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2019 Women in Construction: Christina Arico, Director of Business Finance, Hospitality and Luxury Homes at Shawmut Design and Construction

March 29, 2019 - Spotlights

How many years have you been in your current field? 20

Who are three women – living or dead – that you would like to have drinks with and why?

1. Rosa Parks – She had a huge impact on the U.S. and civil rights—all by having the courage to stand up for what she believed.
2. Sheryl Sandberg – I'd love to understand how she got to her role and navigated her way through business.
3. My grandmother who has been gone for many years – At the age I am now, she was a mother of seven. On her own, she came to a new country, saved money for a year, and sent for her children to come to America. I'd like to understand how she had the foresight, courage, and strength to make such a big change to improve her and her children's lives.

Which project, deal or transaction was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? Several years ago I was presented with an opportunity to come out of finance and spearhead an organizational change initiative to drive efficiencies between accountant and project manager administrative roles. I was initially concerned to take this on because it was very different than what I was used to, but it forced me to think and work differently. During my year in this role, I learned to take a step back and be more strategic, and was exposed to people, programs, and processes that I otherwise never would have been.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? I worked at a bakery throughout high school, which taught me invaluable lessons about customer service. I learned to sell a product, make the customer feel good, acknowledge and correct mistakes. I now appreciate this early lesson I had in client service, which I've carried throughout my career.

What are you doing differently in 2019 that has had a positive impact on your career? Letting go, and not taking on so much. I have always believed in saying yes to every opportunity, but I also realize that I can stretch myself too thin. Making a real effort to empower those around me to take on some of the opportunities I would usually take on myself has enabled me to have more balance, and empowers those around me.

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? Managing and leading people. I was always someone who liked to be in a team, in the background. I was fortunate to have

a manager/mentor who saw leadership qualities in me, and forced me to step out of my comfort zone and take on a management role very early in my professional career.

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