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55 YEARS

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## **2021 Women in Construction: Jeanine Wilson, Senior Project Manager, CM&B**

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How have you adapted and changed in the last 12 months? As a general contractor, the most obvious way we have had to adapt is in our safety protocols on the construction sites. We adjusted

our safety programs to keep up with ever-changing governmental guidelines so that we can continue to work on site with managing the client's expectations for the project while keeping our workers safe and healthy. It has been a balancing act that none of us were prepared for pre-COVID, but it has provided a new standard for safety that we will be abiding by for years to come.

Why should women consider a career in the A/E/C industry? Women should consider a career in the A/E/C industry because it needs our voices, our empathy, our communication skills and our attention to detail. It needs our voices in the room with the breadth of our life lessons and history, along with our skill and knowledge, to create or contribute to projects in a way that is dynamic and authentic. It also helps men as well to work with women and to shift the way society in general sees our industry. Knowing that there is no job that a woman cannot do, we lift all of humanity up towards equality.

What steps have you taken to ensure the continued success of your firm? To ensure the continued success of my firm, I am providing my clients with the utmost attention and care with all aspects of the project, including managing the schedule and budget to ensure we are on track for our goals, working with the design team to handle any issues that may arise as well as working with the client to assist with any purchasing of materials and managing of consultants in order to meet project deadlines. We are all wearing many "hats" these days and must jump in and help in any area of the project for success.

Starting out in the A/E/C business, who or what empowered you? My first boss in the construction industry was a woman of color, like myself, and to see her operate with poise, grace and intelligence in a space where no one else looked like us, was empowering, and helped me to know that I can do the same thing. She taught me not only the nuts and bolts of the business, but by observing how she worked, I learned how to have dignity when confronted by racism or sexism, how to be heard and understood, and that ultimately, if you are good at what you do, most will appreciate that.

What was your greatest achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? It was listening to my instincts and making the decision to leave the firm where I had a successful career managing office and retail projects, and embark on a career at CM&B, in the middle of a pandemic! Although it seemed that the right thing to do would be to stay where I was at during such uncertain times, I knew that if I wanted to grow into a leader in my field and have the support system to do so, I had to make the move. I am excited about the future and opportunities that lie ahead!

What are you most looking forward to post-pandemic? As restrictions are lifted and businesses return, old and new, I am excited to collaborate with our partners to bring back businesses in a safe and responsible environment. This is a time in history where we have felt the devastation and loss of our way of life, but we also have an opportunity to rebuild better and plan for any future public health threats in the way that we design spaces and perform construction. I envision a much more collaborative way of building in the future with this shared experience connecting us together unlike ever before.