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## Construction Institute hosts its Annual Membership Dinner

June 21, 2019 - Connecticut

Hartford, CT On June 20th, the Construction Institute hosted its Annual Membership Dinner to celebrate member milestones, achievements, and to honor individuals who embody the highest level of professionalism serving in the design, construction and facilities communities. Recipients are selected based on their personal achievements, impact on the industry and their contributions to the larger community. This year, the awarded members included:

- Ray Oneglia, O&G Industries, who received the Distinguished Achievement Award;
- Carolina Cudemus-Jones, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, who received the Distinguished Service Award;
- Robert Falaguerra, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center (retired), who received the David LaBau Lifetime Recognition Award;
- Stanley Black & Decker, which received the Special Industry Recognition Award; and
- Everett Anderson, HRP Associates, and Rachel Thayer, Resource Options, who each received the Emerging Young Professional Leadership Award.

To further celebrate and learn from these influential members of the design and construction industry, the Construction Institute wanted to share their perspectives on the role of mentorship, sources of inspiration, daily joys and the power of community. Their insightful responses are a testament to the quality of the people and opportunities that surround them.

What mentor has had the greatest impact on your professional career and what did they teach you?

“My mother, Dr. Mireya Cudemus, has been my inspiration since I was little. She taught me the value of continuous learning. She taught me work ethics and that as women, family and work can be balanced as long as you keep your eyes on your true goals.” – Carolina Cudemus-Jones

“I actually had two mentors who shaped my professional future. Charles Balancia, a graduate of SUNY Maritime College, hired me as director of engineering at Montefiore Hospital. He taught me the ins-and-outs of healthcare engineering. My second mentor was Frank Simon who was the VP of facilities at Bronx Lebanon Hospital when I was director of engineering there. I credit him with teaching me the basics of construction management, estimating and scheduling.” – Robert

Falaguerra

What quote, mantra or book has been inspirational to you?

“A quote that I have always felt speaks to me is, ‘You are your only limit.’ I like this quote because it is so easy to say that you couldn’t get something done, but I believe there is always a way to reach a solution. It’s just a matter of how hard you’re willing to work to get there.” – Everett Anderson

“Maya Angelou – ‘I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.’ I am working with all sorts of people on a daily basis and it is critically important to be sympathetic, listen and understand people’s needs.” – Rachel Thayer

What do you enjoy most about what you do every day?

“The people that I come into contact with. The collaboration in problem solving, logistics planning, anticipating and minimizing risk.” – Carolina Cudemus-Jones

“I enjoy connecting with new people every day and building lasting professional relationships whether they are a client, candidate or industry networking relationship.” – Rachel Thayer

What has your Connecticut community meant to you during your years here?

“Even though I have only had one internship and one job in the AEC industry, it is very apparent to me that this industry is very close-knit. You might have two people who work for competing companies, but they will still find the time to meet up and learn from one another to grow as professionals. It’s really amazing to see that kind collaboration.” – Everett Anderson

“Over the past 26 years, I have raised my son in Avon, met my wife at Saint Francis and met numerous professionals in healthcare and construction. I was responsible while at Saint Francis Hospital for the Facilities transformation to a top ranked medical center. The leadership there, as well as the Hartford community, meant the world to me. All have made my years in Connecticut fulfilling. I look forward to maintaining my contacts as time goes on.” – Robert Falaguerra

Congratulations to all of our honorees!

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540