diversity and private investment to Dudley Square. They began leasing apartment units in January and I am very proud to have been a part of it.

If you had a mentor in your career, who was it and what did they teach you? My mother, Cathy

Kaplan, is my most important mentor. From a young age she taught me about business, from how to read a bank statement to creating a budget (we used envelopes to divide up my allowance). She demonstrated the importance of not only being a leader of the team, but a member too. She taught me how to handle myself in this male-dominated industry – to never shy away from “war room” conversation; to stick up for yourself; that it’s okay to be emotional. All of this has been invaluable in who I am in my past, current, and future success.

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