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2020 Women in Construction: Maria Jones, Assistant Project Manager at Site Specific

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What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? My greatest professional achievement is sharing the work I do every day with my family. I demonstrate

to my son and daughters that the gender boundaries in construction roles are shifting, and I'm proof of that. It's not easy being a woman in a male dominated field; it takes confidence and determination.

When I'm not working I am... I'm a mother of three children. They enjoy playing music. My son plays the drums and my daughter the accordion, and they both play competitively. They're in a band together, and I'm the conductor for our upcoming competition at the end of this month.

What are you doing differently in 2020 that has had a positive impact on your career? This year, I hope to focus on getting more women involved in the construction industry. I've been involved in NAWIC since 2004, and last year I worked with our HR Manager to get Site Specific more involved in the organization. I'm passionate about raising awareness of the roles that are available for women in our industry. In college I graduated as one of five women in the construction management program, and this year there are over twenty!

What trends are you seeing in your field this year? Most of my recent work has been in the private higher education and independent K-12 markets. In the academic world, some trends we're seeing are more collaborative learning spaces and flexible classrooms. I recently completed a project for an independent school in Providence that included life safety upgrades as well as classroom and common space renovations. We added areas for the students to collaborate outside the classrooms. Learning is happening everywhere – not just inside the traditional classrooms.

Who or what inspired you to join the construction industry? I was inspired at a very young age to join the construction industry. My father was a mason and would take me to work with him from time to time. There wasn't a doubt in my mind I wanted to work in construction. My mother was behind me every step of the way, knowing I would be able to handle the pressures that came along with it, but it took a lot to convince my dad. Today, both my parents are very proud of my professional achievements and my efforts to pave the way for other women in field.

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