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2019 Women in Construction: Kristen Gowin, Assistant Manager at NECA Greater Boston

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Which was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? My career game changer was four years ago when I stepped away from my role at the director of government affairs for the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and into the role of assistant manager of the Boston chapter. In D.C., I worked to advance the legislative agenda of the electrical business owners that I represented. I found great pride and satisfaction in this role, but I wanted to do more. Accepting my position with the Boston Chapter, NECA pulled me away from the politics in Washington, D.C. and brought me to the front lines, working alongside our labor partner, IBEW Local 103. We are now experiencing one of the most exciting times in the construction industry, filled with great opportunity and promise. Innovation is happening faster than we can keep pace. We plan on ensuring that the Boston Chapter NECA will serve as a change agent and indispensable resource for our electrical contractors in Greater Boston and the surrounding areas.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? My first “real world” job was with a political polling firm in Washington, D.C. Our small firm worked on campaigns all over the country. I was a Research Assistant. The job was focused on survey research and was numbers driven, analytical and demanded long hours. I learned quickly that I didn’t love tables and charts but I also learned what a winning campaign looked like, what hard work felt like, and how to adapt to an ever-changing political environment. These lessons laid the foundation for my professional development, work ethic, and overall approach to my job and career. I see many similarities on the political scene as I do in the construction industry. They both require hard work, proving yourself as a credible professional on a daily basis, and offer rewarding results. I carry the lessons and experiences with me and strive to do better each and every day.

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