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## **2019 Women in Construction: Felicia Conboy, Project Manager, Retail, Shawmut Design and Construction**

March 29, 2019 - Spotlights

How many years have you been in your current field? 7.5

Which project, deal or transaction was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? My first Apple project was a game changer for my career. Understanding the level of perfection Apple expects and being able to deliver this along with a tight schedule and budget was a major undertaking. My team was able to achieve all three with a very happy client. In the year and a half since that project turned over, I’ve done another store for that client and have one lined up for this summer. The challenges we faced on that first project prepared me for just about any retail fit out.

What are you doing differently in 2019 that has had a positive impact on your career? I’m thinking outside of the box. Earlier in my career I asked less questions and was willing to accept that there was only one way to build something. As I’ve developed my construction knowledge, I’ve found that if my teams take the time to dive into issues, we can often find a better way to address it. I’ve worked with a lot of supers, subs, and clients to try to come up with the best approach—trying to use new methods or technology to attack issues or approach activities. There really aren’t any stupid questions.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? My first ever job was a viaduct rehabilitation in NYC for the MTA. Along with a better understanding of general construction (from paperwork and cost to logistics and scheduling), the most valuable thing I learned from that job was the power of teamwork. This ended up being a really successful job—happy client, good profit, ahead of schedule, etc.—and the one thing that was especially evident was teamwork. Everyone collaborated, supported and got along with each other. This is something I’ve tried to emulate on EVERY project I’ve worked on; every successful job has solid team behind it.

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

1. My mom – She taught me to be the independent, headstrong woman I am today. Growing up, she always told me I could be anything I wanted. I’ll use any opportunity to have a drink with her.
2. Oprah – Strong, generous, self-made. I’ve always admired her tenacity and I think she would have some wonderful stories and advice.
3. Ina Garten – I love to cook and eat especially, from her cook books. In my opinion, she would be a wonderful companion for drinks!

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? I graduated college with a degree in civil engineering, and although it's related to construction, I really didn't have a lot of construction know-how. I was afraid of how much I had to learn, but I quickly realized that as long as I was learning every day and unafraid to ask questions, there was nothing standing in my way

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