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2020 Women in Real Estate: Leslie Fanger, RLA, Senior Landscape Architect Project Manager at Bohler

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Leslie Fanger, RLA
Bohler

Who inspired you to join the CRE Industry? In the 9th grade (1975), I was encouraged by the technical drafting teacher to be the first female in the Natick School System to enroll in his class. That experience launched my lifelong interest in landscape architecture. As I learned about land development, I became fascinated with the idea of connecting with communities and creating a sense of place through my designs.

How have you been networking during the lockdown? I've embraced the technology of video chat, and have been regularly reaching out to clients to touch base. I've discovered an unexpected benefit of using MS Teams or Zoom – I've actually made more personal connections than over regular phone calls. Seeing folks in their personal space often leads to conversations that wouldn't have otherwise transpired.

What aspects of working from home have you enjoyed most? I think it's more efficient, and much more sustainable. We're not getting into cars, driving to meetings, rolling out a set of plans to review. We're saving time, paper, and gas by collaborating on screen.

What is the best advice you have received, and who was it from? My mother taught me to be a good listener. I try to apply that principle in all aspects of my life and work – specifically with employees, coworkers and clients. It's important to truly listen to a client and understand their business goals, above and beyond particulars of the project you're working on.

What recent project or transaction are you most proud of? The Cape Arundel Cottage Preserve in Arundel, ME. I'm proud that I was able to help bring to life the project developer, Joe Paolini's vision for the beautiful, award-winning residential community. We leveraged the site's natural elements to design intimate clusters of cottages, each with their own unique character. Then, I saw an opportunity to reuse the naturally occurring granite to create a cohesive look and feel throughout the resort. In 2018, industry organizations took note of the project team's achievements. Cape Arundel Cottage Preserve received the 2018 Best in American Living Award, and was recognized again in 2019 with the Maine Real Estate and Development Association Top Notable Projects Award.

What honor, achievement or recognition means the most to you and why? Definitely the awards for Cape Arundel Cottage Preserve. From a design perspective, I love that I was able to combine so many different aspects of landscape architecture into that one project. Each neighborhood was so unique, and incorporated different aspects of the natural environment. In addition, the project has had an incredibly positive impact on the community, and has elevated Arundel to be a really well-known area. All the wonderful amenities provided in the resort are bringing people from all over the country.