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2021 Women in Construction: Elizabeth Krol, National Client Director, EBI Consulting

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What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? My greatest professional achievement during the last 12 months has been supporting two key clients as

they pursued new transactions that were outside their traditional acquisitions criteria. These projects required technical resources in a different service line, so I was simultaneously educating our internal team about the unique sensitivities of these transactions while working collaboratively with my clients to mitigate risk. We pivoted together and made this uncertain time one of growth and success.

What steps have you taken to ensure the continued success of your firm? I have moved to more frequent and targeted communication with key and prospective clients. I made a specific effort to inquire first about their health and well-being, and that of their family, then what they need. We are very focused on improving the client experience and finding specific ways to make their lives easier whenever possible, which often means a keen focus on risk mitigation, minimizing friction, and faster delivery of our services. We are investing in our clients' success.

Why should women consider a career in construction? There are plentiful opportunities and variety of disciplines under the very large umbrella of construction. There are opportunities in the pre-construction stage, including site civil and geotechnical engineering, design, and planning or permitting. There are opportunities during construction, including on-site roles in the disciplines of structural, MEP (mechanical, electrical, plumbing), roofing, and other building systems. Even post-construction, opportunities include commissioning of newly installed building systems. At each stage, project management, construction oversight, legal, accounting, and other expertise is needed. For nearly every skill set and interest, there is a role in construction.

What are you most looking forward to post-pandemic? Post-pandemic, I am most looking forward to seeing my clients and colleagues in person. Collaborating face-to-face, rather than through a screen, will be a welcome improvement in the post-vaccine environment. We've made remote work "work" and yet our teams will benefit from working together, especially emerging professionals who benefit from a higher level of mentoring and interaction with senior team members. Company culture is also strengthened when we are together.

How have you adapted and changed in the last 12 months? Communication has changed greatly this past year. Prior to the pandemic, I communicated with clients almost daily by phone, and regularly in person. In initially adapting to virtual meetings, my "silver lining" was the resulting longer, deeper conversations. We all craved connection during such a turbulent time. However, as the pandemic continues, we are all motivated to get projects moving. As such, a brief, tactical call is often the most effective communication with my clients. We are all a bit "Zoomed out" and there is tremendous value in knowing we can connect in a variety of ways.

Starting out in the construction business, who or what empowered you? When I was starting out in the construction and development of commercial real estate, I was empowered by my savvy clients who were evaluating potential commercial real estate development sites. They challenged me to leverage the resources of our technical team to minimize risk in their transactions. I was also empowered by strong mentors who helped me to build my experience on challenging projects, as well as by executive sponsors who recommended me for professional development opportunities. I am grateful to the thoughtful mentors and sponsors who elevating me for technical and leadership

opportunities.

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