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2019 Women in Construction: Mary Leahy, Project Manager at Erland Construction, Inc.

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How many years have you been in your current field? 11

Which project, deal or transaction was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? The Chase 1 was a game changer for me. I was an assistant project manager, hungry to do more, I took it upon myself to jump in with the field team and get the amenity area turned over on time for the client. The client took note and requested that I be promoted to project manager on the next phase of residences. My hunger to do more hasn’t stopped since!

What are you doing differently in 2019 that has had a positive impact on your career? Being humble, admitting my weaknesses, and meeting people where they are. I have always had a passion to help others develop, both personally and professionally. This year I wanted to hear from the entire team (including subcontractors, owners, architects, etc.) on how we could improve internally and provide a better project.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? My first job in operations was closeout documentation assistant. What I learned was that no job is too small within a team; my role was just as important as the project manager or group manager. I strongly suggest everyone start here—it gives you a sense of pride and a thirst for more knowledge.

Who are three women – living or dead – that you would like to have drinks with and why? Mother Teresa – compassion and empathy; Anne Frank – overcoming adversity; and the Queen of England – courage to change, despite people’s opinions.

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? That I wasn’t good enough; that I wouldn’t know everything and that I would be judged. But what’s a career without learning?

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