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2020 Women Who Build Spotlight: Catherine Schoenenberger, Stay Safe Traffic Products, Inc.

February 21, 2020 - Connecticut

Catherine Schoenenberger, President at Stay Safe Traffic Products, Inc.

How many years have you been in your current field? 24 years

What motivated you to step out on your own? I was running a business as if it were my own anyway, without the support or influence of the actual owner, so why not do it as my own really. I believed I could, so I did.

What project, transaction, honor or accomplishment are you most proud of? I am most proud when I hear from someone on how I have made a difference for them because they heard/read my story, or saw me speak somewhere and I made an impression on them; that I was someone that they wanted to follow. I greatly appreciate the natural attraction and selection of mentor for mentee – nothing should be forced!

What are you planning to do differently in 2020 to have a positive impact on your career? Maintaining that positive and credible reputation of being a leader in the industry, advocating for the successful advancement of women in the industry and amplifying their/our successes.

What is the best leadership advice you have ever received? When someone asks you what is expected from them to be part of your team, association, committee, etc., the response is, "Whatever you decide you're able to commit to is what I will expect from you; so, if you say you'll be able to give just 10% on this particular project/committee, then I will expect 100% of that 10% for your commitment. There's no guilt; there's clear expectation." Who was it from? A NAWIC past national president, who received it from one of her lifelong mentors.

What was your favorite job and what did you learn from it? I love public speaking and sharing what I know with others. Whether speaking on work zone safety, the forgotten skill of listening or presiding over various industry forums, it's a great experience. The challenges and the stories shared teaches all something new. There is no learning less whenever you're interacting.

If your life were made into a movie, what actor would you want to portray you and why? I am not sure if I would put an actual name to the actress, however, it would have to be someone who is able

to portray a woman who knows how to get things done with humility and humor...she'd have a strong sense of funny and relatability.

What would you tell your daughter about entering this profession? I have told many daughters to step back and see the entire forest for the trees – no matter what they think this (or my) profession. It's very rarely a straight line. I have a bachelor's in Political Science, and yet I sell stop signs and traffic cones! Our her-stories have allowed these daughters to see themselves in us (collectively).

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