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Ones to Watch 2019: Jamie Kelliher, Axiom Architects

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Jamie Kelliher
Project Manager
Axiom Architects

Year you entered your current field? 2011

If you have a mentor, who is it and how have they influenced your personal & professional growth? My father Jim, who started our company 40 years ago, has taught me what I believe to be the most important aspect of any career, and that is to be business-minded in everything that we do. Talent and hard work will take you very far, but only if you can understand the true value of your work, how to attract the right clients, and how to ensure that you are fairly compensated. I attribute many of my successes in life to this business-savvy approach.

How have your life experiences impacted who you are professionally? I chose to pursue many different experiences in quite a few different interesting locations prior to making a full commitment to a traditional role as an architect. All of these experiences were somehow related to design and construction, and allowed me to gain diverse skills and explore different career options. From basic carpentry, to retail finish work, to alternative material sustainable design and construction, I chose to go wherever my path led me. I think that has resulted in a complex set of skills that I can bring to my work each day.

What do you consider to be your greatest professional accomplishment in the past 12 months? With the constant shifting of the building industry, it can be important for an architecture firm to find its own “niche” in order to stay relevant. In response to overwhelming competition for single-family residential design work in our area, we have looked to actively shift our focus to the growing demand for mixed-use and multi-family design. With four new mixed-use projects currently at various stages in our office, I feel that we have been enormously successful in establishing ourselves as a reliable resource for that type of design in our local communities.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? I think that some of the best advice would be to understand just how much is involved in our field of work that

goes beyond simply “designing buildings.” There are so many other facets to coordinating a successful building process from the earliest schematics, to detailing, coordinating design consultants, writing specifications, and construction administration. An individual can choose to focus their architecture career on any of those areas, especially in a larger firm.

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