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2019 Women Who Build: Jo Ann Michaels, Viking Construction Inc.

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Name: Jo Ann Michaels

Position: Senior Project Manager

Company: Viking Construction Inc.

How many years have you been in your current field? 30+

Which project, deal or transaction was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? The project that had an impact on me was a project in Stamford, CT at 992 Summer St. This was a new low income senior residential building. The residents who moved into this building were living in old run-down units. The building was built on a very small parcel of land in downtown. The team I worked with was incredible from owner, architect and field superintendent. The reason this project stands out to me is the use of space and the product that was built was going to be life changing for the residents and I felt proud that we as a team built this building in a downtown area on a tiny parcel and the end product was so successful.

What are you doing differently in 2019 that has had a positive impact on your career? In 2019 I am looking at my career not as an end to a great career but a continuation of doing what I love. I continue to grow and learn every day and hope to be able to mentor younger men and women to make a lifelong career in the construction industry.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? My first job in the construction field was as an administrative assistant. I learned the “guts” of the business. The foundation of being a Project Manager, the paperwork, and communication skills in this industry. I also learned that being a women in the construction industry while challenging at times is extremely rewarding and knew that this field was my future.

Who are three women – living or dead – that you would like to have drinks with and why? I would love to have drinks with Michelle Obama. I respect her professionalism, her strength and character. She is a role model to all women.

NBC Today Show Savannah Guthrie is another woman I would like to have drinks with. Her wealth of knowledge and ability to succeed in a difficult career is something I respect. She has interviewed

so many individuals and would love to speak to her about them.

I would also love to have drinks with a female professional athlete. There are so many that have succeeded in their sport and they work hard, train hard and sacrifice for their career. They also earn a living doing what they love, like I do!

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? My biggest fear was not having the knowledge that I needed to succeed, but I learned that you gain knowledge everyday and people are always willing to help. All you need to do is ask!

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